

EDITORIAL

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LONELINESS AND OTHER SYMPTOMS

This issue of *New Formations* brings together a collection of essays on the topic of loneliness, curated by Jess Cotton, whose own introduction to them is featured here, along with three articles on other themes. Each of these essays addresses some crucial feature of cultural politics today. Jana Cattien expertly unpicks the threads that make up ‘anti-gender’ discourse in modern Germany, interwoven as they are with the fabric of contemporary racism. This is an important study of one national manifestation of a phenomenon that can now be observed the world over, whereby the very concept of ‘gender’ as a social phenomenon has come to be treated as suspect by a range of reactionary actors. Jan Overwijk and Daniël de Zeeuw offer a singularly ambitious, highly persuasive, account of the epistemological politics of contemporary conspiracy theories, identifying their search for a ‘new clarity’ as in some ways symptomatic of our entire historical period. In a fascinating complement to their contribution, Stephen Harper and Tom Sykes examine liberal conspiracy theories – such as the moral panic around anti-Semitism in the UK Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn – as typical of the current political landscape, yet rarely examined alongside conspiracy theories of the right or left. Alongside Cotton’s collection, these articles provide an incredibly rich and wide-ranging set of diagnoses of some key symptoms of our contemporary cultural and political condition, which *New Formations* is proud to make widely available.