

Sharan Kaur Mehta (she/her)

Rice University
Department of Sociology
6100 Main Street, MS-28
Houston, TX 77005
sharan.k.mehta@rice.edu
www.sharankaurmehta.com

Education

- 2016-Present **Rice University**
PhD Candidate in Sociology
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, Max Besbris, Anna Rhodes, and Kamala Visweswaran
- 2020 **Rice University**
Certificate in Teaching and Learning, Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)
- 2019 **Rice University**
Master of Arts in Sociology
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 **Bryn Mawr College**
Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry
Sociology Minor, *Magna Cum Laude*

Research Interests

Race and Ethnicity, Racism, Religion, Islamophobia, Asian Americans, Identity, Activism, and Science

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- 2021 **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**, Rachel C. Schneider, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. 2021. “‘God Sees No Color’ So Why Should I? How White Christians Produce Divinized Colorblindness.” *Sociological Inquiry*
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/soin.12476>
- Chan, Esther, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. 2021. “Fertilizing Morality: How Religiosity and Orientations Towards Science Shape the Morality, Immorality, and Amorality of Reproductive Technologies.” *Public Understanding of Science*
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09636625211035925>

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 Under Review

- Casarez, Raul S., Allan Farrell, Jenifer L. Bratter, Xiaorui Zhang, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Becoming (Asian) American? Inter-Ethnic Differences in Racial, Ethnic, and American Identities for Asian American Adults.” (*revised and resubmitted*)
- Farrell, Allan, Raul S. Casarez, Xiaorui Zhang, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Message Received: Asian Americans’ Racial, Ethnic, and National Identity Centrality Before and After the 2016 Election.” (*under review*)
- Bratter, Jenifer, Raul Casarez, Allan Farrell, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Xiaorui Zhang. “Counting Families, Counting Race: Assessing “Visible” Family Structural Change among Multiracial Families, 1980 – 2018.” (*revised and resubmitted*)
- Bratter, Jenifer, Allan Farrell, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, Raul S. Casarez, Xiaorui Zhang, and Michael Carroll. “‘There’s something very wrong with the system in this country’: Multiracial Organizations and Their Responses to Racial Marginalization.” (*under review*)

Manuscripts In Progress

- **Mehta, Sharan Kaur**, and Jenifer Bratter. “Blending in vs. Standing out: How Muslims and Sikhs in the US Perceive and Experience Discrimination in their Everyday Lives.”

- **Mehta, Sharan Kaur.** “Boundaries of Asian-ness? How South Asian Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus Perceive and Negotiate Their Racial Status and Identity.”
- 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

2020-Present	Research Assistant, Bratter Research Team, Department of Sociology, Rice University <i>Dr. Jenifer Bratter</i>
2016-Present	Graduate Student Fellow, Religion and Public Life Program, Rice University <i>Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund</i>
2015-2016	Research Assistant, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania <i>Dr. Melissa Wilde</i>
2014	Intern, Research for Action, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
2012-2013	Research Associate, Department of Chemistry, Drexel University <i>Dr. Lynn Penn</i>
2009-2012	Research Assistant, Department of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College <i>Dr. William Malachowski</i>

Grants, Fellowships, and Awards

External Grants and Awards

- 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)
- 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)
- 2017: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR), Student Travel Grant (\$500)

Internal Grants and Awards

- 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: 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: Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS), Rice University, Seth Balkishan Das Singhal Student Paper Award (\$1,000)
- 2018: Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance, Rice University, Research Grant (\$5,600)
- 2017: Social Sciences Research Institute (SSRI), Rice University, Conference Travel Grant (\$400)

Teaching Experience

- 2017-2021 **Department of Sociology, Rice University**
Guest Lecturer
- 2021: Mixed Methods, Research Methods (SOC 381)
 - 2020: Religion and Immigration, Sociology of Immigration (SOC 430)
 - 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 (SOC 380)
 - 2017: Race and Racism, Social Theory (SOC 380)
- 2020 **Department of Transnational Asian Studies, Rice University**
Guest Speaker
- Ethnographic Research in/of Houston Asia (ASIA 305)
- 2017-2018 **Department of Sociology, Rice University**
Teaching Assistant
- 2018: Social Theory (SOC 380)
 - 2017: Social Theory (SOC 380)
- 2014-2016 **Department of Chemistry, University of Pennsylvania**
Organic Chemistry Lab Coordinator (CHEM 245)
- 2013-2014 **Valley Day School, Morrisville, PA**
Special Education Paraprofessional
- 2010-2012 **Department of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College**
Teaching Assistant, General Chemistry (CHEM 101, 103, and 104)

Advanced Training

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

Conference Presentations

- 2021 **Sharan Kaur Mehta.** *Society for the Scientific Study of Religion* Annual Meeting, Virtual Pre-Conference. “What ‘Counts’ as Anti-Asian Racism? Exploring South Asian Collective Action Across Religious Traditions in Texas.” October 16.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta,** Rachel C. Schneider, Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. Regular Session at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. “From Church to the Workplace: How White Christians Produce Racial Ignorance and Inequality.” Virtual, August 6-10.

Sharan Kaur Mehta. Referred Roundtable at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. “Boundaries of Asian-ness? Exploring South Asian Racial Identity and Activism in Texas.” Virtual, August 6-10.

2020

Paper Accepted for Roundtable at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. Esmeralda Sánchez Salazar, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Esther Chan. “Comparing Confidence in Institutions: Exploring Differences Among Latino and White Catholics and Evangelicals.” *Did not attend due to Covid-19

Paper Accepted for Roundtable at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. Esther Chan, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “Fertilizing Morality: Abortion, Confidence in Science, and the Shaping of Moral Attitudes Towards Reproductive Technologies.” *Did not attend due to Covid-19

Abstract Accepted for Critical Dialogue at *Society for the Study of Social Problems* Annual Meeting. **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.” *Cancelled due to Covid-19

2019

Rachel Afi Quinn, Eesha Pandit, Gayatri Joshi, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “South to South – Transnational feminist collectivity from South Asia to the Southern US.” Roundtable at *National Women’s Studies Association* Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. November 14-17.

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* 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* Annual Meeting. St. Louis, MO. October 25-27.

Sharan Kaur Mehta. “How Muslim and Sikh Americans Perceive Discrimination and Negotiate Race in a Climate of Islamophobia.” Section Session at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. New York, NY. August 10-13.

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

Jauhara Ferguson, **Sharan Kaur Mehta**, and Elaine Howard Ecklund. “Muslim Scientists’ Perceptions of Inclusion in the Scientific Workplace: A Cross-National Pilot Assessment.” Referred Roundtable at *The Society for the Study of Social Problems* Annual Meeting. New York, NY. August 9-11.

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.

- 2018 **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* Annual Meeting. Las Vegas, Nevada. October 26-28.
- Sharan Kaur Mehta** and Robert A. Thomson Jr. “Scientific *versus* Religious Tools? The Construction of Political Identities among American Scientists.” Referred Roundtable at *American Sociological Association* 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* 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* Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA. August 12-13.
- 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.
- 2017 **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* Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C. October 13-15.
- 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* Annual Meeting. Montreal, Quebec. August 13-14.
- Ecklund, Elaine Howard, Robert A. Thomson Jr., Daniel Bolger, and **Sharan Kaur Mehta**. “Perceptions of Discrimination in Global Science.” Regular Session at *American Sociological Association* Annual Meeting. Montreal, Quebec. August 12-15.

Invited Talks, Presentations, and Media

- 2021 *Invited speaker*, Houston Independent School District (HISD) Educator Training on Religious Literacy. “Lived Experiences of South Asian and Arab Muslims and Sikhs in Houston.” Organized by the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance at Rice University. March 11.
- 2020 *Invited guest speaker*, “Faith in Our City: The Sikh Tradition.” Virtual event organized by Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston. September 15.
- Invited speaker*, Houston Independent School District (HISD) Educator Training on Religious Literacy. “Sikhism in America.” Organized by the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance at Rice University. June 23. *Cancelled due to Covid-19

- 2019 *Invited speaker* with 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.
- Invited speaker*, Houston Independent School District (HISD) Educator Training on Religious Literacy. “What is Sikhism?” Organized by the Boniuk Institute for Religious Tolerance at Rice University. March 30.
- 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*, “We’ve Got How Many Religions in Houston? Some of the Lesser Known Religions in the Bayou City and Their Contributions.” Organized by Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston. February 17.
- 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

- 2020-Present **Houston Coalition Against Hate, Houston, Texas**
 Representative Member, South Asian Youth in Houston Unite (SAYHU)
- 2017-Present **South Asian Youth in Houston Unite**
 Community Member
- 2019-2021 **Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), Rice University**
 Graduate Student Liaison, Department of Sociology
- 2019-2020 **Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR)**
 Shand International Travel Committee, Committee Member
- 2017-2020 **Graduate Honor Council, Rice University**
 Social Science Representative
- 2019 **Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR)**
 Annual Meeting Graduate Student Ambassador
- 2006-2016 **Interfaith Philadelphia**
 Event Coordinator, Intern, and Volunteer Representative
- 2011-2012 **Bryn Mawr College**
 Senior Major Representative, Department of Chemistry

- 2011-2012 **Bryn Mawr College**
 Curriculum Committee Student Representative
 Self-Governance Association (SGA) Assembly Membe
- 2010-2011 **Bryn Mawr College**
 Community Diversity Assistant, Office of Intercultural Affairs

Service at Academic Conferences

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

Ad Hoc Reviewer Ethnicities, Religions

Professional Memberships

- 2017-Present American Sociological Association
 Racial and Ethnic Minorities
 Race, Class, and Gender
 International Migration
 Religion
 Asia and Asian America Studies
 Collective Behavior and Social Movements
 Sociological Practice and Public Scholarship
- 2019-Present Society for the Study of Social Problems
 Racial and Ethnic Minorities
 Conflict, Social Action, and Change
- 2021-Present Sociologists for Women in Society
- 2020-Present Religious Research Association
- 2019-Present National Women’s Studies Association
- 2017-Present Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

References

Dr. Jenifer Bratter

Professor of Sociology
 Director, Building Research on Inequality and Diversity to Grow Equity (BRIDGE)
 Rice University
 Email: jbratter@rice.edu

Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund

Herbert S. Autrey Chair in Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology
Graduate Program Director
Director, Religion and Public Life Program
Rice University
Email: che@rice.edu

Dr. Max Besbris

Assistant Professor of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Email: besbris@wisc.edu

Dr. Anna Rhodes

Assistant Professor of Sociology
Rice University
Email: anna.rhodes@rice.edu

Dr. Kamala Visweswaran

Professor of Anthropology, T.T. and W.F. Chao Professor of Transnational South Asian Studies
Rice University
Email: kamala.visweswaran@rice.edu