This paper examines the crisscrossing discourses of the family, the nation and deviance in contemporary Italy.

Specifically, it traces how Italy’s far-right paints queer Italians and recent immigrants as dual threats to the national family. Queers threaten because they are thought non-reproductive, failing to replicate future citizens. Foreigners are instead considered *too* reproductive, altering who and what counts as familiar. In this logic, the national family is always-already heterosexual and bound to propagate only straight, racially similar individuals.

Here, Italian-ness is not aligned with a vision of European tolerance but a timeless *patria* governed by sexual and racial continuity. In addition to offering a discursive analysis of the far-right’s rhetoric, I examine sub-cultural responses – posters, protest images and websites – produced in Italy’s lesbian, gay and transgender social spaces.

Such spaces, I demonstrate, represent a counter-public organized around the trauma of social exclusion. And yet, the collective trauma of homophobia also becomes the basis for a playfully pained politics that at once contests and cites the hurt that spawned it.

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