

THE FEMINIST PSYCHOLOGIST

Newsletter of the Society for the
Psychology of Women

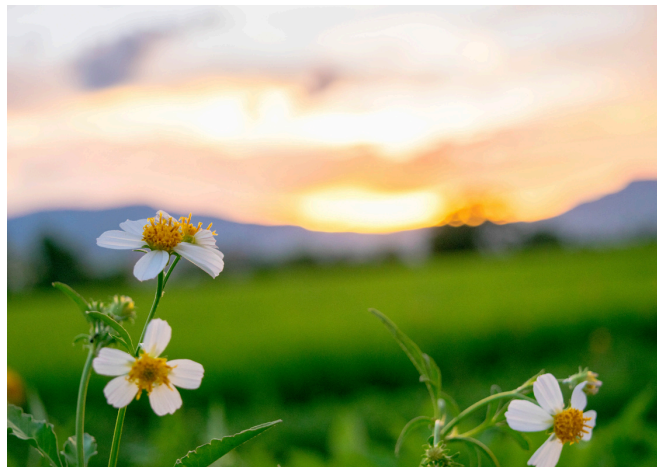


SUMMER 2025

(VOL. 51, NO. 3)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 03 PRESIDENT'S CORNER
- 05 YOUR EDITOR
- 06 YOUR ASSOCIATE EDITORS
- 07 DIVISION 35 BOOK NEWS
- 08 EXPERIENCES OF A LATE DIAGNOSED AUTISTIC PSYCHOLOGIST
- 10 BALANCING MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIA: NAVIGATING THE PHD JOURNEY WHILE PARENTING A DISABLED CHILD
- 13 CHALLENGES OF DOCTORAL TRAINING FOR MOTHERS IN RURAL AREAS
- 15 HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR COLLABORATIONS AT THE APA CONVENTION: INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST MULTIDIRECTIONAL MENTORSHIP
- 17 HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025
- 24 APA PRESIDENT ENDORSEMENT
- 25 OPEN CALL



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Erika Carr, Ph.D.

President, APA Division 35
Society for the Psychology of Women



As I sit down to write this tonight, I hear the beautiful sound of crickets chirping in the fall air, and a cool breeze comes in through my window, filling my soul with feelings of deep gratitude and peace in this moment. I have not often felt such feelings this year. The year 2025 has hit our country with a vengeance due to the administration and a resurging war against basic human rights in a plethora of aspects, including unconscionable efforts to disintegrate what bit of progress our country has made towards rectifying its many wrongs and its path of working towards becoming a more just, equitable, anti-oppression, and anti-racist society. I, for one, have had many feelings this year – many difficult, such as anger, fear, sadness, outrage, and then - hope and a resurgence in the belief of humankind to find creative mechanisms to stand, resist, and fight for what is just. I know the journey ahead is long, but I believe in the power of justice and love over hate, as I think of those who were civil rights activists during the Civil Rights Movement and the fierce determination and undying strength it took to help change our society. May we draw on the lessons from history to do the work ahead that our society needs.

Tonight, I feel powerfully humbled to be writing as the new president of Division 35 and am so thankful for this opportunity. I truly never believed this is something I would ever have the opportunity to do on my journey as a psychologist so again I am grateful and hope to hear from any of you this year personally about the ways you think we can grow as a division, how we can organize in these difficult times for social justice, and of course, in any ways you would like to step up in leadership and service to our division. This division is so deep in its breadth of leaders who are nationally and globally talented intersectional feminist psychologists, with diverse identities, and each of you are a part of what makes this division special and will help it to continue to transform and ever evolve as we move into the future. I know I will learn so much this year from our members and diverse leaders and want to thank you for helping teach me through this process of being a leader of a division that is so rich with dynamic elders, those at diverse career stages, and those who are currently earning degrees and will help shape the future of our field.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER (CONT'D)

This past year I have been on the presidential trio with Dr. Grace Kim, who was president this past year, and Dr. Linh Luu, past-president from 2023-2024. I have learned so much from each of them about leading with courage, equanimity, strength, and judiciousness. They have also taught me beautifully about holding the dialectic of feelings as leaders during these times of both intense distress and also of hope, sheer laughter, and joy. Through working with Dr. Kim and Dr. Luu I have grown more in understanding of my own identity as an intersectional feminist and all the ways we are seeking to lead with those values and perspectives as a division. I intend that every voice is heard, is respected, and feels welcome in our spaces.

This year I hope to continue to build on their amazing efforts to deepen our identity as a division of intersectional feminists and encourage us to lean into our own educational, personal, and group growth processes as we seek to learn from the history of the feminist movement (the good, bad, and ugly), as well as other social justice leaders and movements that can help us continue to truly live out our values. This means valuing how injustice is woven into the very fabric of the past and present and the hundreds of years where societies have been built upon racism, discrimination, sexism, and all forms of oppression. These deep inequalities have structurally shaped our modern society and who has access to safety, rights, and power (UNWomen, 2025). In times of crisis and political distress, our society reinforces oppression. Those at the highest risk of losing rights and power are those who face more intersections of different forms of oppression. This is the time for us as a division to reflect on our own identity as a division and organize, connect, and support in a way that denotes we know what it means to act, lead, and advocate with an intersectional feminist foundation.

We will have some vibrant initiatives this year, and you each will be hearing about them in more detail as we move into fall. I personally hope that this year with Division 35 can be one that helps you have a space to feel valued, heard, and a place to be active for the values you each hold that brought you to this division and can help each of us be agents of social change. I welcome you to reach out and join us in our work this year!

-Erika

UNWomen (2025). Intersectional feminism: What it means and why it matters right now. <https://www.unwomen.org>.

Your Newsletter Editor



Courtney Crisp, Psy.D.

Your Associate Editors



Pamela Counts, Psy.D.



Tatiana Pinkley, Psy.D.



Kim Rust, Ph.D., LCSW



Division 35 Book News

Stacey Williams, Ph.D.

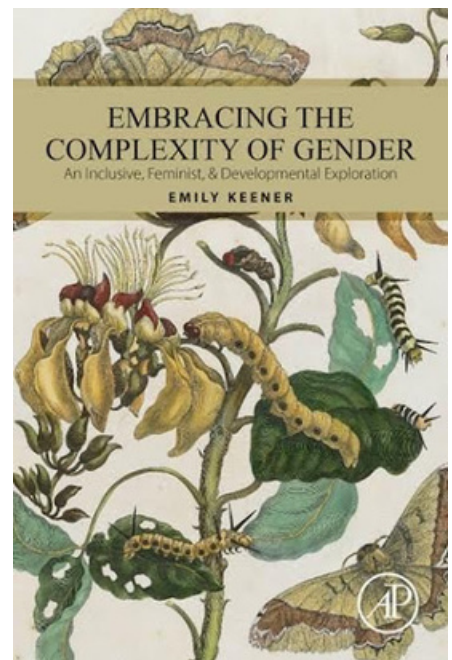
New Release: Embracing the Complexity of Gender: An Inclusive, Feminist, and Developmental Exploration

By Emily Keener, PhD (Slippery Rock University)

Co-sponsored by APA Division 35: The Society for the Psychology of Women

Embracing the Complexity of Gender presents gender as nonbinary, multidimensional, and developing across the lifespan within social and historical contexts. Combining psychological evidence with feminist and developmental perspectives, the book introduces the **Complexity Model of Gender**—a framework that challenges binaries while advancing an inclusive, equity-focused path forward.

Written in an accessible, engaging style, this book is **student-friendly for classroom use** while also serving scholars who seek a rigorous, theory-based approach to gender scholarship.



Features & Highlights

- Co-sponsored by APA Division 35: Society for the Psychology of Women
- Accessible and engaging for students, yet grounded in theory and scholarship
- Challenges binary assumptions and emphasizes social justice and inclusion

Instructor Resources & Author Website

Instructor resources are in development and will be posted on the author's website. A **book preview, purchase link, and YouTube channel** (with conference presentations and future teaching materials) are already available.

ejkeener.wixsite.com/keener

Access & Ordering

- Available via Elsevier and ScienceDirect (add to your institution's database for full access) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/book/9780443364860/embracing-the-complexity-of-gender>
- Use promo code LIFE30 for 30% off the list price



Experiences of a Late Diagnosed Autistic Psychologist

Deanna Zareia, Psy.D..

The autism spectrum has brought so much clarity and meaning to my life. My first exposure to learning about autism was two slides of a slideshow in graduate school. Clinically, I was exposed to autism my 4th year of graduate school and have worked with the population ever since. Everyone I worked with had a special connection to the population that made their work meaningful. I always thought it was strange I did not. At the end of my postdoctoral residency, I had the opportunity to conduct my first adult evaluation for autism. My understanding of autism expanded vastly, as I saw how autism could present in an adult who worked and lived independently. After sharing some stories about my father with a close friend/colleague, she said, "It sounds like your dad is autistic." I always attributed my father's differences to culture as he had immigrated to the United States. Over time, it became clear to me that he was likely an undiagnosed autistic man, and I shared many similarities with him. I pursued an evaluation and was diagnosed with level 1 Autism Spectrum Disorder at 30 years of age. After receiving the diagnosis, I spent some time reflecting on my life experiences and re-examining things that had occurred through this new lens of my identity.

As a psychologist who specializes in evaluating individuals across the lifespan for ASD and ADHD, I am routinely asked, "Why would an adult need or want to be evaluated?" The diagnosis has allowed me to be more compassionate toward myself. There have been numerous experiences, particularly social and emotional, in my life that have caused me to feel anger towards myself for why I could not effortlessly do things the way other people could. Receiving the diagnosis, which prompted me to learn more about myself and the way my brain optimizes has led to more self-acceptance and the acceptance of others.

I felt the recommendations following my evaluation were lackluster. I was already in individual therapy and taking an antidepressant medication to help stabilize my mood. I attended a couple of events from a Meetup group in my area for autistic adults. One of the events was a virtual gathering with other autistic individuals to discuss whatever topics we wanted. While I enjoyed being with other individuals who were like me, I felt I was contributing most of the knowledge and not receiving as many responses to my questions. My therapist brought a group to my attention for late diagnosed autistic adults. The group has followed discussion questions from the book, *Unmasking Autism* by Dr. Devon Price. I had previously read the book on my own and found it very thought provoking. However, processing the prompts in a group setting has allowed me to go even more in depth with the idea of unmasking. One insight I have had while participating in the group has been the automaticity of my masking. It has required more mindfulness to discern when I am being my authentic self and when I am masking. Now, I stop and think, "Is it necessary to mask in this situation?" and "What would happen if I wasn't masking so much right now?" There was a grieving process with realizing I was strongly encouraged to mask my whole life. My parents were well meaning and wanted me to succeed, but were not aware of how to help me succeed while honoring my true self. There is much to undo when you have been conditioned to be neurotypical your whole life.



Experiences of a Late Diagnosed Autistic Psychologist (con't)

Although there is only one other participant in my group, I have benefited drastically from hearing her experiences as well. We often find commonalities in our experiences and how we feel in situations. Knowing that there is a community of other people who think like me, have similar preferences and dislikes, and similar struggles as I do has been immensely helpful. I regularly am told by my clients that they have felt misunderstood by people their whole lives. I too have experienced this feeling of being different. It has been hugely helpful to know there is a whole community of people who are like me. People who are quirky, but also really good at their jobs. People who do not mind just being in the presence of another person and being content without saying much.

Representation is very important and necessary to show neurodiverse individuals that their talents and natural way of being is acceptable and valuable. There is much to be done for the neurodiversity movement. Just like any minority group, establishing our niche in society and advocating for our right to hold space in all sectors of society, is paramount. There is much to learn about the expansiveness of autism. I share with people when I can about my diagnosis, to help them understand how the diagnosis can manifest and to empower people that the possibilities are endless of what you can do and who you can be. Being autistic makes me, me, and I am happy about that.

Further education in graduate programs surrounding neurodiversity and autism specifically is necessary. Psychology practices who tout themselves as experts who work with this population need to show more behavioral alignment with what they say they practice. More research needs to be done surrounding the lives of all types of autistic individuals to create resources that improve the quality of our lives. There are simply not enough resources and programs in place for adults. I am hopeful that as people advocate and are more transparent about their identities, a place for autistic individuals will be more secure and the stigma will decrease. Autistic individuals have a myriad of strengths and assets and we deserve to be known and seen for all of who we are.



BALANCING MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIA: NAVIGATING THE PHD JOURNEY WHILE PARENTING A DISABLED CHILD

SARA MOLLOY, M.A., LLP
FIELDING GRADUATE UNIVERSITY
EDITED BY THE FEMINIST PARENTHOOD COMMITTEE

As I embarked on my doctoral journey in clinical psychology, I found myself navigating a familiar and challenging path. Like many students, I had a strong passion for my studies and an unwavering commitment to pursuing my career goals. However, unlike many of my peers, my journey was accompanied by the profound responsibility of raising a child with disabilities. This dual role—being both a full-time doctoral student and the primary caregiver for my child—has transformed my graduate experience in ways I had not anticipated.

When I began my PhD program, I was already a mother. I had a child with special needs who required frequent medical care, regular appointments, and consistent attention to her emotional and developmental well-being. The morning that I left for my program's orientation, my daughter was returning to school after being off for several weeks due to swelling of her optic nerve. This required multiple hospital visits and travel to medical appointments in the week's leading up to the start of my program. While I was excited to begin my studies, balancing academic rigor with my daughter's needs often overwhelmed my days. The complexity of my life as a mother of a disabled child while pursuing an advanced degree sparked my curiosity about the experiences of other women who balance similar caregiving roles while engaging in high-level academics. As I spoke to other women in my program, I discovered that I was not alone—many of us struggled to balance the responsibilities of caregiving with the demands of graduate school, often facing internal and external pressures that made perseverance feel challenging but not impossible.

Research on the challenges faced by student mothers is abundant, but there is less focus on those who care for children with disabilities while pursuing higher education (King, 2020). This research is valuable because this group of students faces a unique set of challenges, including the considerable time spent on caregiving, the high-level and long-lasting nature of caregiving, the lack of respite services, managing the unpredictable nature of disabilities, and limited opportunities to engage in social, academic, work, and leisure activities due to the intensive level of caring (King, 2020). These added pressures make balancing academic achievement and caregiving even more precarious. Studies on caregiving mothers in graduate school often highlight that they experience significantly more role conflict than their peers, as they constantly shift between student, mother, and caregiver (Wladkowski & Mirick, 2020)

Role conflict is one of the challenges I have faced—and one that many women in similar positions encounter. Role conflict occurs when a person experiences incompatible demands from different roles (Weibert, 2022). This conflict often arises for student mothers like me because of caregiving responsibilities that compete with academic deadlines and goals. For example, there are days when I need to reschedule or delay important academic commitments, such as meetings, classes, or preparing for presentations due to my child's medical or therapeutic needs. Unlike my peers, who can easily commit themselves fully to their academic work, I am often forced to negotiate between these competing priorities, frequently feeling like I am failing in both areas.



BALANCING MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIA (CON'T)

At the same time, I recognize how my life experiences—mainly my time spent parenting a child with disabilities—act as a source of strength. The patience, adaptability, and resilience I have developed over the years as a mother have proven invaluable in navigating graduate school's academic and personal challenges. I have learned to let go of perfectionism and embrace flexibility, acknowledging that sometimes the best thing I can do for my studies—or my daughter—is seek help and be gentle with myself. Additionally, making time for self-care, even when it seems impossible, is essential for my mental well-being and my ability to continue working toward my PhD.

Another essential factor in my persistence is the support I have received from my academic institution. The culture of belonging that recognizes and supports students with caregiving responsibilities—especially those raising children with disabilities—has been transformative and incredibly validating. My university's flexibility regarding personal commitments has enabled me to continue pursuing my degree without compromising my responsibilities as a mother. Additionally, finding mentors who understand the pressures of being both a student and a caregiver has alleviated feelings of isolation and made me feel more supported in my journey. These supports have been essential for my success thus far.

In addition to institutional support, another factor that has helped me continue my PhD journey is developing a broader sense of identity beyond being a student or a mother. For women with children, particularly those caring for children with disabilities, their role as a parent can sometimes overshadow all other aspects of their identity (Papadopoulos, 2021). However, I have found that embracing other facets of myself—whether my identity as a scholar, an advocate for disability rights, or a partner in my marriage—helps me maintain balance. It enables me to navigate setbacks with resilience, as my worth is not defined solely by my academic success or the well-being of my child. This broader perspective has made the inevitable challenges more straightforward to manage, as I no longer view them as failures but as part of a more extensive journey.

Meaning-making has also played a crucial role in my persistence. There have been many instances when I felt physically and emotionally drained, questioning whether it was worth continuing. However, during these times, I reflect on my purpose—why I am pursuing my degree, what I aim to achieve, and how my academic work could ultimately impact the lives of others, especially those in the disability community. Reaffirming my purpose has helped me navigate the most challenging days and kept me moving forward.

While balancing a PhD program and parenting a disabled child is undoubtedly challenging, the experience has also shaped me into a more empathetic, resilient, and adaptable individual. It has deepened my commitment to advocating for more inclusive academic spaces for caregivers and parents, especially those with children who have special needs. While challenging, this dual journey has made me a better clinician, compassionate mother, and dedicated advocate for change in academic and clinical settings.



BALANCING MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIA (CON'T)

Based on my experiences and the stories of others in similar situations, I aim to encourage women currently navigating this challenging path. It is possible to persevere and balance the demands of parenthood and academia while achieving success. For those considering a return to graduate school or who are currently struggling to find balance, remember that your journey is valid, and institutional and personal support is essential. Together, we can foster academic environments that are genuinely inclusive and supportive of all students, regardless of the additional responsibilities they may bear.

This article pays tribute to the many women who, like me, continue to strive for both academic and personal success despite the challenges of balancing graduate school and caregiving. Your resilience, perseverance, and strength deserve acknowledgment and celebration.

Note: The Feminist Parenthood Column is edited by the Feminist Parenthood Committee. If you would like to submit, please email Lauren Mizock, PhD at lmizock@fielding.edu.

References

- King, K. (2020) The struggles and triumphs of the invisible subject: the experiences of mature women students caring for those with learning disabilities whilst studying in Higher Education. Thesis. University of Plymouth. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24382/435>
- Mirick, R. G., & Wladkowski, S. (2020). Women's experiences with parenting during doctoral education: Impact on career trajectory. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 15(1), 89-110. <https://doi.org/10.28945/4484>
- Papadopoulos D. (2021). Mothers' Experiences and Challenges Raising a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Qualitative Study. *Brain sciences*, 11(3), 309. <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci11030309>
- Weibert, A. (2022). Prevalence of depression among mothers experiencing role conflict (Master's thesis). Long Island University, LIU Post. Digital Commons @ LIU. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.liu.edu/post_under_theses/9





CHALLENGES OF DOCTORAL TRAINING FOR MOTHERS IN RURAL AREAS

SHANNON ELGERT, M.A., CCC

When I made the decision to pursue my PhD in clinical psychology, it came from a place of personal value as well as dedication to the mental health of Canadians in rural communities affected by disproportionate challenges. As a practicing psychotherapist in a remote area of Canada, there were few doctors with little psychological care. As one of a few mental health professionals in town, I saw a high need for a licensed psychologist to fill a need for consistent and accessible care. Many rural communities in Canada face challenges in accessing quality mental health care (MacLeod et al., 2022). Barriers such as needing to travel long distances, relying on seasonal conditions that affect ferries and flight services, as well as roads that are impassable and unsafe to access healthcare, are the norm (MacLeod et al., 2022). I saw many cultural inequities and inadequate training at a time of increased need for psychological services for those affected by and suffering from the long-term effects of COVID-19.

At the same time, I began to embark on my PhD journey, I found myself navigating the many factors of uncertainty around balancing the program with my role as a mother of three young children. Mothers pursuing their PhD must navigate the “dual lives” of what it means to be a mother while simultaneously travelling the path of academia (Cronshaw et al., 2022).

Individuals within a certain demographic that falls outside the traditional graduate student, remain underrepresented and their voices unheard (Melián & Meneses, 2024). Studies have found that having children can impede a mother’s progress on her PhD and possibly affect future employability (Cronshaw et al., 2022). Not to forget the monumental financial strain and costs of a PhD, which can impact a mother’s ability to pursue higher education. I started to have doubts and feelings of guilt around what was perceived as an incompatibility of being both a mother of young children and a graduate student.

Second-guessing my decision, I began to wonder how I would face the role conflicts and challenges of competing responsibilities in a situation that almost seemed impossible to yield.

Feeling isolated and alone is the experience of many mothers who decide to pursue their PhD (Cronshaw et al., 2022). PhD programs, despite their growing towards a non-traditional platform, tend to support traditional, young, on-site, full-time demographics (Melián & Meneses, 2024). There is a pull between these opposing responsibilities that comes from a place within that is reinforced through the disconnect mothers feel from society on how they should go about mothering (Cronshaw et al., 2022). For me, there was a personal value around education and teaching my children that I can be a graduate student while also being a mother and a professional. My passion for learning and helping others is a gift that I bring as a mother, and I can choose to think differently about how to attain both. There was a shift where it was important to me to seek guidance and support from other professionals in the field who were both parents and graduate students to help me feel part of a similar group. Challenging the misconception of not being able to pursue higher education as a mother was poignant. An important piece was to overcome the doubt or suspension of my higher goals.



CHALLENGES OF DOCTORAL TRAINING FOR MOTHERS IN RURAL AREAS (CON'T)

In addition to opposing roles, there was the challenge of living in a rural area. Accredited Canadian PhD programs in clinical psychology require students to physically attend university and make full-time commitments to be there full-time (Dobson, 2025). Finding a program that would meet my education goals and licensing requirements was challenging. Barriers such as inflexibility, difficulty with funding and in-person requirements made it difficult to find a compatible institution. Travel expenses would need to be factored into the equation, as well as childcare and accommodating my husband's typical working away schedule. Higher education needs to be accessible and financially viable, which ultimately facilitates the ability to obtain one's PhD (Maher et al., 2004). As Dobson (2025) posited, training models need to align with today's demographic and adjust to economic factors such as systemic inequities and financial and mental strain on students.

A major factor that contributed to my PhD journey was finding a program that is distributed, which allows me to meet the goals and responsibilities of my multiple roles. Distributed programs, or hybrid, are online and can be accessed anywhere in the form of self-study. Today's PhD candidate is changing and is more commonly over 30, self-funded, diverse and female with family obligations (Melián & Meneses, 2024). What is important to note is that many women prematurely leave doctoral training programs early without much research on the reasons why (Maher et al., 2004). I know that I can be a PhD student and a mother, and I can rely on my many strengths and skills to be successful at both. Fostering a supportive on-line supervisory environment and frequent peer contact has been found to bridge these logistical shortcomings (Melián, E., & Meneses). Literature has highlighted the importance to reach out for support and advising early on to facilitate learning, progress and meaningful research initiatives (Maher et al., 2004). Importantly, it was imperative for me to think about the long-term goals my PhD would bring for me and my family. It is possible to persevere and find balance while navigating an extremely challenging path.

This article is meant to recognize the mothers out there, like me, who are experiencing the many obstacles of pursuing their PhD while facing the felt incompatibility of their roles and the inflexibility of their physical location. Your dedication, commitment and gifts deserve scholarship and academic opportunities. Your many talents are worthy of an inclusive environment that both facilitates your learning and advocates for resourceful strategies. I encourage universities to explore and work towards supporting the well-being of this increasing PhD candidate group.

References

- Cronshaw, S., Stokes, P., & McCulloch, A. (2022). Online communities of practice and doctoral study: Working women with children resisting perpetual peripherality. *Journal of further and Higher Education*, 46(7), 959-971. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.2023734>
- Dobson, D. (2025). The balance of the ideal and the pragmatic in professional psychology training. *Canadian Psychology = Psychologie Canadienne*, 66(2), 80-89. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000432>
- MacLeod, M. L. P., Penz, K. L., Banner, D., Jahner, S., Koren, I., Thomlinson, A., Moffitt, P., & Labrecque, M. E. (2022). Mental health nursing practice in rural and remote Canada: Insights from a national survey. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 31(1), 128-141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12943>
- Maher, M. A., Ford, M. E., & Thompson, C. M. (2004). Degree progress of women doctoral students: Factors that constrain, facilitate, and differentiate. *Review of Higher Education*, 27(3), 385-408. Retrieved from <https://ful.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/degree-progress-women-doctoral-students-factors/docview/220860386/se-2>
- Melián, E., & Meneses, J. (2024). Alone in the academic ultraperiphery: Online doctoral candidates' quest to belong, thrive, and succeed. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 25(2), 114-131. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v25i2.7702>



HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR COLLABORATIONS AT THE APA CONVENTION: INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST MULTIDIRECTIONAL MENTORSHIP

NYREE CROWELL, KELSI MARTIN, ZACHARI
NESBY, SAMIBAH STRAITS, JULII GREEN, STEPH
CROSS, BRITNEY BRINKMAN, AND KATHRYN
ANDERSON

Fourteen high school scholars have enlivened the last three APA conventions through active participation in symposia, roundtable discussions, poster sessions and personal conversations. The Pathways Through Feminist Psychology Task Force of Division 35 led by Julii Green and Steph Cross connected intersectional feminist mentors with the scholars to experience and process each of the conventions together. The team is now embedded within the Division 35 Adolescent Committee under the leadership of Britney Brinkman, Julii Green, and Steph Cross.

Four High School Scholars reflected on their experiences at the APA Convention:

"Attending the 2023 APA Convention and meeting with Division 35 Society for the Psychology of Women – was truly inspiring. In their session on supporting youth, they embraced intergenerational listening as a way to foster mutual understanding and bridge both generational and marginalized differences. They created a welcoming space where young people like myself could share our experiences and ideas without being dismissed as 'too young' or 'too idealistic.' Being invited into that space and welcomed as a member of Division 35 was not only affirming but also gave me a deep sense of optimism for the future of not only psychology but advocacy."

--Nyree Crowell (Cohort 1 2023 & Teen Advocacy Webinar Panelist)

"Through Pathways and the APA convention, I found spaces where my voice was truly valued. In group sessions, I had the chance to speak openly about personal experiences and share ideas. What made the experience so meaningful was being genuinely heard and accepted. That kind of presence showed me that feminist psychology is a practice of creating a space for truth, growth, and connection."

--Kelsi Martin (Cohort 1 2023 & Peer Mentor of Cohort 2)

"My experience at the American Psychological Association Conference was pretty awesome. I was able to meet the president of the American Psychological Association, Dr. Debra Kawahara. She did the introduction and welcomed us to the Conference. I was able to be a part of the sessions such as the Indigenizing and Decolonizing- Assessment and Evaluations, The Sweetgrass Method. I learned many things about the views of a community, about colonization and its impact on our communities. I am certainly more interested in psychology than I was before. Before this event and meeting the other wonderful high schoolers, I thought that psychology were social workers. I learned that psychology is a mix of medicine and science and that they are their own branch within science and medicine. I also learned that psychology is not one branch but many different fields of psychology such as behavioral psychology, clinical psychology, and biological psychology. I didn't really understand what they really do and why so many people aspire to be them. When I joined this program I didn't understand what I was getting myself into. As I met the adults that would mentor me and join me in sessions and the other high schoolers, I began to understand that this was a new family for me. I really enjoyed all the sessions that I was a part of and I appreciate the job of a psychologist as an important job for. Thank you to Dr. Julii Green and Dr. Steph Cross for allowing me this opportunity."

--Samibah "Sami" Straits (Cohort 3, 2025)



HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR COLLABORATIONS AT THE APA CONVENTION (CON'T)

"The APA conference is a cool and interesting experience if you want to learn or are into psychology. When I first got there it was quite the experience learning there are levels to this psychology stuff. Don't take my word for it though, sign up and experience it yourself!"

Zachari Nesby (Cohort 3, 2025)

We are grateful for the generous contributions of the APA Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, Training in Psychology Task Force (CEMRRAT2) Implementation Grant and the Alliant Education Foundation Innovation Seed Grant in supporting this initiative.

This initiative inspired APA President Debra Kawahara's Engaging Psychology's Future Presidential Initiative that has facilitated Psyched for Success events at high schools and community colleges around the U.S. All are encouraged to consider applying to host an event in their areas in 2025!





HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025

Healing from the Inside Out: Black Women's Wellness Through Spirituality, Forgiveness, and Community

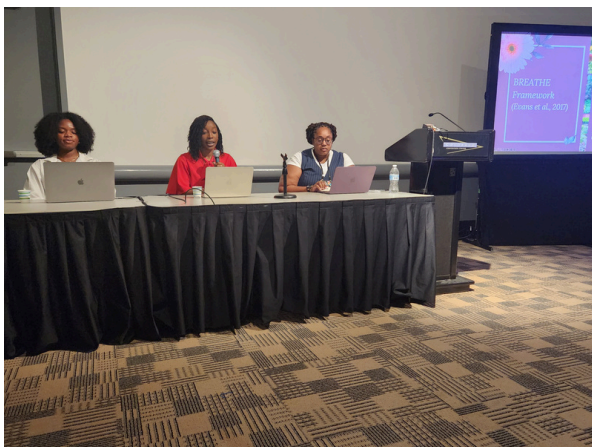
Evans and colleagues (2017) emphasize that wellness interventions for Black women must be culturally grounded and reflect their lived realities. Further, Dillard's articulation of Endarkened Feminist Epistemology (Dillard, 2000) centers the roles of lived experience and community responsibility as integral to self-definition and meaning-making processes among Black women. This author further asserts that research and applications of scholarly endeavors (e.g., practice) reflect both an intellectual and spiritual pursuit, Guided by the aforementioned principles and demonstrating the practice applications of the components from the BREATHE framework (Balance, Reflection, Energy, Association, Transparency, Healing, and Empowerment) (Evans et al., 2017), Castilla, Ciceron, Osazuwa, and Chapman-Hilliard's presentation at this year's convention, identified and examined Black women's resilience and wellness through highlighting the roles of spirituality, community, and forgiveness.

Spirituality was explored as a complex experience of Black women's engagement with Black churches, noting ways in which research literature identifies the church as a source of grounding as well as a site of hurt. Focusing the Black Church as an institution allowed for exploration of the how these spaces have long provided opportunities for belonging, political activism, and emotional support (Belgrave & Allison, 2019; Boddie & Jacob, 2025) while also potentially perpetuating experiences of "church hurt" through exclusion, silencing, and gender role policing (Belgrave & Allison, 2019; Ellis et al., 2022; Evans et al., 2017; Moore et al., 2015). Spirituality, as reflected through engagement with Black churches, may be a place where healing and harm share space, and these complexities should be considered when working clinically with Black women ensuring the full range of their truth is explored (Transparency, BREATHE framework).

Community was highlighted through collective identity—shaped by shared histories, values, and worldviews. Rooted in African traditions and sustained through African enslavement and colonization, collective identity has served as a mechanism of resilience and resistance carried forward by Black women. Digital platforms, and practices such as PsychoHairapy were explored as examples that continue this legacy by creating communal spaces for healing and truth-telling, while also challenging the Strong Black Woman schema by reframing collective care as including protection of the self (Association, BREATHE framework).

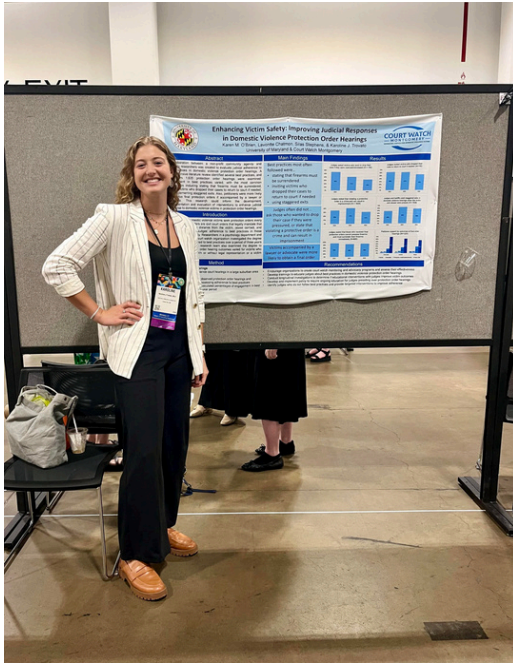
Forgiveness was presented as culturally specific rather than universal. Data from an ongoing mixed-methods study were presented that identified Black women define forgiveness in ways shaped by culture and spirituality, asking when forgiveness is appropriate and why it is pursued. Connected to the Reflection and Transparency components of the BREATHE framework, forgiveness was linked to mindfulness, emotional honesty, and empowerment through rest and self-possession.

Together, these insights illuminate culturally responsive interventions that honor Black women's strengths. As a call to action, practitioners are encouraged to reinvigorate therapeutic goals by centering self- and collective- determination, collaboration, and collective healing, while advancing culturally-congruent research (i.e., as discussed by Dillard, 2000) that sustains Black women's wellness.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025

O'Brien, K. M., Chatmon, L., Stephens, S., & Trovato, K.J. (2025). Enhancing victim safety: Improving judicial responses in domestic violence protection order hearings. Poster presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association.



Thousands of domestic violence victims seek protection orders every year. Protection orders are civil court orders that legally mandate that the abuser maintain distance from the victim, cease contact, and surrender firearms. Judges' adherence to best practices in these hearings varies greatly. A collaboration between a non-profit community agency and university researchers was created to evaluate judicial adherence to best practices in domestic violence protection order hearings. A comprehensive literature review identified several best practices, and data from 1,635 protection order hearings over a period of three years (2022 to 2024) were examined. The research team also examined the degree to which final protection order hearing outcomes varied for victims who appeared in court with or without legal representation or a victim advocate. Engagement in best practices varied, with the most common approaches including stating that firearms must be surrendered, inviting victims who dropped their cases to return to court if needed, and implementing staggered exits. Also, petitioners were more likely to receive final protection orders if accompanied by a lawyer or advocate. This research could inform the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions to enhance judicial response to domestic violence victims in protection order hearings.

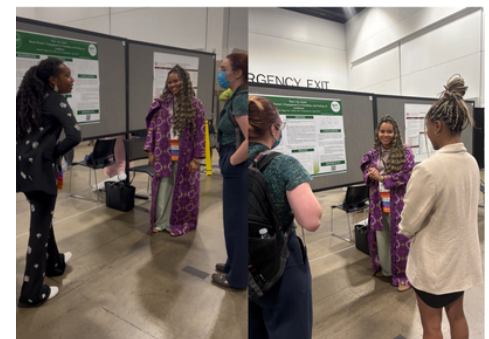
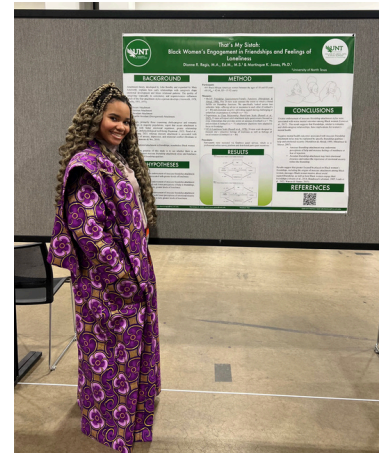
That's My Sistah: Black Women's Engagement in Friendships and Feelings of Loneliness

Dionne R. Regis, M.A., Ed.M., M.S. & Martinique K. Jones, Ph.D.

During the Division 35 poster session at the 2025 American Psychological Association (APA) Convention, I presented for the first time and as first author my thesis project entitled, "That's My Sistah: Black Women's Engagement in Friendships and Feelings of Loneliness." Broadly, this project explored friendship attachment styles and qualities (e.g., help, emotional security) and their influence on Black women's mental health, and specifically feelings of loneliness. Professionally, this project allowed me to explore the sacred role of sisterhood – a critical resource for Black women's liberation and healing. Personally, the project provided me with an opportunity to honor sisterhood through connections with family, friends, and those within my research lab, the [Black Women's Wellness \(BWell\) Lab](#).

The most memorable parts of the convention were the meaningful conversations I had with other women, who generously offered wisdom on how I may further develop my research and work toward dissertation. As a strong advocate of translational research, I felt encouraged by feminist scholars who gave me the confidence to continue exploring how Black women and girls can foster vulnerable yet sacred sisterhoods in a society that has historically required them to guard their emotional yearnings due to generational hardship and trauma.

Overall, my experience at the conventions was both intellectually and socially inspiring. I attended sessions on topics, ranging from self-care and career growth with The Black Girl Doctor to supporting youth mental health using social media. I also engaged in critical conversations about the role psychologists play in politics and public discourse. These experiences will undoubtedly shape how I continue my work as a student, researcher, clinician, as well as my vision for my future as a psychologist. The convention has been truly memorable, and I look forward to what APA 2026 will bring.



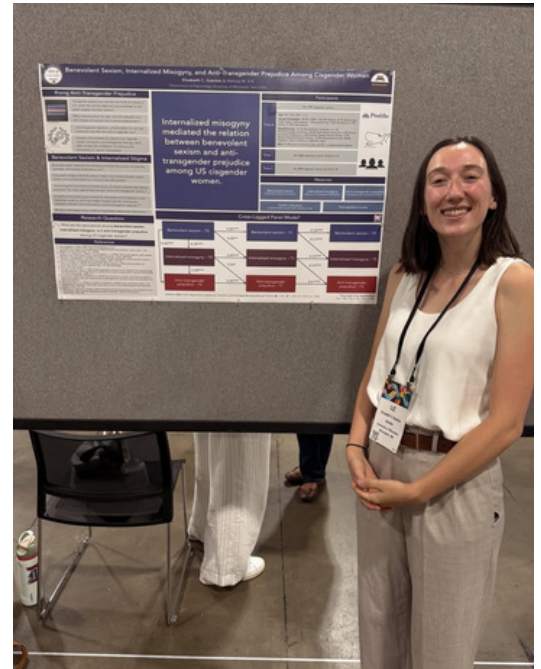
References

Regis, D. & Jones, M. K. (2025). That's my sistah: Black women's engagement in friendship and feelings of loneliness." Master's thesis, University of North Texas.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025

Benevolent Sexism, Internalized Misogyny, and Anti-Transgender Prejudice Among Cisgender Women

Transgender people have reached new levels of visibility in U.S. public life, and the legal and cultural backlash to this social progress has been extreme. While anti-transgender legislation, political platforms, and hate crimes are most often the work of cisgender men, this emphasis can obscure how cisgender women contribute to anti-transgender ideology, which often invokes their protection, by enforcing the boundaries of “natural” womanhood. In the STRIPE Lab at the University of Minnesota, we aim to integrate rigorous research in counseling psychology with perspectives from adjacent disciplines, such as social psychology, gender studies, and public health, to understand the root causes of health disparities, advance equitable health outcomes, and support the thriving of marginalized populations. Our project, presented at the APA 2025 Division 35 poster session, used cross-lagged panel analysis to test a novel theoretical question: Does internalized misogyny (self-hatred and hostility directed toward women, as incorporated into a woman’s own self-concept) mediate the association between benevolent sexism (the stereotypical beliefs that women are precious, vulnerable, and must be protected by men) and anti-transgender prejudice? Using Prolific, we collected longitudinal data with a diverse community sample of nearly 800 U.S. cisgender women (follow-ups at one and six months after baseline). As hypothesized, we found a significant, indirect effect across time points from benevolent sexism to anti-transgender prejudice via internalized misogyny. In presenting this work, we received many thoughtful, engaging questions—most notably, about our measure of internalized misogyny, which was developed and validated for a larger, concurrent project about women’s mental, sexual, and behavioral health. Looking forward, we aim to extend our work by developing cross-domain models of stigma internalization. Under what conditions do negative beliefs about one’s own social identity spur the development of others-oriented prejudice? The axis of gender, on which transgender people and cisgender women face marginalization in shared and unique ways, provides a generative case study that may be applied to other oppressive hierarchies. Ultimately, understanding the basic mechanisms by which complex forms of gender-based marginalization are maintained is critical to addressing both anti-woman and anti-transgender prejudice on a societal scale.



Elizabeth C. Szanton (second-year PhD student in Counseling Psychology) & Dr. Melissa M. Ertl (Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology), University of Minnesota

HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025

Intersections of Change: Building Coalitions Across Feminist, Disabled, Minority, and Genderqueer Communities in a Polarized Sociopolitical Landscape

At this year's APA conference, Division 35 Womxn and Disability committee members, Drs Alette Coble-Temple, Erin Liebich, Kelly Deragon, and Elizabeth Scriven were featured on the main stage where they presented "Intersections of Change: Building Coalitions Across Feminist, Disabled, Minority, and Genderqueer Communities in a Polarized Sociopolitical Landscape." The session explored how effective coalition-building can transform advocacy, amplify marginalized voices, and challenge entrenched systems of oppression.

The panel emphasized how genuine structural change requires coalitions rooted in intersectionality, reciprocity, and shared leadership. Drawing from disability justice, feminist praxis, and queer theory, the presenters illustrated how overlapping identities and histories of exclusion can be transformed into sources of strength when communities mobilize together. For example, disability justice frameworks—particularly Crip Theory and the cultural activism of Sins Invalid—were highlighted as models for redefining leadership, visibility, and cultural belonging. Dr. Coble-Temple shared how platforms such as Ms. Wheelchair America disrupt ableist beauty norms and function as engines of collective empowerment, advocacy, and policy influence.

The presentation also examined challenges coalitions face, including internal power imbalances, sustainability, and the invisibility of multiple marginalized identities. These realities underscore the need for intentional strategies: cultivating organizational diversity, building financial capacity, centering those most impacted, and maintaining cross-movement solidarity. Importantly, the panel situated coalition work within today's socio-political context, noting how legislative rollbacks targeting DEIA, disability rights, and gender equity threaten not only communities but also the ethical foundations of psychology itself.

Participants were invited to reflect on their role as psychologists and advocates in shaping inclusive coalitions. The presenters offered practical pathways for engagement—such as supporting grassroots organizations, lobbying for intersectional policy change, and educating future clinicians in cultural competency, perhaps by joining Div. 35 Womxn and Disability Committee. Ultimately, the session affirmed that coalition-building is not just a theoretical framework but a vital strategy for ensuring justice, equity, and belonging in times of heightened polarization.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM APA 2025

Asian American International/Cross-Cultural Motherhood: the Blessing, the Tears, and the Wisdom

At the 2025 APA Convention, Dr. Meng-Ju Yang and Dr. Cory Reano led a presentation titled, "Asian American International/Cross-cultural Motherhood: the Blessing, the Tears, and the Wisdom". Their presentation explored the complex, beautiful, and often unseen realities of Asian American international mothers navigating motherhood across countries, cultures, and generations. The title reflects what they've witnessed in their communities, professional work, and personal lives. By bringing together feminist psychology and Asian American psychology, Drs. Yang and Reano emphasized the need for intersectional and culturally responsive perspectives in understanding the lived experiences and needs of international, cross-cultural mothers.

Motherhood is deeply shaped by migration histories, cultural negotiations, and layered identities for international and cross-cultural mothers. These women carry the roles of mothers, immigrants, women of color, children/caregivers to parents, partners, professionals, and community members, all while bridging expectations from extended families abroad with the demands of raising children in the U.S. Oftentimes, expectations within these roles can be different or competing. They can also be influenced by cultural norms, generational beliefs, and societal pressures. Trying to be mindful of the different traditions and cultures but also faced with navigating different and sometimes competing parenting values. Mothers may also wrestle with intergenerational differences and trauma, trying to honor where they came from (e.g., how our parents may have raised us, if we grew up in a different country), while also creating something new and healing for their children.

A central theme of the presentation was the importance of having a dedicated space to name and validate these layered intersectional experiences. When mothers are given the language and recognition to articulate their realities, they find not only personal affirmation but also a sense of connection and solidarity. In their session, the audience, many of whom either shared similar identities or worked closely with this population, engaged in rich, interactive dialogue. Their reflections highlighted the urgency of creating supportive spaces for international mothers in research, clinical practice, and personal lives.

Drs. Yang and Reano acknowledged that not everyone may identify as mothers in the traditional sense. Some may mother in other ways. In their session the term "mother" was used in a broad, inclusive way, honoring all those who provide care and nurture those in their lives. The session was conducted through storytelling, grounded in both their professional knowledge and lived realities. Drs. Yang and Reano strongly believe that honoring these stories deepens our collective understanding of feminist psychology and builds pathways for healing, advocacy, and community care. Their hope is to continue this conversation, because when we intentionally create space for us to talk about our challenges, how we incorporate self-care, and how we bring meaning to our multiple roles as Asian American, international, and cross-cultural mothers, we heal and empower each other in the process.



What Kind of Support Do you Have?

Understanding relational risk and resilience in the perinatal period

Authors: Mariah Menaker, Daphne Y. Liu, Elysia Poggi Davis, and Galena K. Rhoades

For women going through pregnancy and the post-partum period, depression is a common struggle. Depression during the perinatal period can contribute to issues from mothers' quality of life to their abilities to bond with their babies. In fact, rates of perinatal depression are particularly high among women from racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically marginalized communities. This led us to want to understand potential ways to promote the well-being of women who are at risk for perinatal depression—more specifically, in a group of socioeconomically disadvantaged Latina pregnant women.

We know that relationships matter to mental health – they can both help and hurt wellbeing. Because of this, we focused on how relationships might impact mental health during pregnancy. Specifically, how experiences of interpersonal problems and social and romantic support were associated with depressive symptoms.

As expected, the more participants struggled with interpersonal problems (such as having difficulty with joining in on groups or being assertive with others), the more likely they were to have symptoms of perinatal depression. However, we also wanted to see whether social support could be protective against the negative psychological impact of interpersonal problems. In other words, if someone experiences a lot of interpersonal problems, but also has strong relationships, do they experience less of the depressive symptoms we might otherwise expect to see in them?

For our participants, the answer seemed to be – it depends on the kind of support. General social support, for example having “someone you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk” did appear to be protective in this way. Surprisingly though, supportive romantic partnership did not offer such protective effects. People with high interpersonal problems, and a supportive partner, still experienced high levels of depressive symptoms.

The perinatal period can be a stressful phase of life. Our findings highlight that while having a supportive partner can improve wellbeing, for people with interpersonal problems, it is important to have a strong, wholistic social support system. Social support might also be particularly protective in Latine culture, which fosters strong community values and familism. In the future, we would like to further investigate the kinds of

interpersonal issues people experience, from whom they get their support, and whether our findings here generalize across cultural groups.

The women whose experiences led to the above findings are participants enrolled in the La Luz study, a larger study of an interpersonal psychotherapy-based intervention that aims to support pregnant women in the perinatal period. In this study (funded by the National Institute of Mental Health [R01MH130976]), participants complete four weeks of the ROSE program (Reach Out stay Strong Essentials) which helps pregnant women reflect on and learn skills to improve their relationships with themselves and loved ones. Through this research, we hope to increase accessibility to programs that improve social support and mental health for women during the perinatal period. If you have interest in learning more about this work, please refer to the study protocol (Liu et al., 2025).



Mariah Menaker

References

Liu, D. Y., Perry, N. S., Demers, C. H., Hyer, J. S., Alamo, A., Vuksanovich, P., Dube, N., Flanagan, E. R., Gallop, R. J., Rhoades, G. K., & Davis, E. P. (2025). Virtual versus In-person ROSE program (La Luz) as universal prevention for perinatal depression: Protocol for a randomized controlled trial in a safety net hospital. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, 107988. <https://10.1016/j.cct.2025.107988>

Reflections on Imposterism as an Initial Division 35 fellow

Margo A. Gregor, Ph.D.

Much of my work as an early career psychologist has focused on the imposter phenomenon (IP; [Clance & Imes, 1978](#)), particularly among women academics in STEM. IP describes difficulty internalizing success, often attributing accomplishments to luck or deception, and fearing eventual exposure as a fraud despite clear evidence of competence. Research demonstrates that IP is pervasive ([Bravata et al., 2019](#)), disproportionally affects those with marginalized identities ([Cokley et al., 2015](#), [Cusack et al., 2013](#)), and reflects systemic oppression rather than individual deficit ([Feenstra et al., 2020](#)). Yet, this knowledge has done little to dislodge its intrusive and chronic presence in my life.

Imposterism has been a consistent and faithful companion through various stages of my educational and work pathways. My first non-academic article, written for the AWP newsletter Women View, described my feelings of imposterism as a new counseling psychology Ph.D. and freshly appointed Assistant Professor in a tenure track position. I lamented how I hoped that eventually I would be rid of IP. I wrote “Certainly when I received my diploma and signed Ph.D. behind my name, then I would feel self-assured, then I would acknowledge my accomplishments, then I would feel competent!” I hoped that milestones like tenure or leadership roles would leave me feeling accomplished, confident, and competent, yet none of them cured my IP.

In fact, my imposterism nearly kept me from applying for Division 35 fellowship. Only with persistent encouragement from my mentor, Karen M. O’Brien, Ph.D., and colleague Andrés Pérez-Rojas, Ph.D. did I submit. The APA describes fellowship as “An honor bestowed upon members who have made ‘unusual and outstanding contributions to the field of psychology.’” My IP flared violently as I mulled over the application. The thought of being considered among such giants felt absurd. Yet I followed the advice I give students and colleagues facing IP....do it anyway.

In Women View I suggest (from an ACT perspective) that perhaps the best solution to imposterism is to befriend it - acknowledge it, normalize it, focus on your strengths, and lean on trusted others. I still agree with this assessment. To anyone struggling with IP: you are not your thoughts- Do it anyway! Apply for the job, the award, the promotion, and let the rest be what it may.

With love from an initial division 35 fellow (who still feels mixed about whether she deserved it.) – Margo



Division Endorsement APA President Elect



Linda M. Woolf

Linda M. Woolf embodies a history of visionary leadership, effective coalition-building, and strategic thinking. With a sustained focus on diversity and interconnections, Linda has demonstrated a dedicated commitment to strengthening the psychology profession and promoting global impact.

Many Voices, One Psychology.

Click here 



OPEN CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Feminist Psychologist team wants to hear your voice! We'd love to hear from psychologists of all stages.

Pieces must pertain to general themes/values of feminist research, theories, education, and practice.

General submission guidelines are 500-1000 words.

Please contact us at spw.feministpsychnews@gmail.com for more information or to submit your piece.



INTERESTED IN SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE?

Email us at:

spw.feministpsychnews@gmail.com



SPW MEMBER SERVICES

Join Division 35 at www.apa.org/divapp. New memberships are free. Membership is for January-December. If you apply during August-December, your membership will be through the following December.

Renew your membership: Renewal notices begin going out in September. Members, Associates, and Fellows may renew along with their APA membership at www.apa.org/membership/renew.aspx. Professional and Student Affiliates may renew at www.apa.org/divapp.

Website: www.apadivisions.org/division-35/

Journal: Subscription to the journal *Psychology of Women Quarterly* is included with membership. The journal may be accessed at pwq.sagepub.com.

Newsletter: The *Feminist Psychologist* is sent out as a PDF/online publication, is posted on the Division website, and is shared on the Division's announcement listserv.

Email lists: Keep up with the latest Division 35 news through the email listservs. They are listed at lists.apa.org (scroll down to the ones that begin with "DIV35").

Sections are: (1) *Psychology of Black Women*, (3) *Society of Latinx Womxn in Psychology/Sociedad de Mujerx en Psicología*, (4) *Section on Sexual and Gender Diversity*, (5) *Psychology of Asian Pacific American Women*, and (6) *Alaska Native/American Indian/Indigenous Women*. Join and renew at www.apa.org/divapp.

For help with membership issues, contact the Division office at division@apa.org or (202) 336-6013.