

# WGS news

Department of Women's & Gender Studies  
University of South Florida  
Spring, 2020



# Chair's Column:

## Dr. Diane Price Herndl

Greetings, WGS Community, from my desk in my home study!

Like so many of you, I am working from home during the COVID-19 crisis as I write this, teaching classes and going to meetings remotely. While I am missing my students and colleagues terribly, I am also taking some time to be grateful for the privileges I have—healthcare, a job that I can do remotely, a safe place to that work, among so many others—and to try to think of ways to help out those who don't have those privileges during this time.

We at WGS want to urge those of you who can help out to think about the folk who are in precarious situations right now: those who have lost jobs, those who are having to stay home in unsafe home environments, those who are having to live with families who are not accepting of them, those who are having to go to work at workplaces where they aren't safe or adequately paid. If you're in a situation where you can help, we urge you to think about supporting the USF Student Support Fund, a local domestic violence shelter, a food pantry, or just to lend encouragement to those who have to work in unsafe spaces. If you are in one of those precarious places, please reach out. If you're a student, you can ask for help from the USF Student Support Fund, and the on-campus food bank is operating, too. If you are at home in an unsafe space, please reach out to a hotline for abuse or for LGBTQ+ support.

We are also missing so many of the events and celebrations that were

planned for the spring. We typically spend a lot of time in April and May acknowledging the hard work of our wonderful students with "Talk and Toast" for our MA grads, with the WGS Research Colloquium, and with the Triota Student/Faculty Potluck. But we are also harnessing our WGS creativity to hold online versions of Talk and Toast and the Research Colloquium, and we are working on ways to support and celebrate each other as a community.

And we are of course disappointed, after well over a year's worth of work, that we had to cancel SEWSA (the Southeast Women's Studies Association's annual conference). Our faculty and staff had put together a program, "Embodying Difference, Crafting Affinities," to look at how both diversity and alliance work as the heart and soul of resistance politics. They had planned art exhibits, workshops, brilliant keynote speakers, and fun events. With its location on the shore of Tampa Bay at USF St. Petersburg, the conference had attracted the largest number of registrations in the history of the organization. We are tentatively scheduled to host SEWSA 2021, but it isn't clear that we will have the resources to do so next year. We will let you know if we are going to be able to recreate what looked like a dynamic weekend. In the meantime, if you'd like to check out the conference-that-was-not-to-be, you can download the program at: <https://bit.ly/36t5gUQ>.

But it isn't in the nature of feminists to dwell on the downside for long. If



Dr. Diane Price Herndl

we didn't believe in the prospect of things getting better, we would give up on our hopes for gender liberation, right? We are looking forward to a not-too-distant future when we'll be able to leave our house and get together. But in the meantime, we can take part in the various kinds of online activism, scholarship, teaching, and work in the community that are aiming to make things better for all folk. And perhaps the larger world will have learned an old feminist lesson to value all the workers who risk themselves every day by doing the hard and dirty jobs, the ones who rarely get acknowledgement for that work. This feels like a time that we can push for a living wage, for healthcare for everyone, and for worker protections. We can get back to some of the bedrock of early feminist activism and make sure that workers are acknowledged in meaningful ways.

We remember that Audre Lorde taught us that "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Remember that when you are taking care of yourself, you are taking care of your community, too.

I hope you stay well. And that you will help out those who you can help, and will reach out for help if you need it.

# WGS Alumni Spotlight: Samantha Heuwagen

*Samantha Heuwagen graduated from USF with her MA in Women's and Gender Studies in 2014 and currently works as a sex therapist in her own private practice. She does talk therapy with individuals, couples, and families and while most of her cases are within the sex therapy realm, she also does work with clients struggling with anxiety, depression, and helps them navigate healthy relationships.*

*WGS helped Samantha find her calling: WGS allowed me to assist the class, Human Sexual Behavior. After that, I was intrigued with sexuality studies and found myself gravitating toward sex therapy. Once I made up my mind to pursue a career in therapy, everything fell into place. I was accepted into Mercer University School of Medicine and I am now a fully licensed marriage and family therapist that specializes in sex therapy. My dreams came true!*

I truly believe I couldn't do what I do without having my WGS degree. It allows me to connect with people in different ways and systemically work through issues with my clients since we form a team to overcome their problems. I'm able to see the invisible and intersectional work for and against my clients. Helping them navigate these systems is an honor and makes our work special, healing traumas that might have been generational; breaking the patterns that were impact my clients lives in negative ways.

The area most relevant to my career goals hovered around sex, sexuality and the Latinx population and

history. I am so lucky to have had the experience I did at USF that led me to find my place in the therapy world. I'm able to bridge my culture as Latinx and do therapy with many people from around the world.

*Samantha recommends WGS to undergrad and grad students: Taking these types of classes will help you be a more well-rounded candidate for jobs and help you see the world differently. If you're interested in exploring the why of the world, these classes can help you find the answers you're looking for. It will change your life if you're ready to take the chance and opportunity.*

My own WGS journey changed my life from the first moment I took a class. It led me on an incredible path, allowing me to do work that makes my soul sing each and every day. If you're unsure of what do to with your life or what kind of job you're looking for, allow yourself to explore this area of study. You never know what you might learn about yourself or the world around you.

*Samantha believes that WGS faculty make all the difference: Being open with your advisor about your goals in life, whether they be personal or career centered. If I hadn't talked to Dr. Golombisky about my dreams of being a sex therapist, she wouldn't have been able to help me navigate classes and suggest conferences to attend. She really looked out for me because she knew what to look for. If I hadn't had been honest, who knows how long it might have taken me to reach my goals.*



WGS alumni Samantha Heuwagen

Dr. Golombisky and Jennifer Ellerman-Queen gave me the space to explore my research interests and find my way. They supported me at every turn and were extremely patient teachers. Without them I wouldn't be the speaker or therapist I am. Especially not the author I turned out to be. I am grateful for them every single day of my life and owe them so much for my current career.

*Samantha has turned to fiction writing to help spread mental health awareness: In a way to combat the stereotypical views of mental illness, I came up with an idea: what if I started the conversation about mental health and healthy relationships in a new and unique way through fiction writing? Dawn Among the Stars (2018), part of the Starlight Series, is an opportunity to depict mental health in a realistic way by changing the narrative around individuals who push through similar obstacles every single day. I want to offer readers positive role models instead of tired, old stereotypes. Starlight Series books Fading Starlight (2019) and Stardust Emerging (2020) continue this approach.*

# WGS Faculty Research Spotlight:

## Dr. David A. Rubin

My name is David A. Rubin. I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) at the University of South Florida. I write and teach in the areas of feminist and queer theory; intersex and transgender studies; and the history of gender, race, and science.

Following the late feminist anthropologist Saba Mahmood, I believe that WGS as an intellectual project is most effective when we “embark upon an inquiry in which we do not assume that the political positions we uphold will necessarily be vindicated, or provide the ground for our theoretical analysis, but instead hold open the possibility that we may come to ask of politics a whole series of questions that seemed settled when we first embarked upon the inquiry” (Mahmood 2005, 39).

My book *Intersex Matters: Biomedical Embodiment, Gender Regulation, and Transnational Activism* (SUNY Press, 2017) analyzes the medicalization of people diagnosed as “intersex,” which is an umbrella term for individuals born with sexual anatomies various societies deem to be nonstandard. Through an examination of medico-scientific, scholarly, political, and popular archives from the mid-twentieth century to the present, the book argues that the medical regulation of atypical sex is fundamentally a feminist and a



David A. Rubin

queer issue, and an intersectional and transnational one as well. Critical attention to intersex lives, bodies, narratives, and activism profoundly reconfigures contemporary paradigms of sex/gender, race, health, normality, biopolitics, and human rights. *Intersex Matters* charts the emergence of intersex rights activism in the global north and global south, thus demonstrating the value of understanding intersex experience when rethinking the vicissitudes of body politics in a globally interconnected world.

My co-edited anthology *Queer Feminist Science Studies: A Reader* (University of Washington Press, 2017) takes a transnational, trans-species, and intersectional approach to this cutting-edge area of inquiry between women's, gender, and sexuality studies and science and technology studies (STS). The essays in the volume “queer”—or denaturalize and make strange—ideas that are taken for granted in both areas of

study. Reimagining the meanings of and relations among queer and feminist theories and a wide range of scientific disciplines, contributors foster new critical and creative knowledge-projects that attend to shifting and uneven operations of power, privilege, and dispossession, while also highlighting potentialities for uncertainty, subversion, transformation, and play.

My new book project analyzes how negative affect shapes intersex, trans, and gender nonconforming people's experiences of embodiment and activism. Tentatively titled *Intersex Rage: Negative Affect and Biopolitical Protest*, the book argues that anger, aggression, and attitude—far from being toxic, anti-social emotions—are in fact vital to intersex and trans survival, resilience, and world-making.

My articles and essays have appeared or are forthcoming in a variety of journals and anthologies. Recent chapters can be found in: *The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Philosophy of Science* (Routledge, forthcoming), *Rethinking Women's and Gender Studies, Volume II* (Routledge, forthcoming), *Men's Health Equity: A Handbook* (Routledge, 2019), *Reproductive Justice and Sexual Rights: Transnational Perspectives* (Routledge, 2019), and elsewhere.

*Dr. Rubin is teaching Contemporary Feminist Theory in fall 2020.*

# WGS Visiting Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Helis Sikk

*Dr. Helis Sikk joined WGS as a visiting assistant professor in the fall of 2020. Before coming to USF, Dr. Sikk was a visiting assistant professor at DePaul University, the College of Wooster, and the College of William and Mary.*

Dr. Helis Sikk's research focuses on violence against LGBTQ+ people and queer (visual) cultures. Her work on anti-LGBTQ+ violence has been funded by Cornell University's Phil Zwickler Memorial Research Grant, and a Smithsonian Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Her co-edited collection of essays, *The Legacies of Matthew Shepard* (Routledge 2019) considers the effects of post-1998 federal policy changes on rural America, the relationship between land, nature and politics, and documentary representations of Shepard. She is currently working on her monograph, *Mainstreaming Violence: Affect, Activism, and Queer Politics of*

*Representation*, which traces the affective genealogy of anti-LGBTQ violence since the 1960s.

In addition to her work on violence, Dr. Sikk is currently working on two additional projects. Her article, "Politics, Sex, and Radical Empathy in Queer Graphic Memoir," is part of a larger project on comics, which traces queer autobiographical writing since the 1990s. Her second project explores the relationships between affect, the built environment, and digital cultures in the Tampa Bay area.

Besides purely academic endeavors, Dr. Sikk is part of a collaborative social practice art project, *Queer Apocalypse Solutions*, which involves a year-long Instagram action and a converted U-Haul Queer Feelings Booth to help to mitigate the quotidian violence enacted against non-normative identities.

Dr. Sikk's feral approach to research



Helis Sikk

carries over to her teaching. She asks her students to engage with everything from comics to the built environment—the goal is to gain an embodied understanding of the knowledges presented.

In her free time, Dr. Sikk enjoys running in the Florida heat, kickboxing, and arranging music.

*Dr. Sikk will be teaching Gender and Social Action, and Queer Comics in fall 2020.*

## WGS Fall Event: Latinx Feminists You Should Know!

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, undergraduate and graduate students with various academic backgrounds attended a presentation on October 15th on Latinx Feminists organized by Drs. Price-Herndl and Serls. At the start of the presentation participants played a game to see how many of the people featured on the front of the handout

they could recognize. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Angie Cruz were among the first to be recognized. The presentation was primarily discussion-based; however, Serls and Price-Herndl made sure to discuss notable figures such as Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga, two Latinx scholars who were among the first to call out the intersections of race, class, gender,

and sexuality as they relate to ethnicity, nationality, language, and citizenship. Students left with a list of resources they could investigate to learn more about the topic, and afterwards they even spent some time hanging out in our beloved WGS library. It was a great event!

# WGS Visiting Faculty Spotlight:

## Dr. Melinda Mills

*Dr. Melinda Mills joined WGS as a visiting instructor in the fall of 2019 and will be with us through the spring of 2021. She comes to us from Castleton University in Vermont, where she is an Associate Professor and the Women's & Gender Studies Program Coordinator.*

“Currently, I am working toward completion of two book projects. My manuscript, *In/visible Mixture*, explores the experiences of multiracial people in romantic relationships. I consider what it means for multiracial people to find romantic partners and establish intimate romantic relationships. How much does race shape romance in their lives? To what extent does race impact partner choice? How does a multiracial person's physical appearance shape their experiences in choosing

and being chosen? How do multiracial people manage the in/visibility of their racial mixture? Is being “clearly mixed” a currency or a penalty in the dating scene? I explore these and related questions in this work.”

“The second book project engages the topic of social justice through the figure of music celebrity, Bruno Mars. This project builds upon and engages my previous research publication, *The Borders of Race*. In that book, I expanded upon the idea that racially mixed people frequently get asked to articulate their racial heritage to others, while often having said heritage and preferred identity called into question or contested. Writing a book about Bruno Mars allows me to explore how he performs race and employs his

racial mixture in strategic ways, to encourage fans to reimagine race. Utilizing feminist scholarship in my analysis has been an exciting and rewarding facet of this research.”

“In the classes that I am teaching, I hope to engage students in conversations about feminism and popular culture. One of my favorite experiences as an educator is creating student-centered learning communities. That's where students can actively explore their own questions, engage the course material and each other, and learn in a space that they co-create.”

*Dr. Mills will be teaching Intro to Women's Studies, and Issues in Feminism in the fall 2020.*

## Art Exhibit:

### *Reproductive Justice is for Everyone!*

From November 5, 2019 to March 5, 2020, WGS hosted the traveling art exhibit, *Reproductive Justice is for Everyone!* The exhibit featured art that responded to the question, “what does reproductive justice mean to you?”

Artists from across the U.S. and Canada sent us work that answered this question in a variety of different artistic forms, including ceramics, recorded performances, drawing, and photography, and covered a range of topics, including abortion, maternal mortality rates for black women, parenthood, gender identity, and menstruation.

All of the work centered on the concept of reproductive justice. Reproductive justice enriches the idea of reproductive rights to completely include marginalized and vulnerable members of our society. It holds feminism accountable to the fact that the movement often ignores issues that don't directly affect white, middle-class or rich women. Sister Song's definition of reproductive justice sums it up well: while abortion access is critical, marginalized people; black, indigenous, and latinx people; poor people; and trans and non-binary people face challenges accessing basic healthcare, adequate prenatal care, equal wages

with which to support themselves and their families, and even a society in which to raise their children safe from violence and police brutality, to name just a few things. Reproductive justice centers the experience of the marginalized and asks us to analyze and dismantle the systems that oppress us.

The opening reception for the exhibit took place on November 5th, and on January 29th WGS hosted an evening reception for a group of reproductive rights activists from Pinellas, Polk, and Pasco Counties.

# WGS Careers & Alumni Panel

WGS partnered with USF's Career Services to welcome back seven former WGS students on October 1, 2019 for a WGS Careers & Alumni Panel. Coming from as far away as Georgia and California, the alumni visited with students in WGS classes during the day, and then in the evening they sat down with current and prospective WGS students to discuss their experiences in WGS and their career paths.



Dr. Tangel Serls leads a discussion between WGS alumni and students during the WGS Careers & Alumni Panel

The alumni shared career wisdom gained from a variety of backgrounds:

**Kiah Bowers**, a Proteomics Core research specialist at Moffitt Cancer Center, encouraged students to pursue their dream job and apply for jobs they want even if they don't seem to have all the qualifications.

**Vanessa Charles**, a real estate agent, described how students can use their knowledge gained from WGS to do good in their communities no matter what field their career is in.

**Pierce Dignam**, a PhD student in sociology at FSU, told students to make use of the supportiveness and resources offered by the WGS Department, and made the case for WGS giving the "best academic framework to break paradigms."

**Aubrey Hall**, a Green Dot Coordinator at Sunrise of Pasco County, argued that more fields could use people with WGS backgrounds, particularly in government and grantmaking, and urged students to "throw out the map" when planning their careers and to "be authentic" to themselves.

**Samantha Heuwagen**, an independent sex therapist, related her own experience as an independent therapist and told students that working for oneself is always a great option to pursue.

**Coral Nardandrea**, a video game writer at Pixelberry Studios, reiterated the advice given by Kiah and others and told students to apply for jobs even if their skills don't match the ad, and added that networking is extremely useful in turning an interest into a

marketable skill and career.

**Katie Turner**, Director of Operations at Family Healthcare Foundation, emphasized ways to make oneself stand out, particularly through well-known internships and programs like Americorps.

All of the alumni agreed that their WGS education contributed greatly to the work they do regardless of field or title, and that it gave them the skills, knowledge, and confidence to make a difference in the world.

WGS would like to thank Kiah, Vanessa, Pierce, Aubrey, Samantha, Coral, and Katie for traveling and being a part of the panel, and to Emily Fiore from Career Services for her participation as well. Thank you!

## Intersex and Trans: Beyond 101s

On October 21, 2019, as part of its celebration of LGBTQ+ History Month, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) sponsored "Intersex and Trans: Beyond 101s," a brief lecture and discussion with WGS's associate professor Dr. David A. Rubin on the history and challenges facing intersex, trans, and gender

nonconforming people. Organized by the OMA LGBTQ Initiatives coordinator Cristina Yelvington, over 75 students, staff, and faculty attended the event. Dr. Rubin provided inclusive definitions of intersex, transgender, and gender nonconforming as umbrella terms that cover a great diversity of peoples with wide ranging experiences

and the attendees discussed the ongoing challenges of medicalization and pathologization, workplace discrimination, and the importance for institutions and groups to uphold the fundamental rights of self-determination and bodily integrity.

# WGS Undergrad Spotlight: Daynah Singh

*Daynah Singh is majoring in Mass Communications – Advertising and is minoring in Women’s and Gender Studies and Creative Writing. She is a first-generation college student. She has recently accepted a job working as a copywriter at an advertising agency in downtown Tampa and plans to use her background in women’s and gender studies to increase diversity, inclusion and minority representation in the advertising industry.*



Daynah Singh

*Daynah discovered WGS by chance, but quickly realized how valuable it would be to her major: When I started USF in 2016, I didn’t know Women’s and Gender Studies existed. In fact, it wasn’t until I took Female Experience in America as a random elective that I realized WGS was something I seriously wanted to pursue as my minor. As an advertising professional and a member of the media, it was important to me that the work I produced was inclusive and representative of all different walks of life. I knew that minoring in WGS would ultimately help me expand on this passion and allow me to explore ideas and concepts that would never be discussed in a “traditional” classroom setting.*

*Daynah is early in her career as an advertising professional, but has already found WGS to be valuable to the work*

*she does:* I’ve recently accepted a job as a copywriter and plan to pursue a career in creative advertising. With this being said, I use my WGS background every day in the advertisements that I write. The advertising industry has consistently lagged behind when it comes to diversity, with most ads being very heteronormative and overly sexualized. My WGS background has allowed me to write more diverse ads and has given me the knowledge to defend my reasoning when I break from traditional norms. I am more conscious about how my ads will impact society and work every day to help make small changes that can eventually lead to bigger and better representation for people of all races, genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, body types, and ages.

*Daynah believes that taking WGS classes*

*is beneficial for all students regardless of their field of study:* I would absolutely recommend majoring or minoring in WGS, or even just taking an intro class. The concepts and theories you learn aren’t just things you can Google. These courses have helped me expand my viewpoint on the world and allowed me to unlearn the biased things I was taught at a young age. WGS allows you to see how important it is to be intersectional in your thinking. Moreover, it teaches you how we are all connected as a society and how small changes can make a huge impact on the people in your community.

My favorite WGS class has to be Black Feminisms with Dr. Tangelia Serls. This class had the biggest impact on me as a WGS student and truly made me feel seen as a woman of color. Dr. Serls is, without a doubt, the best professor I’ve had during my time at USF. She is someone who genuinely cares about WGS and works her hardest to form meaningful bonds with her students. Since Black Feminisms, I have taken her Literature by Women of Color and her WGS Capstone courses. Her guidance and support have molded me into the person I am today and I am so grateful.

## Cover Art

The cover art is by Florida artist Shoog McDaniel and is from a series of buttons that Shoog created for WGS for the SEWSA conference.



# WGS Grad Student Spotlight: Bre Carter

*Breanna Carter just graduated this spring with her MA in Women's and Gender Studies.*

*WGS has offered Bre a variety of practical media-centered skills that are useful for managing, organizing, and spreading knowledge: I have had the opportunity to create an informational Youtube series in this program. This experience taught me about video editing and creating feminist media projects to help spread knowledge. I have also had the opportunity to intern at the Tampa Bay Women's Business Centre, where I have been working alongside Dr. Nidia Diaz. She is a doctor who runs her own holistic wellness practice and I worked with her all of Fall 2019 semester helping her grow her Instagram page and market herself so that her practice can grow.*

*Bre has had the opportunity to deepen her research interests while in WGS: Multiracial identity in America and*

media studies are my main research focuses. I have worked on a paper discussing how Barack Obama was racially identified in four newspapers across America in 2007 when he announced his presidency. I also wrote a paper that analyzed the themes found in two children's books made for multiracial children and how mothers of multiracial children can use these books as tools to help their children shape their racial identities. I am a multiracial American woman, so I find the experiences of multiracial people fascinating. Living in ambiguity can be very difficult in a world that loves to put people into boxes. When multiracial identity intersects with economic status, race, gender, sexuality and media, a lot of interesting occurrences can happen.

WGS has helped me understand the ways in which our world works. I have been able to focus on my research of media studies and multiracial identity in America in ways that other departments



Bre Carter

may not have let me.

*Bre plans to use the knowledge gained in WGS in useful ways outside of academia: Even though I do not want to be a professor I believe that no matter what I do I will always push for representation of different bodies if I am working on any social media campaigns. I would also love to write a book one day about the experiences of multiracial people in America, maybe even a children's book!*

## Art Exhibit:

### *The Founding Mothers: Women in Herstory*

WGS is pleased to present *The Founding Mothers: Women in Herstory*, an exhibit of artwork on loan from the Museum of Motherhood (MOM). The exhibit opened on March 6, 2020 and will run through September 15th.

*The Founding Mothers* brings together feminists throughout herstory who have challenged conventional attitudes about gendered performance and motherhood through their writing, activism, and art. The multi-media interactive

exhibit encourages us to think critically about evolving family narratives and womyn's place in society. Join us in discovering through this exhibit the dynamic impact mother studies can have on your life, perspective, and the future.

The exhibit is curated by Martha Joy Rose, a scholar, artist, and activist and founder of the Museum of Motherhood. She also founded the MaMaPaLooZa music festival, has been organizing the international Academic MOM Conference since



2005, and editing the *Journal of Mother Studies*. The Museum of Motherhood is currently located in the MOM Art Annex in St. Petersburg, Florida.

# WGS Talk & Toast

The annual WGS Talk & Toast event took place on April 24, 2020 - the event was held virtually this year due to COVID-19. Graduating MA students Breanna Carter and Jonathan Rosenstadt presented their research along with WGS MA student Fyn Asay.

Jonathan and Fyn shared with us their thoughts on WGS, their research, and their futures after graduating.

## **Fyn Asay:**

My research interests in general are in transgender studies, fat studies, queer studies, LGBTQ+ studies, communication, gender and communication, feminist media studies, and gender studies more broadly.

The research I presented at Talk and Toast, entitled, “Theorizing Transfat Embodiment” is focused on exploring the intersection of the transgender and fat identity (transfat) through the examination of two key texts I have identified, Jabba the Hutt from Star Wars and Pat from the Saturday Night Live skits, “It’s Pat” from the 1990’s. Through an examination of these texts I explore how the erasure and marginalization of a transfat embodiment is tied to transnormativity, racism, and fatphobia.

I plan on applying to a couple of PhD programs locally, but I am not sure if I can secure the amount of funding needed to continue my research. Alternatively, I would like to

work for an organization that focuses on helping LGBTQ+ persons and youths or provide diversity training for companies looking to improve. Regardless of where I end up, I want to continue my work on transfat embodiment and research.

My education in WGS has helped me to see things from multiple perspectives and to hone my critical thinking skills so that I can problem solve creatively and collaboratively. WGS has shown me the power of



Fyn Asay

collective action and support towards a unifying goal of a more just world.

## **Jonathan Rosenstadt:**

My research interests include studying social and legal issues that affect LGBTQIA(+) people and the multiple, intersecting ways in which they are impacted by exclusion, criminalization, and violence.

For Talk and Toast, I presented my portfolio *Legally (In)Human: Selected Works on State Sanctioned Identities and Representations of Sex and Gender*. These pieces explore the ways in which the state perpetuates homo/

transphobia by excusing multiple forms of violence against some LGBTQIA(+) people while, critically, also denying them access to legal categories of human. I also present possibilities for inclusion, beyond the state’s current binaristic hegemony, that calls for the systematic restructuring of existing legal organizations and classifications.

Post graduate school, I plan to combine both my employment and education experiences to shift my career out of a decade-long stint in the corporate sector and into my goal of working in advocacy.

WGS prepared me for my future by providing me the tools to examine the multiple forms of disadvantage and marginalization that affect all people in vary degrees, while also learning how to speak and work alongside, rather than through, people that I intend to advocate with.



Jonathan Rosenstadt

**Thank you** to Fyn, Jonathan, and Bre for sharing their research at Talk & Toast! And congratulations to Jonathan and Bre on graduating!

# Welcome Incoming WGS Grad Students!

WGS is pleased to welcome six new MA students to the Department this coming fall semester. Joining us will be **Zuri Guthrie, Diana Hechavarria, RayShon Louden, Tasnim Mahbuba Rahman, Sabeedah Ravat, and Alisha Romano.**

Tasnim, Sabeedah, and Alisha shared with us their plans for their graduate work and why they chose WGS at USF.



Tasnim Mahbuba Rahman

**Tasnim Mahbuba Rahman:** *Tasnim has a Bachelor's in Business Administration from North South University in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where she focused on finance and accounting, and economics. She will be on the thesis track in WGS.*

“I have a willingness to conduct research on ‘Representational practices’ of ‘Muslim woman’ identity by the faith based organizations, to explore the representational practices of Muslim woman by the secular development organizations (SBOs) and faith based organizations (FBOs), and figure out if the practices differ, and if so, how? I also want to dig deeper to see if the FBOs offer alternative forms of representational practices to counter the dominant discourse that are inspired by coloniality.”

“I feel that the international environment of the University of South Florida, as well as the

possibility offered by the MA program in Women’s and Gender Studies, will help me acquire a solid understanding of different perspectives and concepts in development. I also believe it will provide me academic and technical insight and confidence in this field and will help me apply gender-sensitive perspective on new areas within the academic field.”



Sabeedah Ravat

**Sabeedah Ravat:** *Sabeedah has a B.A. in Integrative Biology with a minor in Women’s & Gender Studies from the*

*University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. She will be on the thesis track in WGS.*

“My research interests focus around queer Muslim experiences, particularly in terms of navigating the cultural and religious boundaries of nonsexual kinship. I am also interested in the roles of daughters in various South Asian family structures and how that impacts agency and personal development. Though not a primary academic focus, I enjoy exploring the overlap of professional sports and culture, mainly in terms of how race, gender, and sexuality are negotiated in women’s sports.”

“The WGS department at USF was instrumental in shaping my undergraduate experience. I find the program to be deeply intellectual, while maintaining the priority of tangible social justice.

The department is smaller and more intimate, and I believe it is the best place for me develop my research and grow as a scholar in an environment that will give me the tools to be successful in a PhD program in the future.”



Alisha Romano

**Alisha Romano:** *Alisha has a B.A. in Japanese Language and Culture with a minor in Global Studies from California State*

*University Monterey Bay in Seaside, California. She wrote her senior thesis on contemporary women’s movements in Japan. She will be on the thesis track in WGS.*

“Gender and culture are exceptionally linked and because of this I hope to learn the methods of examining gender in a more critical way. In this way, I hope to use my understanding of certain cultural theories and their connections to both history and contemporary life in order to analyze women’s impacts in cultural and gendered aspects. Cross cultural analysis is especially interesting when examining protests and historical life.”

“I selected the WGS department at USF because the faculty and graduate students that I came into contact with were welcoming. One of the most enjoyable aspects of my undergraduate degree was knowing everyone in the department and being able to have that support and comradery. WGS offers coursework I am interested in and that I believe will help me further my goals, but it also made me feel welcome and that was equally important.”

# WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A WGS DEGREE?

We asked WGS alumni what they have done...

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

### WGS alumni are leaders:



executive director, assistant director of stewardship, annual giving manager, project manager, director of account management, strategy manager of process engineering, IT manager, insurance claims manager, healthcare practice administrator

## EDUCATION & RESEARCH

### WGS alumni build knowledge and educate:



assistant professor, librarian, research manager, academic services administrator, teacher success coach, social studies department head, instructional designer, Montessori teacher, editorial coordinator

## HEALTHCARE & COUNSELING

### WGS alumni help people to lead healthier lives:



med student, public health researcher, mental health clinician, school counselor, clinical trauma interventionist, medical case manager, children's therapist, sex therapist, social services case manager

## ANYTHING YOU WANT!

### WGS alumni follow their passions:



attorney, law student, deaconess, video game writer, state park assistant manager, poet, feminist real estate agent

# WGS Degrees

## *Undergraduate Programs:*

**Major or Second Major in Women's & Gender Studies:** 36 hours (30 for second major). The major focuses on feminist research and practice. WGS promotes social justice through the discovery and production of knowledge that emerges from feminist perspectives on culture and society.

**Minor in Women's & Gender Studies:** 18 hours. This minor offers students from other majors the opportunity to learn more about feminist analysis, research, and activism.

**Minor in Queer and Sexuality Studies:** 18 hours. This minor trains students in the critical analysis of sexuality. It examines the rich history and cultural contributions of LGBTQIA people as well as the processes of normalization and pathologization that have structured sexual relations in different contexts.

## *Graduate Programs:*

**M.A. in Women's & Gender Studies:** 36 hours. The M.A. is useful for students and professionals who are preparing for advanced degrees, nonprofit sector employment, and those interested in broadening their understanding of WGS topics. Deadline to apply for fall admission: February 15. Funding is available to students through graduate assistantships.

**Graduate Certificate in Women's & Gender Studies:** 12 hours. The Certificate provides an opportunity for graduate students and other professionals to gain a more inclusive knowledge of women's and gender issues in society, including feminist studies.

# WGS is Different

We *link* knowledge, research, teaching, and activism.

We *promote* social justice by engaging students in the discovery and production of knowledge that emerges from feminist perspectives on culture and society.

We *teach* students to use the analytic skills that emerge from engaging the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, and nation in order to promote responsible citizenship in a diverse transnational environment.

We *expose* limits in traditional higher education caused by excluding women and other marginalized groups and create knowledge that is transformative and inclusive.

We *aim* for knowledge that will better all people's lives, not just the lives of a few.

We *connect* our work as academics with the social, political, and economic world outside the university to educate our students about social inequalities that result from sexism, heterosexism and homophobia, racism, classism, able-ism, and ethnocentrism.

We *seek* to empower students through a feminist critique of social, cultural, and institutional structures that enables them to think more critically about their own lives and that inspires them to work as active citizens for social change.

WGS *prepares* students to go on to graduate school, medical school, law school, or to enter the workforce in a wide variety of public, private, governmental, and non-profit agencies.

WGS *offers* a B.A., a second major, a minor in Women's Studies, a minor in Queer & Sexuality Studies, an M.A., and a graduate certificate.

For more information, visit the new WGS website at: [usf.edu/wgs](https://usf.edu/wgs).

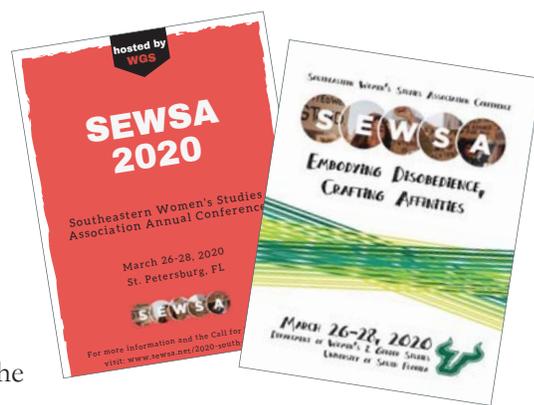
# SEWSA 2020

The 2020 Southeastern Women's Studies Association conference was to have been held in St. Petersburg on March 26-28. The Department of Women's & Gender Studies at USF is honored to have been the host of the conference and regrets that it had to be canceled due to COVID-19.

Thank you to SEWSA for partnering with WGS, and thank you also to everyone who was going to participate in the conference. In

particular, thank you to our speakers Loretta Ross and Aisha Durham; our workshop leaders Kenyette Barnes, Shoog McDaniel, and Finn LeFevre; and to our exhibition hall exhibitors: Kitchen Table Literary Arts, Planned Parenthood SWCF, PUSHED ReproArt Collective, Metro Inclusive Health, Sex Workers Outreach Project, Tampa Bay Museum of Motherhood, Creative Clay, Lakeland Women's Collective, Red Tent Initiative, Love Your Rebellion, Shoog McDaniel Photography, Mother Kombucha, and Meredith College activism quilts project.

To view the SEWSA 2020 program, visit: <https://bit.ly/36t5gUQ>.



# WGS Faculty

Dr. Diane Price Herndl  
*Professor and Chair*

Jennifer Ellerman-Queen  
*Instructor and Graduate Program Coordinator*

Dr. Kim Golombisky  
*Associate Professor and Interim Director of the Zimmerman School  
of Advertising and Mass Communications*

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller  
*Professor and Director of Graduate Studies*

Dr. Melinda Mills  
*Visiting Instructor*

Dr. David A. Rubin  
*Associate Professor*

Dr. Tangela Serls  
*Instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies*

Dr. Helis Sikk  
*Visiting Assistant Professor*

Dr. Milton Wendland  
*Instructor and Internship Director*

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## Contact Info

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**Giving to WGS:** [usf.to/wgs](http://usf.to/wgs)