

**Washington State University**

**College of Education**

**Hannah Martian**

**Will defend the Thesis on**

**Date: April 15, 2024**

**Time: 3:00 P.M.**

**Pullman Campus – Education Addition 202**

*Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend*

**MORAL PANIC? NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF TRANSGENDER  
ATHLETES MIANNE BAGGER AND LIA THOMAS**

Chair: Simon Ličen

This thesis focuses on how sport and the framing of transgender athletes affect transgender moral panics in the United States. Coverage of transgender athletes Mianne Bagger and Lia Thomas appearing in the New York Post and The New York Times is examined using Braun and Clark's method of thematic analysis. Themes identified illustrate how sport can be used to further transgender moral panics by featuring repetitive, hyper specialized content that focuses largely on a single anecdote or athlete. In some cases, transgender athletes are scapegoated and used as a heuristic to exaggerate fears about transgender athletes, a key component in the development of moral panics.