

ALKA V. MENON
Northwestern University
Department of Sociology
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Sociology, Northwestern University, 2018 (Expected)
Dissertation Title: “Looking Good: Race and Cosmetic Surgery in Transnational Perspective”
Committee: Steven Epstein (Chair), Carol Heimer, Carolyn Chen, Wendy Griswold

M.A., Sociology, Northwestern University, 2013.

B.A., College Scholar and Biological Sciences, Cornell University, 2010.
Graduated *Summa cum laude*.
Majors: College Scholar: Marriage and Society, Biological Sciences: Neurobiology and Behavior.
Minors: Science and Technology Studies; Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Medical Sociology	Qualitative Methods
Science and Technology Studies	Sociology of the Body and Embodiment
Racial and Ethnic Studies	Global and Transnational Sociology
Gender and Sexuality Studies	Theory

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

Menon, Alka V. “Do online reviews diminish physician authority? The case of cosmetic surgery in the U.S.” *Social Science & Medicine* 181: 1-8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.03.046>

Menon, Alka V. 2017. “Reconstructing Race in American Cosmetic Surgery.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(4): 597-616. DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2016.1206590.

Linster, C., Menon, A.V., Singh, C.Y., & Wilson, D.A. 2009. “Odor-specific habituation arises from interaction of afferent synaptic adaptation and intrinsic synaptic potentiation in olfactory cortex.” *Learning & Memory* 16(7): 452-59.

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Book Reviews

Menon, Alka V. 2016. "Race in the Genomic Era." Book Review of *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century* (by Dorothy Roberts). *Spontaneous Generations* 8(1): 109-111.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Menon, Alka V. "Naturalizing Asian Aesthetic Surgery: Breasts, Eyelids and Pan-Asian Beauty Culture." To be submitted to the *Journal of Asian American Studies*.

Menon, Alka V. "Operating on and Operationalizing Race in Global Cosmetic Surgery." To be submitted to *Social Studies of Science*.

HONORS, AWARDS and FELLOWSHIPS

- 2017 American Sociological Association Section on the Body and Embodiment Graduate Student Paper Award for "Reconstructing Race and Gender in American Cosmetic Surgery"
- 2016 Robert F. Winch Award for Best Published Paper for "Reconstructing Race and Gender in American Cosmetic Surgery," Department of Sociology, Northwestern University
- 2016 Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, National Science Foundation, Section of Science, Technology & Society (\$14,422)
- 2016 Graduate Research Grant, Northwestern University (\$1700)
- 2015 Buffett Institute Dissertation Research Travel Award, Northwestern University (\$5000)
- 2014 Social Science Research Council Dissertation Prospectus Development Fellowship (\$5000)
- 2013 Graduate Affiliate, Medical Humanities and Bioethics Program, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University (\$5000), until 2015
- 2013 Robert F. Winch Award for Best 2nd Year Paper, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University
- 2011 Mellon Fellow in Interdisciplinary Studies, Science Studies, Northwestern University
- 2010 Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, Cornell University
- 2010 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Undergraduate Research Prize, Department of Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Cornell University

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

- 2017 Menon, Alka. "Operating on and Operationalizing Race: Racial Projects in Cosmetic Surgery." Society of the Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting, Boston, 30 August-2 September.
- 2017 Menon, Alka. "Cosmetic Surgery and Racial Projects in Global Perspective." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, 11-15 August.
- 2016 Menon, Alka. "Constructing a Perfect Ten: Acceptable Cosmetic Surgery in Multicultural Societies." Society for the Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting, Barcelona, Spain, 31 August-3 September.
- 2016 Menon, Alka. "Cosmetic Surgery and the Construction of a Natural Look." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, 20-23 August.
- 2016 Menon, Alka. "'Ethnic Preservation': Cosmetic Surgery and the Asian American Exception." Asian American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Miami, FL 27-30 April.
- 2016 Menon, Alka. "Evaluating Expertise: How to Judge a Cosmetic Surgeon." "Expertise from Margin to Center—Science, Politics and Democracy" conference, Columbia University, New York, NY, 14-15 April.
- 2015 Menon, Alka. "Traveling Guidelines: Global Expertise in the Treatment of Ebola and HIV." American Sociological Association annual meeting, Chicago, IL 22-24 August.
- 2015 Menon, Alka. "Doctor Knows Best: The Expertise of American and Malaysia Cosmetic Surgeons." Science, Knowledge and Technology 25th Anniversary Mini-conference, American Sociological Association, Chicago, IL, 21 August.
- 2015 Menon, Alka. "Studying Standards and Standardization in the Global and Transnational Arena." Law and Society Association annual meeting, Seattle, WA, 28-31 May.
- 2015 Menon, Alka. "The Cutting Edge?: Cosmetic Surgery in Malaysia." Invited Montgomery Lecture, Medical Humanities & Bioethics Program, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. 7 May.
- 2014 Menon, Alka. "Facial Profiling: Race and Cosmetic Surgery in the U.S." Society for the Social Studies of Science annual meeting, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 20-23 August.
- 2014 Balasubramanian, Savina and **Alka Menon**. "Constraints and Opportunities in the Global Regulation of Pharmaceuticals." Law and Society Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, 28 May-1 June.

- 2014 Balasubramanian, Savina, Carol Heimer, **Alka Menon** and Arielle Tolman. “Babbling about Globalization: Conceptual Incoherence and its Consequences.” 4th Regional Colloquium on Globalization of Law, International Organizations, and International Law. American Bar Foundation, Chicago. 16-17 May.
- 2014 Menon, Alka, Arielle Tolman, Carol Heimer and Savina Balasubramaniam. “With and Without Borders: Global Regulation of Health and Healthcare.” 4th Regional Colloquium on Globalization of Law, International Organizations, and International Law. American Bar Foundation, Chicago, 16-17 May.
- 2014 Menon, Alka. “Understanding ‘Race’ in American Ethnic Cosmetic Surgery.” Invited Montgomery Lecture, Medical Humanities & Bioethics Program, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. 10 April.
- 2014 Menon, Alka. “Facial Profiling: Race and Ethnicity in American Cosmetic Surgery.” Eastern Sociological Society annual meeting, Baltimore, 20-23 February.
- 2013 Menon, Alka. “Putting the Right Nose on the Right Face: Race and Ethnicity in American Ethnic Cosmetic Surgery.” American Sociological Association annual meeting, New York City, 9-13 August.
- 2013 Menon, Alka. “Standardizing Race: Ethnic Cosmetic Surgery in the U.S.” Engendering Change: Graduate Student Gender and Sexualities Conference, Chicago, 13-14 March.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Northwestern University

Instructor in Sociology and in the Medical Humanities and Bioethics Program of the Feinberg School of Medicine (MHB)

Graduate Seminar: Second-Year Paper, Sociology Department (Fall 2017)

Sociology of Beauty, Sociology Department (Summer 2016)

Sociology of Infectious Disease, MHB (Winter 2014)

Sociology of the Body, MHB (Fall 2013)

Teaching Assistant

Foundations of Clinical Ethics (1st-year medical students), MHB (Fall 2014)

Medical Sociology, Sociology Department (Spring 2013)

Environment and Society, Sociology Department (Winter 2013)

Introduction to Sociology, Sociology Department (Spring 2012)

Cornell University, Cornell Prison Education Program

Teaching Assistant

Introduction to Chemistry (Spring 2010)

Introduction to Biology (Fall 2009)

History of the Family in the U.S. (Summer 2009)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2013-15 Research Assistant to Carol Heimer, American Bar Foundation. Collected and analyzed primary and secondary sources on international guidelines for healthcare as part of a four person team.
- 2012-13 Research Assistant to Steven Epstein, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University. Collected and analyzed archival material for a study on the meanings and construction of “sexual cancer” and “sexual health.”
- 2011 Research Assistant to Tom Waidzunas, Science in Human Culture Program, Northwestern University in a study of sexuality in Uganda.

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Reviewer, *Sociological Theory, Law and Social Inquiry*, 2016-present

Elected Student Council Member, Science, Knowledge and Technology section, American Sociological Association, 2015-present.

Student Advisory Editor, Student Advisory Board, Social Problems, Society for the Study of Social Problems, 2014-2015

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Coordinator, Culture and Society Workshop, Sociology Department, Northwestern University, 2017-2018

Coordinator, Science in Human Culture Doctoral Colloquium, Science in Human Culture Program, Northwestern University, 2014-2017

Co-President, Sociology Graduate Student Association, Northwestern University, 2013-2014

Chair, Organizing Committee, Chicago Ethnography Conference, Northwestern University, 2013-2014

Student Representative, Graduate Student Affairs Committee, Northwestern University, 2012-2013

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Public Health Associate, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA and Houston, TX, 2010-2011. Stationed at the City of Houston Bureau of Tuberculosis Control.

LANGUAGES

Spanish (Intermediate), Hindi (Comprehension-Intermediate, Reading-Beginner)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association, Society for the Social Studies of Science, Sociologists for Women in Society, Society for the Study of Social Problems, Association of Asian American Studies