In the introduction to the previous newsletter, I wrote: “Welcome to spring 2020, the beginning of what will be a momentous year for many reasons.” Who could have known that 2020 would bring so much tumult: a rampaging global pandemic that has isolated us from each other, state-sanctioned repeated brutality against Black and Brown people in public view, an economic recession, and terrifying effects of global warming. I’ve said many times in the last six months, “the world is on fire, literally and figuratively.” And while fire destroys, it also heals and purifies. So, the fire we are in is also generative, offering sustained and expansive movements for racial justice, appreciation for introspection and mindfulness, deeper understandings of intersectional oppressions, and creative approaches to sustaining social relationships. The fire has also ignited us in WGS to shift our priorities and focus on ways that we can contribute to the generative aspects of this historic time.

This academic year WGS programming will continue to emphasize “intersections” of scholars, artists, and activists; of disciplines; and of identities and oppressions. Please read more about our Commitments to Anti-Racism posted June 2020 to our website and blog and copied here on page 2. Out of necessity much of our programming, like our courses, meetings, and celebrations will happen virtually. We hope that this offers expanded opportunities for participation and for connecting to this vibrant community of ours.

We invite you to follow our blog and Instagram to stay informed of all the things we are working on to stamp out injustice, on and off campus, and to extend the reach of our forward-thinking, inclusive, and justice-oriented vision. Our curriculum remains as dynamic as ever, despite current constraints. We are maintaining our partnerships with community organizations for meaningful dialogue and education on pressing local issues. And we will carry on celebrating our amazing students, even if over zoom as we were forced to do with our graduating seniors in the spring (pictured above). Coronavirus be damned, we will persist!

Liberation is a practice, an act of continuous labor that requires vigilance as much as it requires community. We trust that as the metaphorical and actual fires rage on, you do too, in community and in resistance with WGS and with each other.

In solidarity,

Kris De Welde

NOTE:

THIS DIGITAL NEWSLETTER USES LIVE LINKS. CLICK ON ANY UNDERLINED TEXT TO VISIT WEBPAGES, RESOURCES, AND MORE.
WGS COMMITMENTS TO ANTI-RACISM (JULY 2020)

STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY AND ACTIONS

Over the summer, we reaffirmed our commitment to direct confrontation as a means for transformative change, and thereby support members from our community – students (past and present), faculty, community supporters, staff – who are currently protesting in the movement for Black lives. The mounting devastation we are witnessing and experiencing must result in the dismantling of social structures and processes that uphold, as our national organization writes, “structural racism and systemic violence rooted in white supremacy, racialized heteropatriarchy, capitalism, militarism, imperialism, and the carceral state” (read the NWSA statement). In short, Black Lives Matter.

WGS as an academic discipline was born in and of struggles for justice. But that does not absolve us of complicity in perpetuating systemic failures and our social institutions, particularly in our home of higher education. Our commitment to the struggle for liberation always has been, is now, and will continue to be sustained, beyond a particular crisis or media moment. Our work persists beyond the atrocities. Our efforts continue after the cameras are gone, subsequent to statements flooding our inboxes, beyond the “crisis;” revolution is ongoing, and has a history much more complex than what is immediately available. Because of this, we will always strive to do better.

We acknowledge the physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological sacrifices that protestors, many of whom are students, make. We assert our solidarity with them and other agents of progressive change. In words and in praxis, we honor the Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, individuals and people of color who historically have borne the burdens of transforming communities and reimagining futures. We want to make our on and off campus communities aware of the additional efforts we are taking “at home” to support the struggle for liberation broadly, and the movement for Black lives specifically. We commit to the following objectives and corresponding actions, which have been collaboratively developed with the intention to be collaboratively implemented:

1. HOLD SPACE FOR ANTI-RACIST DIALOGUE, RESISTANCE, AND COMMUNITY

**ACTIONS:**
- WGS and affiliates (namely the Gender and Sexuality Equity Center, GSEC) organized one Creating Space to Build Together session (June 05, 2020). We plan to hold these regularly and indefinitely.
- Interrogate historical and contemporary feminism’s culpability in how to do better through book discussions and workshops. We will include faculty affiliates, staff, students, alumni, and Community Advisory Board members. We welcome suggestions from these groups to guide our work.

2. ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT ANTI-RACIST, INCLUSIVE, DECOLONIAL, LIBERATORY PEDAGOGIES AND STRATEGIES

**ACTIONS:**
- We will pivot all 2020-2021 T.E.A. with WGS (Teaching to Engage and Activate) professional development sessions to reflect this focus. These sessions, which are held approximately 3-4 times per semester over the last two years for WGS affiliated and adjunct faculty. We will broaden our invitations to participate so that faculty not affiliated with WGS can engage in these conversations with us.
- We have developed an online resource guide for inclusive pedagogy (blogs.cofc.edu/wgsconnect/inclusive-anti-racist-pedagogy)

3. INCLUDE MINORITIZED STUDENT VOICES IN PROGRAM-LEVEL DECISION MAKING

**ACTIONS:**
- We have invited student leaders, with intentional invitations to students from marginalized groups, to participate in a Student Advisory Board, which will serve in an advisory role to the program and all of its efforts.

4. DIFFUSE ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

**ACTIONS:**
- We will be organizing WGS “pop-up” classes around the theme of Intersectionality and Racial Justice, in the context of the South, which will feature experts, learning opportunities, community engagement activities, etc. on a variety of topics. These will continue through 2020-21 and beyond.

5. SUPPORT CRITICAL RACE CURRICULUM AT THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

**ACTIONS:**
- We will continue advocating strongly for the Race, Ethnicity, and Inclusion undergraduate requirement (currently pending).
- We will develop WGS courses to support this curriculum, and commit all necessary resources associated with the requirement. We further commit that our next faculty line request will help to both staff these courses and further develop this expertise within the program with specialty areas in critical race studies and/or queer of color critique.

6. CONTRIBUTE TO THE VISIBILITY OF BLACK CREATIVITY, RESILIENCE, SCHOLARSHIP, AND JOY

**ACTIONS:**
- We will continue to intentionally amplify the experiences, creativity, talents, and power of Black artists, podcasters, entrepreneurs, elected officials, community advocates, scientists, musicians, scholars, and writers through our events, curriculum, community engagement, and social media platforms.

We recognize that the actions listed here are only the first steps in meeting our objectives: we will be providing regular updates on our web and social media channels. We welcome feedback, critique, and further collaboration from our on and off campus communities.
WGS HIRES NEW FACULTY MEMBER
DR. ELIZABETH VELÁSQUEZ ESTRADA

The program is thrilled to announce that after an extensive search, we have hired Dr. Elizabeth Velásquez Estrada as our newest faculty member!

Dr. Velásquez Estrada earned her Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin and specializes in violence and grassroots peacemaking, transnational feminisms, and the politics of intersectional inequality as applied to migration and immigration integration.

Dr. Velásquez Estrada will join us as Assistant Professor of WGS in fall 2021, after completing a prestigious Postdoctoral Research Associate Program at the University of Illinois.

PROGRAM NEWS:
NEW "KETNER-CRUNELLE"
SCHOLARSHIP
HONORS RECENT WGS ALUM

As a spectacular example of what is possible when we couple philanthropy with activism, Linda Ketner has established the first ever LGBTQ+ scholarship here at the College of Charleston and which will be located in WGS.

The Ketner-Crunelle scholarship is eponymously named for the indelible impact that Tanner Crunelle (WGS ’20) has made on Linda, on WGS, and on our campus communities, especially the LGBTQ+ community, through his sustained activism.

In addition to his contributions to the WGS program, Tanner made deep connections and lasting impact through continued involvement with student organizations and cross-campus efforts such as I-CAN (Inter-sectional Cougar Action Network) and Out Front (an initiative spearheaded by GSEC, MSPS, and Prism).

His connection with Linda Ketner, which began after he became part of the Ketner Scholars cohort, has only strengthened over his time as an undergraduate.

The new Ketner-Crunelle scholarship will begin supporting students who “advance the full dignity and equality of LGBTQ+ persons” in 2021.

Read more about this new scholarship in an upcoming issue of the College of Charleston Magazine!

QUE SEA LEY SCREENING
SPRING WGS EVENT RECAP

WGS programming for Women’s History Month (March) included an exclusive screening of Que Sea Ley (Let it be Law), a film that premiered just months before at the Cannes Film Festival. WGS partnered with many departments and programs to make this screening possible.

The event was moderated by Dr. Julia McReynolds Pérez (Sociology & WGS), who also led a Q&A and mini-lecture about her own research on abortion rights in Argentina. Dr. McReynolds Pérez led the attendees in making their own green handkerchiefs* that they can proudly wear in solidarity with Latin American feminists.

*Across Latin America and the Caribbean, hundreds of thousands of activists are donning green handkerchiefs to show their support for sexual and reproductive health and rights in what’s being called “La Marea Verde,” or the Green Wave.

(aabove) WGS students and faculty show off their new green handkerchiefs in solidarity with Latin American feminists.

(right) Que Sea Ley (Let it be Law) documentary poster from the Cannes Film Festival

Tanner Crunelle (left) and Linda Ketner (right)
CELEBRATE OUR RECENT GRADUATES

HADLEY CHANCE
Hadley is a double major in Religious Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies at The College. Stirred by the intersections of her areas of study and fueled by social constructionist theory, Hadley has focused her education on examining how societal norms, perceptions, and biases toward gender and sexuality are constructed and influenced by religions globally. Hadley has cherished her time in the WGS program, highlighted by courses such as Women and Religion with Professor Doire and Black Women Writers with Dr. Martin. Through the program she has been instilled with the values of holistic, humanistic communication, and hopes to forge further into the academic world with those principles in mind. She spends her time tending to her house plants, reading, and hiking.

TANNER CRUNELLE
Tanner Crunelle (he/him) is from Charleston: a white, genderqueer poet, scholar, and activist and proud Southerner. At CofC, his leadership has been coalitional in nature, ranging across departments and divisions. This is enhanced through a place-based, intersectional feminist analytic comprised of perspectives from across the critical humanities. His scholarly work springs from forgotten, derelict, marginal discourses; generally, a preoccupation with aesthetics informs his approach to cultural texts of many forms. His creative writing practice is largely metapoetic, fascinated with questions of embodied trauma, constructions of the self, and collective consciousness. Recent honors are the Alison Piepmeier award from SEWSA, and an eponymous scholarship for queer student activism at the College. In his free time, he likes to cook and study films.

RAIJA HAUGHN
Raija is a senior double major in Women’s and Gender Studies and Communication. After graduating in December 2020, she hopes to go on to be a patient advocate for underserved populations in the realms of mental and reproductive health. Raija is currently working with the Women’s Health Research team on campus and will be working on a study at MUSC this summer dealing with coercion toward HIV+ women about contraceptives and infant feeding. Previously, Raija has worked with Cistern Yard News as both a writer and managing editor. She has also completed an internship with Skirt magazine and hopes to use the writing and communication skills she has gained to advocate for social equity in all aspects of her life.

SAM HOWILER
Sam is a Women’s and Gender Studies major and an Environmental and Sustainability Studies minor. He is passionate about environmental justice, intersectionality, taxing the rich, queer theory and pop music. In the future, Sam hopes to create a career path that incorporates the values of feminism and protecting the environment.
CELEBRATE OUR RECENT GRADUATES

CAM LACEY
Cam is a double major studying both Women’s and Gender Studies and Psychology. Cam will be moving back to New York to attend Columbia Nursing School, one of several prestigious institutions to which she was accepted. She will earn a Masters in Nursing and a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse-Midwifery. She would love to serve in underserved and underrepresented communities in hopes of giving a voice to the voiceless, and hope to the hopeless.

CAMILLA MOYER
Camilla Moyer is a double major at the College of Charleston in Psychology and Women’s and Gender Studies with a minor in Creative Writing. She chose to engage in Women’s and Gender Studies courses following the 2016 election and the political climate that followed and decided upon the major after feeling impassioned in her Intro to Women’s and Gender Studies course. She plans to pursue further schooling to help support and aid her community by means of mental health counseling. Camilla also hopes to further promote equity and the importance of diversity by publishing creative works that tell stories that are underrepresented in mainstream media culture.

CALLISTA PULLIN
Callista is a double major in Political Science and Women’s and Gender Studies with a minor in Psychology. She has always felt inspired by the community of students and professors that make up the Women’s and Gender Studies Department. Calista has found such a home in academia that she hopes to one day become a professor herself, helping future students to grow and empower themselves, just as Calista’s professors have done for her. In her free time, you’ll find Calista painting, roller skating around the streets of Charleston, or just trying to keep her plants alive.

JORDAN ROSS
Jordan is a Women’s and Gender Studies major pursuing a career in Cosmetology. She will be attending Cosmetology school in May after graduation. Jordan hopes that her intersectional education will help her open an inclusive hair salon. Jordan plans to continue living in Charleston, where she enjoys walking her dog Aspen and going to the beach.
CELEBRATE OUR RECENT GRADUATES

AIDAN TOUMEY
Aidan is a Women's and Gender Studies major with a minor in Film Studies at the College of Charleston. He declared a WGS major in the Spring of his Sophomore year after taking Asian Philosophies: Feminist & Queer Perspectives with Dr. Ian Sullivan which ignited his interest in intersectional queer studies. He plans to pursue a career in visual media production that both entertains and analyzes queer communities and their relations. When he isn't virtue signaling, he enjoys photography and beading.

TAYLOR VEAL
Taylor Veal is a Women's and Gender Studies Major at the College of Charleston with a minor in Psychology and a focus on human sexuality and behavioral psychology. Her favorite roles on campus have included working as a social mentor with the REACH program and as the Sexual Health Intern for the Office of the Dean of Students. With her Women's and Gender Studies degree, she hopes to provide medically accurate, queer-inclusive sex education to youth in the South.

RAEGAN WHITESIDE
Raegan Whiteside is a senior at the College of Charleston majoring in Women's and Gender Studies and English with a Concentration in Writing, Rhetoric and Publication and a minor in Spanish. Her most notable experience at the College was being part of the 2018 WGS Oral History research team dedicated to the documentation of the WGS Program’s rich history. The research was also, in part, for the Year of Women, celebrating the centennial of white women and the semicentennial of African Americans being accepted into The College. She also interned at Skirt, magazine, the first women’s magazine in Charleston and was the 2018-2019 Alison Piepmeier scholarship recipient. She holds a position as a bookseller at Buxton Books, an independent bookstore located downtown, and hopes to go into the publishing industry after graduation.

REAGAN WILLIAMS
Reagan is a double major studying Psychology and Women’s & Gender Studies. She is the co-founder of Mental Health in Melanin, an organization that fights mental health inequalities in communities of color. Reagan declared her major in Women’s & Gender Studies after working as an executive board member for CofC’s Gender & Sexuality Equity Center. It is her goal to continue studying Psychology after undergrad and pursue research in the area of prejudice and discrimination across the African Diaspora. She enjoys advocating, intellectual conversations, live music and sunsets on the beach.
CELEBRATE OUR RECENT GRADUATES

CLAIRE ZLOTNICKI
Claire Zlotnicki is double majoring in Women’s and Gender Studies and Psychology, with a minor in Political Science. She has studied at the University of Westminster in London, UK, and has interned at Dee Norton Child Advocacy Center in Charleston. She is interested in a career in social work or public health with a special interest connecting people to mental health resources.

READ MORE STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS ON OUR PROGRAM BLOG:
BLOGS.COFC.EDU/WGSCONNECT/CATEGORY/STUDENT-SPOILIGHTS

WGS AWARD RECIPIENTS

ALISON PIEPMEIER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
Sarah Claire Mullis

SKIRT. MAGAZINE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
Mariam Amireh

HSS SCHOLAR AWARDS
Camilla Moyer
Raegan Whiteside

WGS ENGAGED STUDENT AWARDS
Tanner Crunelle
Reagan Williams
"INTERRUPTING RACISM IN THE CLASSROOM"

This semester’s first T.E.A. with WGS event will be led by Dr. Charissa Owens (Office of Institutional Diversity). Join WGS for an interactive conversation and learn more about “Interrupting Racism in the Classroom,” including strategies for self-reflection, engaging students, and addressing racism and practicing anti-racism in our classrooms (or zoomrooms).

SEPTEMBER 29 @ 3:00

RSVP FOR THE EVENT: BIT.LY/3M8AYMF

OCTOBER
"FROM PAST TO PRESENT: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ABOUT PROBLEMATIC DISCIPLINARY CONTRIBUTORS"

NOVEMBER
"EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION: BEYOND DIVERSITY AND OTHER METAPHORS"

DECEMBER-FEBRUARY
WE WANT TO DO MORE THAN SURVIVE: ABOLITIONIST TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM BY BETTINA LOVE (BOOK CLUB)

* = STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS!

RECURRING

• **DAILY** — Events & opportunities posts on the WGS Instagram page and WGS Connect blog.
• **WEEKLY** — Weekly email bulletin sent out every Monday-Tuesday
• **ADVISING** — Make an appointment with Kris De Welde or Dr. Kollath-Cattano
WGS EVENTS

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:
"SOPHONISBA BRECKINRIDGE, THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE" WITH DR. ANYA JABOUR (8/28)

Did you attend the latest WGS virtual lecture featuring Dr. Anya Jabour (Regents Professor of History, University of Montana)? Moderated by our very own scholar of women’s history Dr. Sandy Slater (History, WGS), this special event centered Dr. Jabour’s research on Sophonisba Breckinridge, leader of the suffrage movement who sought to address the needs of women of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and create coalitions that brought together working women, African Americans, and immigrants. After the ratification of the 19th amendment, she continued to promote social justice on a variety of fronts, helping to shape immigration policy, social programs, and labor regulations in the 1920s and 30s.

After Dr. Jabour’s lecture, Dr. Slater led a virtual Q&A on Dr. Jabour’s work on Breckinridge’s lifelong reform activity, her long-term partnership with Edith Abbott, and the role of lesbians in the suffrage movement.

WATCH THE FULL LECTURE & Q&A ON YOUTUBE:
BIT.LY/3BK0PAI

FALL BOOK CLUB:
VANGUARD: HOW BLACK WOMEN BROKE BARRIERS, WON THE VOTE, & INSISTED ON EQUALITY FOR ALL
BY MARTHA S. JONES

WGS is partnering with the Avery Research Center, the Libraries, African American Studies, and the departments of History and Political Science to host a fall book club for Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All by Martha S. Jones (Basic books, 2020) to commemorate the 19th amendment and continue our interrogation of “historical and contemporary feminism’s culpability in racism” (as per WGS’s Commitments to Anti-racism, see p. 2).

Open to all!

INTERESTED IN JOINING US?
STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS ON OUR BLOG & VIA OUR EMAIL LISTSERVS!
Many of us have been struggling to keep up our productivity, mental health, and wellbeing during the past few months. Keeping up our motivation and healthy habits is already a task under ordinary circumstances, and these days we find ourselves swimming in a sea of self-care on social media. But how helpful are they really, when many articles only offer face-value advice that doesn’t take into account the real and multi-layered obstacles our communities are now facing? How can we prioritize self-care and establish healthy habits that will last and truly nurture us so that we can continue on during the quarantine and beyond?

WGS consulted an expert to help tackle this dilemma. Dr. Shanesha Brooks-Tatum (pictured right), self-care expert and founder of the Life Balance Institute who describes herself as “a warrior for women’s wellness,” hosted two webinars for WGS faculty and students on April 16-17. These informative, hour-long workshops, titled “Self-Care During Covid and Beyond: Practical and Radical Ways to Be Present and to Preserve Oneself and One’s Community,” armed participants with a specialized “wellness manifesto” to help them work towards beginning new and lasting self-care habits. Just in case you missed these great workshops, see below for a few key strategies to developing your very own plan for wellness.

**Reflect Upon and Celebrate Your Journey**
- Begin by thinking about your personal journey. What sacrifices have you made? How have these sacrifices made you stronger? And what are some ways that you can celebrate your past to help invigorate your present and future?

**Identify Barriers**
- What barriers or obstacles exist between you and carving out time for self-care? Are these barriers mostly real or imagined? How might you make changes and/or ask others for help to surmount them?

**Your Restorative Activities**
- Consider: What makes you happy? What do you do to relax? And how can you make the most of these moments of joy?

**Prioritize and Plan**
- Ask yourself, why is self-care important to you right now? How can taking time to recharge help you support yourself and others in your community? What areas of self-care are the most urgent?
- **PRIORITIZE AND PLAN**

  **TIP:** If you’ve ever written a yoga mantra, you already have a good idea of how to write your manifesto. Begin sentences with phrases like, “I commit to...” “I will...” “To achieve my goals, I pledge to...”

---

**Dr. Shanesha Brooks-Tatum is the Founder and CEO of the Life Balance Institute. As Founder and President of the National Annual Black Women’s Life Balance and Wellness Conference, Dr. Brooks-Tatum is also a recent National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow at Emory University and former Visiting Scholar-in-Residence at Agnes Scott College. She is committed to working to provide an open, honest, and intergenerational space for women to learn and share strategies for achieving balance and wellness in all areas of life.**
I decided to go to the College of Charleston because of the liberal arts education. I knew that studying only one subject for four years would not bring me the joy or the knowledge that I wanted to get from my college experience. In my first semester, I decided that I wanted to go into law or politics and I had to find majors that were going to give me fundamental knowledge about laws, justice, philosophy, inequity, and a lot more. I decided on WGS when I learned that I could take all types of classes in different areas of study with a focus on gender and/or sexuality. This allowed me to study both historical and current issues like women in war, gender in politics, and trans representation in media. My classes challenged me and encouraged me often and I am lucky to have taken all of them. Out of all these wonderful experiences, the most impactful was getting to write my Bachelor’s Essay in the WGS major. With the help of Dr. Claire Curtis (Political Science) and Dr. Kris De Welde (WGS), I later presented my research about the relationship between women’s education, confidence, and politics. The process of planning, writing, and presenting my research gave me ownership over my studies and helped grow my own confidence. It has informed my practices as a student and a teacher.

What have you been doing since graduation? How did your major in WGS prepare you for your current position?

I am currently a 4th grade reading teacher in Miami-Dade County, Florida through Teach for America, a program that places people in classrooms that receive an unequal amount of resources. I am white and almost every student I teach is part of BIPOC communities. I have to work each day to be an antiracist educator and to ensure that I am doing all that I can for my students to get the education they deserve. This involves my challenging myself daily. The major taught me how to consider new perspectives, how to replace what my earlier education has taught me, and how to question my own biased thinking. I could not be where I am today without it. Thanks to my studies in WGS, I am now able to discuss racism, sexism, transphobia, and other important topics with my students in the classroom.

What are your aspirations for the near future?

In the future, I would like to continue towards a career in policy or law so that I can help dismantle and change the racist and unjust society we live in.

"THANKS TO MY STUDIES IN WGS, I AM NOW ABLE TO DISCUSS RACISM, SEXISM, TRANSPHOBIA, AND OTHER IMPORTANT TOPICS WITH MY STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM."

- SAM MCCARTHY ('20)
What projects are you working on currently?

"Moving Beyond Cultural Tropes: The Struggle for Political Visibility among Amerindians in Guyana 2015-Present" This project explores: 1. how the Guyanese postcolonial state continues the practice of strategic visibility: reducing Amerindian representation to cultural tropes as a means to satisfy the discourse around national unity and inclusivity, and strategic invisibility: substituting cultural representations for political power as a means of further displacing and marginalizing Amerindians from the political sphere; 2. How are Amerindians navigating and resisting the strategic visibility and invisibility approach of the State? A State that continues to view them as cultural tropes to satisfy the discourse of national unity and inclusivity, while simultaneously through practices of neglect, cooption, and fragmentation seek to close off and manipulate spaces for political contestation among Amerindian groups.

I am also currently working on "The Journey of Doing and Becoming a Decolonial Ethnographer: Lessons Learned from Indigenous Women's Research Project in Guyana." This paper draws attention to how scholars engaged in research in indigenous communities, specifically with indigenous women, might engage a feminist praxis of reflexivity built upon decolonizing methodologies. Drawing on my fieldwork among the Wowetta Women's Cassava Argo-Processing group in the North Rupununi of Guyana, I share the experience of my ethnographic journey of being an ethnographer engaged in researching and becoming a decolonial ethnographer. Activating a decolonial approach to ethnography enabled me to identify the power dynamics of "waiting", positionality and representation that were present or particularly challenging when engaging in research with indigenous communities.

How do you incorporate WGS in your scholarship and classroom?

As a WGS faculty affiliate, my course contribution to the program each spring semester is teaching Comparative Gender Politics. This course seeks to enable students to explore the ontological and epistemological roots of gender. We begin by addressing such questions as: What counts as female? What counts as male? What counts as gender? Where did our ideas about femininity and masculinity come from? Do we all answer these questions in the same way? How do we make connections among women and other minoritized groups, across geographies, time and based on different social identities? Therefore, answering such questions requires us to look at how societies are organized, and at the ways in which we, individually and collectively, accept, value, participate in, and challenge gendered definitions of our lives. To do this, we take an approach that can best be summarized by the phrase: Thinking backwards and Thinking outwards. This means that issues are looked at historically and are also situated in a global context. The aim of this is three-fold: To encourage students to develop critical questions about aspects of their daily realities that they take for granted; using an intersectional lens to enable the making of connections between, and think about differences across the experiences of women and minoritized groups, across geographies, and to allow the exploration of how society works, in order to think about, and evaluate strategies for making social change.

If you could teach a dream course, what would it be called and what would it cover?

My dream course would be titled Feminist Indigenous Caribbean Geographies. This title is actually inspired by an intellectually invigorating and gratifying workshop Indigenous Geographies and Feminist Geographies I attended in 2017 at the University of the West Indies (St Augustine) in Trinidad and Tobago. The workshop with input from activists, indigenous women from across the Caribbean, artists, students and scholars gathered to share the stories and experiences of indigenous women at the forefront of the struggle to transform the current global political economy built on invasion, decimation and extraction. In addition to exploring the various dimensions of resistance strategies engaged in by indigenous Caribbean communities, my dream course Feminist Indigenous Caribbean Geographies would center around: problematizing the construct of indigeneity and challenging the notion of the Caribbean as a non-indigenous space.

Dr. Hollis France was born in Guyana, the only English-Speaking country in South America. She is the acting chair of the Department of Political Science at the College of Charleston. Dr. France's ongoing research focuses on diverse and social economies as alternative development models, the intersections of gender and political economy, indigenous epistemologies in the Anglophone Caribbean, and indigenous political mobilization and development discourses. In the wider Charleston community, she is a member of the worker owned Transformative Teaching Collective (TTC) which centers on a social justice praxis of liberation and action, a current board member of the South Carolina affiliate American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and a board member of the Charleston Council for International Visitors.
TWO NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE WGS CAB

The WGS program is thrilled to welcome two new members to the program Community Advisory Board (CAB), Barbie Schreiner and Ali Titus. The WGS Community Advisory Board (CAB) is made up of ambassadors of feminism and the Women’s and Gender Studies Program in the community. The CAB’s mission is to “endeavor to bridge campus and community, support students and faculty in gaining access to resources, and promote feminism and gender justice at large.” Barbie and Ali join current CAB members Amanda Bunting Comen, Margaret Pilarski, Callie Shell (chair), and Leah Suárez.

BARBIE SCHREINER
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, LOWCOUNTRY LOCAL FIRST

Barbie brings more than 15 years of community outreach experience to the CAB. From her work with large scale nonprofits like United Way and American Red Cross, to regional organizations like Coastal Crisis Chaplaincy and the College of Charleston, her commitment to the greater good is ubiquitous. Also committed to life-long learning, Barbie earned her Masters of Public Administration for Nonprofit Management from the College of Charleston and has taught as an adjunct professor in the program.

Prior to that, she received her bachelors degree in Public Relations from Ferris State University. Her feminist spirit was ignited in high school when she was exposed to feminine empowerment at her all girls school. Currently Barbie works at Lowcountry Local First as the Director of Development, working to advocate and promote local independent businesses which enhance the culture and character of our community.

ALI TITUS
POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, ACLU SOUTH CAROLINA

Ali is originally from West Columbia, SC and received an undergraduate degree in Psychology from Presbyterian College followed by a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from College of Charleston, where she focused on nonprofit management and social justice. She has served in various nonprofit roles, including Director of Development for the ACLU of SC and Program Officer at the Coastal Community Foundation of SC where she facilitated the awarding of more than $1.5M annually across a nine-county service area and developed expertise in organizational equity and inclusion.

In her role as Awareness and Advocacy Manager at Center for Women, Ali created and executed the organization’s first advocacy platform and programming targeted at advancing the status of women in South Carolina. She directed a learning incubator for College of Charleston Master of Public Administration students who provide research and capacity to nonprofit organizations and municipalities throughout the Charleston region before returning to the ACLU of SC in 2019 as Policy and Communications Director. In her life outside of work, Ali enjoys cooking, listening to records, and spending time with her family (especially Levon and Hugo, the world’s two most perfect dogs).

WGS STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) was born from one of our July 2020 commitments to anti-racism (p. 2) to “include minoritized student voices in program-level decision making.” The newly formed SAC recently penned their resolution and charge, which reads as follows (excerpted):

“We, students and recent alumni of the CofC WGS Program, care about contributing to the Program’s continued success; and, we align ourselves with marginal political agendas. We are committed to long-term goals of institutional change for collective liberation. …working alongside the Program director, WGS Executive Committee (EC), and WGS Community Advisory Board (CAB) to further vascularize our Program-community, enact the participatory demands and promises of liberatory pedagogies, and combat intersectional oppression. Therefore, we negotiate the difficult lines between our respective ‘home’ and the larger campus ‘community’ in which we often find ourselves. Negotiating these distinctions catalyzes processes of generative and contemplative action, in pursuit of contributing to our collective sustainability and freedom.”

Members: Tanner Crunelle (’20), Kristen Graham, Sarah Claire Mullis, Jasmine Tindall, and Reagan Williams.

WGS students: Email Reagan Williams (SAC chair) for information about how to be involved in SAC efforts to strengthen and expand the WGS program.
In “Becoming Millennial,” we looked at a cluster of mostly sci-fi Hollywood movies around the turn of the century that interrogate established structures of identity, especially biological sexuality and heteronormativity. Films like *Being John Malkovich*, *The Matrix*, *The Truman Show*, *Fight Club*, and *eXistenZ*, to name a few, all express profound skepticism about the truth of the “real world,” which we take for granted, but which imprisons us in its rules about who we can be and what we can do. The main characters in these films all test the boundaries of reality in order to escape its imaginary limits and become a more authentic version of themselves. The ways in which science fiction depicts the constraints of reality and the act of transcending them is really fun to watch and is also quite conceptually profound and nuanced.

What is especially interesting to me, as a literary scholar, is that the visual language of transformation (becoming) in this contemporary genre of sci-fi often reflects ancient representations of inanimate objects like statues and puppets coming to life. So, we studied origin myths of metamorphosis—especially Ovid’s myth of Pygmalion—to contextualize our understanding of the emergence of the non-binary, posthuman Millennial person.

I wanted students to be able to study the construction of Western gender and sexuality and the deconstruction of its supposed Truth with material that appealed to their senses, is imminently relevant, and is also a looking glass into the origins of Western ideologies about identity formation. I also wanted the classroom to be an anxiety-free space of community to work through all of this complex material. So, I decided to apply for a grant from the *Committee on Innovative Learning in the Liberal Arts and Sciences* (ILAS) to hold the class in a “pop-up” Montessori environment. The grant award allowed me to purchase furniture, lamps, food, an essential oil diffuser, and some other materials that we used each week to transform our traditional classroom into a flexible workspace with lounge-style seating options and discussion pods to suit different learning styles and preferences. I also gave students choices for what they could work on during the class period and included reflective journaling, discussion-board posting, and peer-editing exercises to keep them engaged and break down the stress of writing papers.

We had established a truly great vibe and rhythm in class when the pandemic hit and our delightful Montessori zone was banished to the virtual reality of Zoom. Having never taught online before, I was anxious about the transition in the midst of a world health crisis, no less. Once we were all together again, a Brady Bunch grid of faces peering out at each other from our homes, apartments, and dorm rooms, it was ok. Different, but still productive and communal, even at a distance. I was still able to produce work choices that the students used in Zoom “chat rooms.” And, thanks to the students' active engagement in responding to one another’s discussion posts, I was able to structure lessons that bounced off their ideas. It was a magnificent group of students whose intelligence, curiosity, and flexibility made it one of the very best teaching experiences of my career.

Dr. Lauren Ravalico has been an assistant professor at the College of Charleston since 2014, and is a former member of the WGS Executive Committee. She is a specialist in 18th-19th-century French literature, art, and culture. Her research focuses on the history of the senses, affect theory, women in the arts, gender and sexuality studies, and the social history of dialogue and networking. Dr. Ravalico was the Director of “Global Foodways,” the 2018-2019 World Affairs Signature Series for the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs. In addition to the special topics courses she teaches for WGS, Dr. Ravalico also regularly teaches French 313: French Composition in Cultural Contexts, as well as French 335: Interpreting French Literature and Film.
ANNOUNCEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
WGS STUDENTS, FACULTY, & STAFF

- Kathy Béres Rogers (English) submitted an article "Form and Deformity in George Crabbe’s The Borough to Review of English Studies. AND with Christy Kollath-Cattanooga. Beth Sundstrom, Cara Delay, Allison Foley, and Jacob Steere-Williams, submitted an NEH Initiatives Grant for our Medical Humanities program to develop classes and host lectures focused on inequalities in healthcare. Have you visited the website for our medical humanities minor? go.cofc.edu/medh


- Cara Delay (History, WGS) and Beth Sundstrom (Communication, WGS) recently published Birth Control: What Everybody Needs to Know (Oxford Univ. Press, 2020).

- Dave Hansen (Management & Marketing) taught the first ever Gender and Entrepreneurship course (summer 2020). Dave’s curriculum included 10 cis and trans women speakers from a variety of perspectives – academic research, personal experience, government support. All of them are recorded via zoom and he’s happy to share them!

- Melissa Hughes (Biology) et al.: “Teaching Animal Behavior in the Midst of a Pandemic: A Primer” - https://ecoevorxiv.org/64y25 (as a pre-print under review, this article has been downloaded over 160 times!)

- Todd LeVasseur (Quality Enhancement Plan, Sustainability Literacy Institute) is teaching Race, Gender, and Climate Change as an FYE this fall. This course was inspired by the “Teaching with Intent” feminist/inclusive pedagogy workshop held in summer 2019.


- Lisa Ross (Psychology) delivered an online sermon: “So What? Meaning Making and Well-being” at The Unitarian Church in Charleston (July, 2020). Available as a recording upon request!
VISIT THE WGS PROGRAM BLOG: WGS CONNECT!

STAY UP TO DATE WITH THE WGS PROGRAM, COMMUNITY EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND SO MUCH MORE!

WGS CONNECT PLUGS YOU IN TO ALL OF THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AND GIVES YOU THE INSIDE SCOOP ON ALL THINGS WGS.

BLOGS.COFC.EDU/WGSCONNECT

FOLLOW THE WGS INSTAGRAM PAGE! @COFCWGS

This issue of WGS Connect was designed & edited by Percy Haas. Special thanks to Shanesha Brooks-Tatum, Kris De Welde, Hollis France, Sam McCarthy, Lauren Ravalico, Barbie Schreiner, and Ali Titus for their contributions.