

## Sharan Kaur Mehta

University of New Mexico, Department of Sociology & Criminology, MSC05 3080,  
1915 Roma NE Ste. 1103 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131  
skmehta@unm.edu | [www.sharankaurmehta.com](http://www.sharankaurmehta.com) | Pronouns: she/her/hers

### Positions

---

2023-Present **Postdoctoral Fellow**, Department of Sociology & Criminology, Institute for the Study of  
“Race” and Social Justice, University of New Mexico-Albuquerque

### Education

---

- 2023 **PhD in Sociology**, Rice University  
Dissertation: “From South Asia to the Southern US: Exploring South Asian Racial Identity, Religion, and Collective Action in Texas.”  
Committee: Jenifer Bratter (Chair), Elaine Howard Ecklund, Anna Rhodes, Max Besbris, and Kamala Visweswaran  
*\*Nominated: John W. Gardner Best Dissertation Award in Social Sciences, Rice University*
- 2019 **MA in Sociology**, Rice University  
Thesis: “Negotiating Race in a Climate of Islamophobia: How Muslim and Sikh Americans Perceive Discrimination and Construct Racialized Religious Identities.”  
Committee: Elaine Howard Ecklund (Chair), Jenifer Bratter, and Anna Rhodes  
*\*Winner: 2019 Seth Balkishan Das Singhal Student Paper Award, Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS), Rice University*
- 2012 **BA in Chemistry**, Sociology Minor, Bryn Mawr College  
*Magna cum Laude*

### Research Interests

---

Race and Ethnicity, Racism, Racialization, Religion, Gender, Intersectionality, Asians and Asian Americans, Identity, and Collective Action

### Publications

---

#### *Peer-Reviewed Publications*

- 2022 Bratter, Jenifer, Allan Farrell, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Raul S. Casarez, Xiaorui Zhang, and Michael Carroll. 2022. “There’s something very wrong with the system in this country’: Multiracial Organizations and Their Responses to Racial Marginalization.” *Social Sciences* 11(5):226. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11050226>
- Mehta, Sharan Kaur**, Rachel C. Schneider, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2022. “‘God Sees No Color’ So Why Should I? How White Christians Produce Divinized Colorblindness.” *Sociological Inquiry* 92(2):623-646  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/soin.12476>

Bratter, Jenifer, Raul Casarez, Allan Farrell, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Xiaorui Zhang, and Michael Carroll. 2022. "Counting Families, Counting Race: Assessing 'Visible' Family Structural Change among Multiracial Families, 1980 – 2018." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 31:609-622. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-022-02244-x>

Farrell, Allan, Raul S. Casarez, Xiaorui Zhang, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. 2022. "Message Received: Asian Americans' Racial, Ethnic, and National Identity Centrality Before and After the 2016 Election." *Sociological Spectrum* 42(2):135-155. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02732173.2022.2081894>

Casarez, Raul S., Allan Farrell, Jenifer L. Bratter, Xiaorui Zhang, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. 2022. "Becoming (Asian) American? Inter-Ethnic Differences in Racial, Ethnic, and American Identities for Asian American Adults." *Ethnicities* 22(3):347-373. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968221092769>

Chan, Esther, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. 2022. "Fertilizing Morality: How Religiosity and Orientations Towards Science Shape the Morality, Immorality, and Amorality of Reproductive Technologies." *Public Understanding of Science* 31(4):376-393. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687968221092769>

2021 **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**, Robert A. Thomson Jr., and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2021. "Polarized Scientists? Exploring Political Differences about Religion and Science among US Biologists and Physicists." *Sociological Forum* 36(1):5-28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12661>

2020 Thomson Jr., Robert A., **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2020. "‘Doing Gender’ and ‘Doing Religion’ in Science: A Cross-National Examination." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 59(2):269-288. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jssr.12654>

2019 **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**, Christopher P. Scheitle, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2019. "Can Religiosity Be Explained By ‘Brain Wiring’? An Analysis of US Adults’ Opinions?" *Religions* 10(586):1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10100586>

Ecklund, Elaine Howard, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Daniel Bolger. 2019. "A Way Forward for Sociological Research on Science and Religion: A Review and A Riff." *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 54(3):634-647. <https://doi.org/10.1111/zygo.12542>

#### *Book Reviews and Other Publications*

2019 Ferguson, Jauhara, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. "Review of *Being Muslim: A Cultural History of Women of Color in American Islam* by Sylvia Chan-Malik," for *Gender & Society* 33(4):656–658.

2017 Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and **Sharan Mehta**. "Review of *Seeking Good Debate: Religion, Science, and Conflict in American Public Life* by Michael S. Evans," for *Sociology of Religion* 78(2):235-236.

- 2015 Burke, Sarah J., William P. Malachowski, **Sharan K. Mehta**, and Roslyn Appenteng. “The Enantioselective Construction of Tetracyclic Diterpene Skeletons with Friedel-Crafts Alkylation and Palladium-catalyzed Cycloalkenylation Reactions.” *Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry* 13(9): 2726-2744.

#### *Manuscripts In Progress*

- **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**. “The Boundaries of Asian-ness and Their Impacts on the Movement to #StopAsianHate: Exploring South Asian Identities and Collective Action in Texas.”
- **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**. “Blending in vs. Standing out: How Muslims and Sikhs in Houston Perceive and Experience Discrimination in their Everyday Lives.”
- Zhang, Xiaorui, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Jenifer Bratter, and Shahill Parsons. “Layers of Panethnic Boundaries: Disaggregating Asian American Intermarriage.”
- Salazar, Esmeralda Sánchez, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Esther Chan. “Comparing Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals.”
- Ecklund, Elaine Howard, Robert A. Thomson Jr., **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Daniel Bolger, and Di Di. “Global Science, Global Discrimination? Perceptions of Discrimination among Scientists in Different National Contexts.”

#### **Research Experience**

---

- 2023-Present Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of New Mexico  
*Dr. Nancy López*
- 2020-2023 Research Assistant, Bratter Research Team, Department of Sociology, Rice University  
*Dr. Jenifer Bratter*
- 2016-2023 Graduate Student Fellow, Religion and Public Life Program, Rice University  
*Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund and Dr. Rachel C. Schneider*
- 2015-2016 Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania  
*Dr. Melissa Wilde*
- 2014 Intern, Research for Action, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 2012-2013 Research Associate, Department of Chemistry, Drexel University  
*Dr. Lynn Penn*
- 2009-2012 Research Assistant, Department of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College  
*Dr. William Malachowski*

#### **Teaching Experience**

---

- 2023 Instructor of Record, Department of Sociology, Rice University
- Sociology of Asians and Asian Americans (SOC 311)  
*\*New course: proposed, designed, and taught new course offering in Spring 2023*
- 2017-2022 Guest Lecturer, Depts. of Sociology and Transnational Asian Studies, Rice University
- 2022: Religion, Gender, and Inequality (SOC 410)
  - 2021: Mixed Methods, Research Methods (SOC 381)
  - 2020: Religion and Immigration, Sociology of Immigration (SOC 430)
  - 2020: Ethnographic Research in/of Houston Asia (ASIA 305)
  - 2018: Gender, Religion, and Immigration, Soci. of Immigration (SOC 451)
  - 2018: Race and Racism, Social Theory (SOC 380)
  - 2018: Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Social Theory (SOC 380)

- 2018: Foundations of Modern Social Theory, Social Theory (SOCI 380)
  - 2017: Race and Racism, Social Theory (SOCI 380)
- 2020 Certificate in Teaching and Learning, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University
- 2017-2018 Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, Rice University
- 2018: Social Theory (SOCI 380)
  - 2017: Social Theory (SOCI 380)
- 2014-2016 Organic Chemistry Lab Coordinator (CHEM 245)  
Department of Chemistry, University of Pennsylvania
- 2013-2014 Special Education Paraprofessional  
Valley Day School, Morrisville, PA
- 2010-2012 Teaching Assistant, General Chemistry (CHEM 101, 103, and 104)  
Department of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College

### **Grants, Fellowships, and Awards**

---

- 2023: Nominated for the John W. Gardner Best Dissertation Award in the Social Sciences by the Department of Sociology, Rice University
- 2022-2023: Teaching Fellowship, Department of Sociology, Rice University (\$29,500)
- 2021-2022: Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance Fellowship (\$25,000), Rice Sociology (\$4,500)
- 2021: Min Zhou Research Grant, Department of Sociology, Rice University (\$1,500)
- 2020: Religious Research Association (RRA), Constant H. Jacquet Research Award (\$4,000)
- 2020: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), Student Research Grant (\$3,000)
- 2020: Social Sciences Research Institute (SSRI), Rice University, Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (\$4,963)
- 2020: Ida B. Wells Award in Public Sociology (Inaugural), Rice University (\$300)
- 2020: Nominated for Graduate Teaching Award for Course Support, Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), Rice University
- 2019: Seth Balkishan Das Singhal Student Paper Award, Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS), Rice University (\$1,000)
- 2019: American Sociological Association (ASA), Student Forum Travel Award (\$250)
- 2019: American Sociological Association (ASA) Religion Section, Student Travel Grant (\$250)
- 2019: Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), Lee Student Support Fund (\$150)
- 2018: Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, Rice University, Research Grant (\$5,600)
- 2017: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), Student Travel Grant (\$500)
- 2017: Social Sciences Research Institute (SSRI), Rice University, Conference Travel Grant (\$400)
- 2016-2021: 5-year Graduate Fellowship, Department of Sociology, Rice University (\$27,500/year)

### **Advanced Training**

---

- 2021 Intersectional Qualitative Research Methods Institute for Advanced Doctoral Students (IQRMI-ADS), UT-Austin, Latino Studies, June 21-June 25.

## Conference Presentations

---

- 2023 *Paper Accepted.* Xiaorui Zhang, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Jenifer Bratter, and Shahill Parsons. “Layers of Panethnic Boundaries: Disaggregating Asian American Intermarriage.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, PA, August 17-21.
- 2022 *Paper Accepted.* **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Building Solidarity to #StopAsianHate: How South Asians Negotiate the Boundaries of the Asian Category.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. \*Did not attend due to Covid-19
- 2021 **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Rachel C. Schneider, Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “From Church to the Workplace: How White Christians Produce Racial Ignorance and Inequality.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Virtual, August 6-10.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Boundaries of Asian-ness? Exploring South Asian Racial Identity and Activism in Texas.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Virtual, August 6-10.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “What ‘Counts’ as Anti-Asian Racism? Exploring South Asian Collective Action Across Religious Traditions in Texas.” *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting*. Virtual, October 16.
- 2020 Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Esther Chan. “Comparing Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Virtual, August 8-11.
- Paper Accepted.* Esther Chan, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “Fertilizing Morality: Abortion, Confidence in Science, and the Shaping of Moral Attitudes Towards Reproductive Technologies.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. \*Did not attend due to Covid-19
- Abstract Accepted.* **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, Rachel C. Schneider, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “Beyond Toolkits: How White Christians Produce Racial Ignorance and Inequality in the Workplace through Religious Frames.” *Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) Annual Meeting*. \*Canceled due to Covid-19
- 2019 **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Building Coalitions among Muslims and Sikhs in the US: Opportunities and Barriers.” *Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS) Annual Symposium*. Rice University. April 5.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta** and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “International and Intersectional Perspectives of the Global Study of Religion and Science.” *Contextuality and Universality in Science and Religion Consultation*. Oxford University. Oxford, England. April 29-May 1.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “How Muslim and Sikh Americans Perceive Discrimination and Negotiate Race in a Climate of Islamophobia.” *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. New York, NY. August 10-13.

Jauhara Ferguson, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. "Muslim Scientists' Perceptions of Inclusion in the Scientific Workplace: A Cross-National Pilot Assessment." *Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) Annual Meeting*. New York, NY. August 9-11.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta**. "Fertilizing Morality: The Effect of State Context on Moral Attitudes Around In-Vitro Fertilization." *Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Annual Meeting*. New York, NY. August 11-13.

Elaine Howard Ecklund, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar. "'God Sees No Color' So Why Should I? Producing White Ignorance Through Religious Frames." *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting*. St. Louis, MO. October 25-27.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta** and Jauhara Ferguson. "#Blessed? The Double-Edged Sword of Social Media for Muslims and Jews in the US." *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting*. St. Louis, MO. October 25-27.

Rachel Afi Quinn, Eesha Pandit, Gayatri Joshi, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. "South to South – Transnational feminist collectivity from South Asia to the Southern US." *National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Annual Meeting*. San Francisco, CA. November 14-17.

2018

**Sharan Kaur Mehta** and Robert A. Thomson Jr. "Gender and Religion Among Scientists: A Cross National Study." *Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS) Annual Symposium*. Houston, Texas. Rice University. April 13.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta** and Robert A. Thomson Jr. "Scientific *versus* Religious Tools? The Construction of Political Identities among American Scientists." *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, PA. August 10-14.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta**. "Being American in a Climate of Islamophobia: How Muslim and Sikh Americans Negotiate Their National Identities." *Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, PA. August 12-13.

Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Esther Chan. "Race, Religion and Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Protestants." *Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, PA. August 12-13.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Esther Chan, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. "Fertilizing Morality: The Role of Religion in Shaping Moral Attitudes Around In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF)." *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting*. Las Vegas, Nevada. October 26-28.

2017

Ecklund, Elaine Howard, Robert A. Thomson Jr., Daniel Bolger, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. Regular Session. "Perceptions of Discrimination in Global Science." *American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting*. Montreal, Quebec. August 12-15.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Robert A. Thomson Jr., and Elaine Howard Ecklund. "How Religious and Political Identities Intersect for US Scientists." *Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR) Annual Meeting*. Montreal, Quebec. August 13-14.

**Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Robert A. Thomson Jr., and Elaine Howard Ecklund. "Gender and Religion Among Scientists: A Cross National Study." *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting*. Washington, D.C. October 13-15.

### **Invited Talks, Presentations, and Media**

---

2022 *Invited speaker*, Asian American Studies Now! Speaker Series at Texas A&M University, co-sponsored by the South Asia Studies Working Group. "The Boundaries of Asian-ness and Their Impacts on the Movement to #StopAsianHate: Exploring South Asian Identities and Collective Action in Texas." November 30.

*Invited speaker*, interfaith panel at Post Oak Middle School in Houston, Texas. March 21.

2019-2021 *Invited speaker and training facilitator*, Houston Independent School District (HISD) Educator Training on Religious Literacy organized by the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, Rice University.

- 2021: "Lived Experiences of South Asian and Arab Muslims and Sikhs in Houston"
- 2020: "Sikhism in America" \*Cancelled due to Covid-19
- 2019: "What is Sikhism?"

2019-2020 *Invited speaker*, panels and events organized by Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston.

- 2020: Guest Speaker, "Faith in Our City: The Sikh Tradition"
- 2019: Panelist, "We've Got How Many Religions in Houston? Some of the Lesser Known Religions in the Bayou City and Their Contributions"

2019 *Invited panelist* with Elaine Howard Ecklund and Robert A. Thomson Jr. "Islamophobia Teach-In." Rice University. Hosted by the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance and Religion and Public Life Program. March 27.

*Invited panelist* with Elaine Howard Ecklund and Robert A. Thomson Jr. "Religion and the University." Rice University. Hosted by the Boniuk Council. January 29.

*Interview for Houston Matters* with Elaine Howard Ecklund. "Religion and the University," Houston Public Media NPR. January 29.

<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/shows/houston-matters/2019/01/29/319424/what-role-does-religion-play-on-college-campuses/>

### **Academic Service and Community Engagement**

---

2022-Present Community Advisory Board Member, Institute for Diversity & Civic Life (IDCL), Austin, Texas

2021-2023 Community Member, Rice Asian Diasporic and Asian American Research (RADAAR) Collective, Rice University

2020-2022 Representative Member, South Asian Youth in Houston Unite (SAYHU), Houston Coalition Against Hate, Houston, Texas

- 2017-2022 Community Member, South Asian Youth in Houston Unite (SAYHU)
- 2019-2021 Sociology Graduate Student Liaison, Center for Teaching Excellence, Rice University
- 2019-2020 Shand International Travel Committee, Committee Member, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR)
- 2017-2020 Social Science Representative, Graduate Honor Council, Rice University
- 2019 Annual Meeting Graduate Student Ambassador, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
- 2006-2016 Event Coordinator, Intern, and Volunteer, Interfaith Philadelphia
- 2011-2012 Senior Major Representative, Department of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College
- 2011-2012 Curriculum Committee Student Representative, Self-Governance Association (SGA) Assembly Member, Bryn Mawr College
- 2010-2011 Community Diversity Assistant, Office of Intercultural Affairs, Bryn Mawr College
- 2009-2011 Member, Student Curriculum Committee, Bryn Mawr College

*Service at Academic Conferences*

- 2021 Moderator, Roundtable, “Gender, Identity and Relationships.” Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) Winter Meeting.
- 2019 Convener, Author Meets Critics Session, “Secularity and Science: What Scientists Around the World Really Think About Religion.” Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) Annual Meeting.
- 2018 Table Presider, Student Forum Referred Roundtable Session, “Race, Gender, and Sexuality: Across Institutions and Movements.” American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting.

*Ad Hoc Reviewer:* Ethnicities, Religions

**Professional Memberships**

---

- 2017-Present American Sociological Association (ASA)
  - Racial and Ethnic Minorities*
  - Race, Class, and Gender*
  - International Migration*
  - Religion*
  - Asia and Asian America*
  - Global and Transnational Sociology*
  - Collective Behavior and Social Movements*
  - Sociological Practice and Public Scholarship*



2019-Present	Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) <i>Racial and Ethnic Minorities</i> <i>Conflict, Social Action, and Change</i>
2021-Present	Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS)
2022-Present	Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS)

## References

---

References available upon request.