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Neeraj WGS Alumni Group

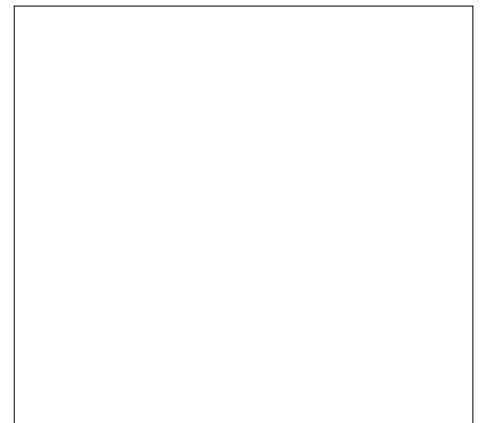
An i-Racism Speaker Series

Event from Academic Year 2020-2021

Chair's Column: Dr. Diane Price Herndl

I asked my daughter to make this piece of art for me for 2021 and I keep a version of it on my computer's desktop. I'm not a person who is much given to inspirational art or slogans, but it feels like this is a year for us all to be assessing how to move back into what is going to count as normal now. Most of us would agree that things before the pandemic were not good enough to settle for, but can we rebuild back better?

For feminists, there is a lot to assess. Study after study shows that women lost a lot of ground during the pandemic and communities of color likewise suffered more and lost more ground than white communities. As



Dr. Diane Price Herndl

WGS Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Jill McCracken

Hi! I'm Jill McCracken, and I am a Professor in Women's and Gender Studies and in English at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg campus. I had the wonderful opportunity to join the Department of Women's and Gender Studies in August 2020, and I am thrilled to be here!

My primary areas of research focus on sex work and trafficking in the sex industry, women and incarceration, and the impact of sexuality education on marginalized communities.

Having worked with sex workers and victims of trafficking for almost 20 years, I am also the co-founder and co-director of the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) Behind Bars (swopbehindbars.org), a national grassroots social justice network dedicated to the fundamental human rights of sex workers and victims of trafficking that focuses on ending sex trafficking, violence, and stigma through education, community building, advocacy, and policy. where I completed a Fulbright Specialist Project to investigate the

I draw primarily on ethnographic and qualitative research methods, and I strive to integrate community-based, participatory research into all of my work.

I had the amazing opportunity to collaborate with the New Zealand Prostitute's Collective in 2018

WGS Alumni Spotlight: Yordanos Molla

Yordanos Molla received a BA degree in International Studies and Women's & Gender Studies in May, 2018 and an MA in Ethics, Peace, & Human Rights from American University in 2020. She is currently the Deputy Field Director at Equality Florida.

I am the Deputy Field Director at Equality Florida and mostly work on

Join the WGS Alumni Group

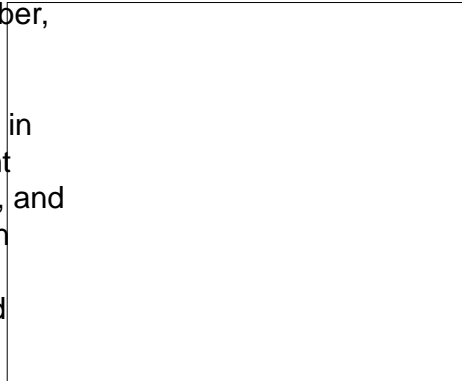
Introducing the USF WGS Alumni Group (UWAG)! Committed to upholding the goals and values of the Women's and Gender Studies Department (formerly Women's Studies Department), the USF WGS Alumni group was created by WGS alumni to help former WGS students give back to the community and connect with other like-minded alumni.

The USF WGS Alumni Group is still in its early stages and needs volunteers to help make it a success. By becoming an active member or joining the leadership team, you can help choose what initiatives and events UWAG should spearhead. UWAG will always be based on the interests and goals of the WGS alumni.

If you're interested in becoming an active member, holding a leadership position, or just want to learn more about the group, please contact Communications/Student Outreach Coordinator, Daynah Singmo6 (u2 (a7/m [6.042 14.4s1 (h Si)6 (n)6 theluthedenmmts Uurs hefi8.9 h6 (g a leadfi8.9 h6 (i)6 (t)5 (o)4 ((n)7 (s/S).01

WGS Alumni Spotlight: Katie Maloney

Katie Maloney graduated in December, 2020 with a B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies with a minor in Sociology. She is currently enrolled in the Human Resources Management graduate certificate program at USF, and recently started work at Metropolitan Ministries as an assistant in Human Resources. Katie is the founder and current President of the new WGS Alumni Group.



Katie Maloney

question remained the same: "What can you even do with that degree?" I took the class Careers & Professionalism in WGS with Dr. Wendland and what I learned in this class was invaluable. I realized that there was no direct pipeline from a WGS degree to a WGS job. I learned that you don't have to get a job directly related to WGS. You can leverage your WGS knowledge to make a positive impact in whatever position or field you choose.

During my first semester at USF, I took a course called Human Sexual Behavior. I absolutely loved the class and at the end of the semester our professor told us if we enjoyed the class we should consider the WGS program. I was so excited I enrolled in Intro to Women's Studies and declared WGS as my major before the next semester started.

Learning about intersectionality was absolutely transformative for me personally, politically, and academically. Also, as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, it meant the world to me that I was able to take classes like Intro to LGBTQ+ Cultures and Sexualities Studies. What I learned from majoring in WGS was invaluable. It challenged me and allowed me to grow into a more compassionate, resilient, and dynamic person.

Katie is leveraging what she learned in WGS into a career in human resources. In the future I would like to work in Human Resources, specifically, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (since writing this, Katie has obtained a position in human resources). I chose to major in Women's and Gender studies

because of the department's focus on developing students to be active citizens that work for social justice and change. My major enhanced my critical thinking and analytical skills by encouraging me to approach all topics with an intersectional lens, which considers the impact of all identities (such as race, gender, sexuality, age, ability, nationality, etc.). It promotes effective diversity and inclusion in all sectors of society, but in this case in employment. Now more than ever organizations are accepting the importance of cultivating an environment that supports and values diversity, which is an area WGS has extensively prepared me for. WGS equipped me with the knowledge and tools to effectively work with and for a variety of individuals, which allows me to gain multiple perspectives and collaborate well with others.

Katie overcame her worry about "what can you do with a degree in WGS?". When I first started telling people I changed my major to WGS I always got the same question. While the range went anywhere from curious, concerned to condescending, the

lets me know I chose to major in WGS because I was passionate about social justice and change. People preach to do what you love, but often when you take their advice you get pushback on the practicality and financial aspects of your pursuit. I can't say I wasn't scared at first, but I knew that what I was learning from WGS was significant and essential. People may ask you what you can do with a WGS degree, but the question should be what can't you do with one. WGS is an interdisciplinary field, meaning it incorporates a variety of disciplines. You will walk with invaluable knowledge and skills that you will use for the rest of your life, both personally and professionally. But most importantly, you will walk away a better person.

Katie is the founder of the new WGS Alumni Group and is passionate about its success: During my last semester at USF I started an internship with the WGS Department. I collaborated with Dr. Tangela Serls and Sarah Jünke to start forming the WGS Alumni Group. What excites me the most about this project is having the opportunity to maintain my connection with the WGS

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WGS Alumni Spotlight: Daynah Singh

Daynah Singh graduated from USF with a B.A. in Mass Communications with minors in Women and Gender Studies and Creative Writing. She currently works as a Junior Copywriter at an advertising agency based in downtown Tampa, using her background in WGS to increase diversity, inclusion, and minority representation in the advertising industry. Daynah is currently the Communications and Student Outreach Coordinator for the new WGS Alumni Group.

With that in mind, I found myself drawn to areas of study surrounding race, gender, and sexuality. I wanted to understand how these factors shaped our

In 2019, I graduated with my bachelor's degree in Mass Communications with a minor in Women and Gender Studies. When I first started at USF, I had no idea the Women's and Gender Studies department existed. My first introduction to WGS came from taking the course Female Experience in America as a random elective. Through this course, I realized my current major and WGS could work really well together to improve the representation and diversity issues found in the media, and that was the moment I decided I wanted to pursue WGS as my minor.

WGS Alumni Group Events in Fall 2021

UWAG has two events already planned for the fall semester for WGS alumni.

To stay up to date on more UWAG events and projects, follow us:

Instagram: @usfwgsalumni

WGS Website: <https://bit.ly/3wRcsWt>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/wgsfriends/

“Visibility and Remembrance:

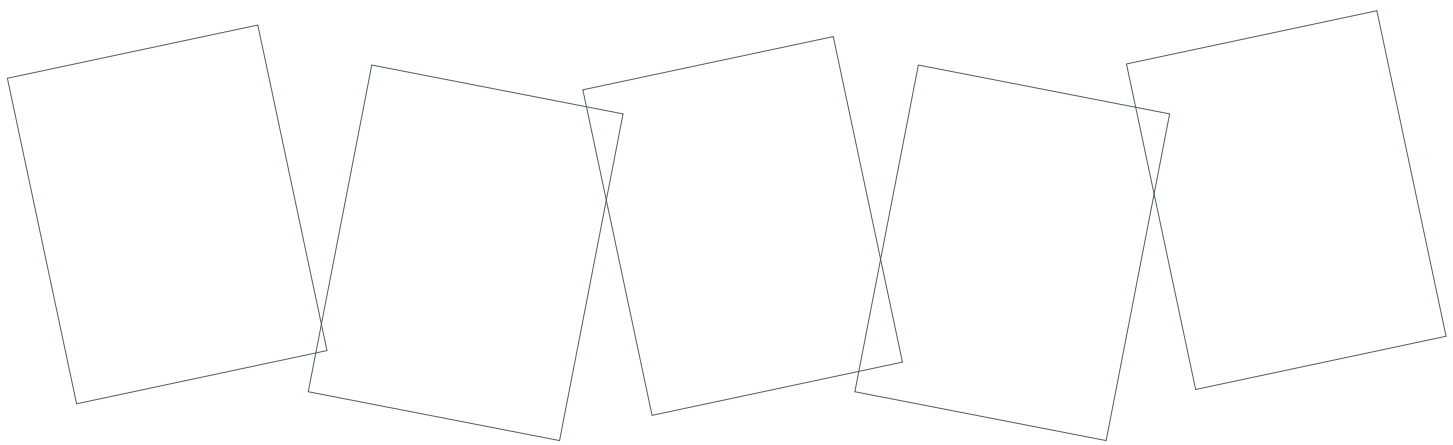
WGS Diversity Group

Beginning in the fall semester, WGS were also inspired by the USF equity, and inclusion efforts being done created a department Diversity Group Black Employee Steering Committee at the University. WGS's commitment and also began an Anti-Racism Series (USF BESC) call to work towards a more inclusive and anti-racist USF. Racism Series will continue in the fall virtually, to have discussions around For the past year, the USF BESC has been providing the Enlightenment Workshop Series, which "presents

The WGS Diversity Group organically courageous conversations designed by the WGS diversity liaisons took up the charge issued by the College of Arts and Sciences' diversity committee to establish formal trainings and informal activities related to anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion. The WGS Diversity Group includes Dr. Kim Golombisky, Sarah Jünke, Dr. Angela Serls (WGS diversity liaison), Dr. Helis Sikk (WGS diversity liaison), Sabeedah Ravat (graduate student member), and Tracy Meshey (spring 2021 diversity intern). To that end, our WGS Anti-Racism Series is meant to serve as an additional resource to the further the diversity,

WGS Anti-Racism Series

The WGS Anti-Racism Series kicked In November, WGS's own visiting against intersex, trans, and gender o in October, 2020 with a screening instructor, Dr. Melinda Mills, hosted and discussion of the film, *Suppressed* on her book, *The Borders of Race: 2020: The Fight to Vote*. The film, *Patrolling "Multiracial" Identities*, and In March, WGS graduate students which is available to watch free online discussed her research into multiracial identities and how people manage these communities of Color and Other Georgia in 2018 that disproportionately identities publicly and privately. *Marginalized Groups*." The panelists a affected Black Americans. Dr. David Rubin spoke in January discussed key themes in anti-black discourse, including ongoing social In October, the Series brought Keith about "Intersex Rage, Biopolitical justice work combatting anti-black Woods the Chief Diversity Officer Protest, and the Movement for Black racism in communities of color. at NPR, for a workshop, "Digital Lives," discussing how the Movement Dialogues about Race." Woods worked Black Lives can help us to rethink WGS Anti-Racism Series will be with event attendees to grow in their and re-evaluate the interconnections back in the fall 2021 semester. To stay anti-racism work and practice. between scientific and medical racism informed about Series events, visit: and state-sanctioned medical violence <https://bit.ly/3vohEB8>.



WGS Undergraduate Student Spotlight: Emily Hernandez

Emily is minoring in Women's and Gender Studies and majoring in Integrated Public Relations and Advertising, and will graduate in the spring of 2022. A few women that inspire Emily are Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, and Dr. Tangel Serls.

I wanted to pursue WGS before I knew it was a minor/major offered at USF. During my first year, I took the intro class and I remember being so captivated by the readings that by the end of the semester, I knew that one class was not enough so I googled "Women and Gender Studies minor at USF" and here I am today.

I'm originally from Trinidad and Tobago where the closest thing to Women's and Gender Studies is general social studies and the words 'feminisms' or 'queer' simply don't exist within those pedagogies and I hoped that these classes would cover these topics extensively. A few two classes expectations were exceeded as I was learning about the global LGBTQ+ experience, disabilities, feminist theories, and much more.

I soon realized that I had this great

privilege to be able to pursue this and to only enhance my knowledge not just for my personal gain but so that I can pass knowledge down to those who didn't experience my privilege.

My future career plans change almost every week but more recently I decided to pursue a master's degree in Women's and Gender Studies and possibly a PhD in Social Justice Communications. I would love to teach at the intersection of these two fields at a tertiary level in the future as well as practice social justice communications.

WGS has definitely helped me with writing but it has also expanded my understanding of just how

important intersectionality is in every

aspect of the world especially when communicating the oppressions of different communities in order to obtain due justice.

It is so difficult to choose a favorite WGS course, they have all been my favorite. I will say that Black Feminisms has been an amazing experience. Not only am I interacting with material authored and created by phenomenal Black women and non-binary folks but I am interacting with a class of the most accepting and amazing people I have ever met. Dr. Serls leads the class in such a way that I am always comfortable to be myself and share openly.

I would recommend this degree every time. I would say that if you have the opportunity to take just one class, take it because there is nothing to lose and everything to gain by stepping outside your comfort zone to learn about and understand the stories of the oppressed and apply this knowledge to your own life. Finally this

WGS Undergraduate Student Spotlight: Jesus Gogo

Jesus is a Women's and Gender Studies major who just graduated in spring of 2021.

Jesus found WGS to be a good fit for his career plans of educating children: I changed my major to Women & Gender Studies because while I was majoring in Elementary Education, I was disappointed in how little say elementary teachers have in their lesson planning, what they teach, and how they teach.

My main goal in becoming an elementary teacher was to include an inclusive education where I introduced students to different identities (gay, lesbian, bi, trans, non-binary, etc.) and different family dynamics (single parent home, 2 father home, 2 mother home, etc.). After taking Dr. Rubin's "Queer Theory" course as an elective, I immediately knew I could learn more and teach more with a Women & Gender Studies degree than I could with an Elementary Education degree.

My Capstone course with Dr. Serls was my favorite because the class was so small and it gave all of us an opportunity to really listen to one another and to express our opinions in a smaller community. This was the first course during COVID-19 that I felt really helped me feel some type of normalcy.

Also, shoutout to Careers and Professionalism in WGS with Dr. Wendland! I learned so much about

how to navigate the workforce as a queer person and learned so much about myself.

When asked if he recommends WGS as a major, Jesus responded, "Absolutely!" My degree in WGS taught me to question everything, research it, and understand the whys. I am a more thoughtful, intentional, and empathetic person because of my WGS degree, my fabulous professors, and my colleagues.

WGS has helped me understand the intersectionality of varying identities and how we all differ. Class discussions with my colleagues allowed me to hear and understand first-hand experiences that you can't get from a textbook or quiz. I thought I was open-minded when I started my WGS courses, however I learned about my own implicit biases and

WGS Graduate Student Spotlight: Sabeedah Ravat

Sabeedah graduated from USF with a BA in Biology and a minor in Women's and Gender Studies, and is now completing their MA in Women's and Gender Studies and will graduate in May, 2022. After graduation, Sabeedah plans to pursue doctoral studies to become a professor and writer. They are an immigrant from South Africa, a first-generation college student, and an avid sports fan.

I got my undergraduate degree in Biology with plans to attend medical school. I decided to do a minor in WGS just out of personal interest in the field. From the moment I took my first class, I fell in love with the field and the potential I could have in it. When it came time to apply to graduate schools, I decided to follow my passions and take a leap of faith.

I have a lot of research interests but my two primary focuses are queer Muslim experiences and politics, as well as the way race, gender, and sexuality are

WGS A liate Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Diana Leon-Boys

I am an assistant professor in the

WGS Graduate Feminist Research Colloquium

The WGS Graduate Feminist Research Colloquium was held on April 19, 2021. Eighteen graduate students in WGS's Feminist Issues, Research, and Methods course presented their research on a diverse range of topics.

Panel: Critical Counter Narratives

- Sabeehah Ravat, Queering Islam: The Transformative Promise of Queer Muslim Liberation (Women and Gender Studies)
- A

WGS Talk & Toast

The annual WGS Talk & Toast event in human sexuality or Sexology to USF toward Jamaican LGBTQ+ people, took place on April 27, 2021. The event became a human sexuality education social issues, and culture. was held virtually this year due to COVID-19. whose speciality is marginalized communities such as disabled individuals, the kink community, and polyamorous circles.

WGS MA students Stella Escalante, Zoe Knowles, and Lauren Wright shared with us their thoughts on WGS prior to attending the WGS program, their research, and their futures after graduating. I had never thought more deeply about the world around us outside of a psychological context. I wasn't into feminist thought or theory (or had limited knowledge of it), and only dealt with things on what I consider to be a surface level. With WGS, I consider things from a wide range of perspectives and formulate my own understanding based upon different scholars and my own experiences with others like me and even those unlike me. I am incredibly grateful for the knowledge I have received from this program and it will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Sophia "Stella" Escalante: My work focuses on the intersection of race, sexuality, disability, and crime, and how having intersecting identities affect treatment in a myriad of spaces, including education, healthcare, society in general, and laws and policies put in place by local, state, and federal governmental bodies.

My research portfolio, which is named "Violence Against the Humanity of Black, Brown, and Disabled Bodies," is dedicated to the discussion of how Black and Brown disabled bodies are harmed by the society around us, which is built upon racist, sexist, ableist, and dehumanizing thought processes and actions, such as through the usage of historical sexual stereotypes of Black women in pornography and poor protections and justice for disabled students of colour.

My plan is to officially take a break of two to three years after I graduate. After that, I aim to go for my doctorate.

My research interests include LGBTQ+ studies, queer theory, transnational feminisms, queer criminology, and Caribbean studies. Primarily I focus my research on LGBTQ+ rights in Jamaica.

Welcome Incoming WGS Grad Students!

WGS is pleased to welcome all of our incoming MA students this fall. Two of them, Quinn Bachman and Juyeon Shin, shared with us their research interests and why they chose WGS at USF.

Quinn
Bachman: I

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 Gender 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.

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.

WGS Faculty, 2020-2021

Dr. Diane Price Herndl
Professor and Chair

Dr. Elizabeth Bell
Professor

Jennifer Ellerman- ueen
Instructor and Graduate Program Coordinator

Dr. Kim Golombisky
Associate Professor

Dr. Jill McCracken
Professor

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