

WGS news

Department of Women's & Gender Studies
University of South Florida
Spring, 2019



University of South Florida

Department of Women's & Gender Studies

2018-2019

WGS Faculty & Staff:

Diane Price Herndl
Professor & Chair

Jennifer Ellerman-Queen
Instructor, Graduate Program
Coordinator, & Office Manager

Kim Golombisky
Associate Professor

Michelle Hughes Miller
Associate Professor

Sarah Jünke
Project Coordinator

David Rubin
Assistant Professor

Tangela Serls
Instructor & Director of
Undergraduate Studies

Milton Wendland
Instructor & Internship Director

WGS Academic Programs

Undergraduate:

Major in Women's & Gender
Studies: 36 hours

Second Major in Women's &
Gender Studies: 30 hours

Minor in Women's & Gender
Studies: 18 hours

Minor in Queer & Sexuality
Studies: 18 hours

Graduate:

MA in Women's & Gender
Studies: 36 hours

Graduate Certificate in Women's &
Gender Studies: 12 hours

*Funding is available for MA
students.

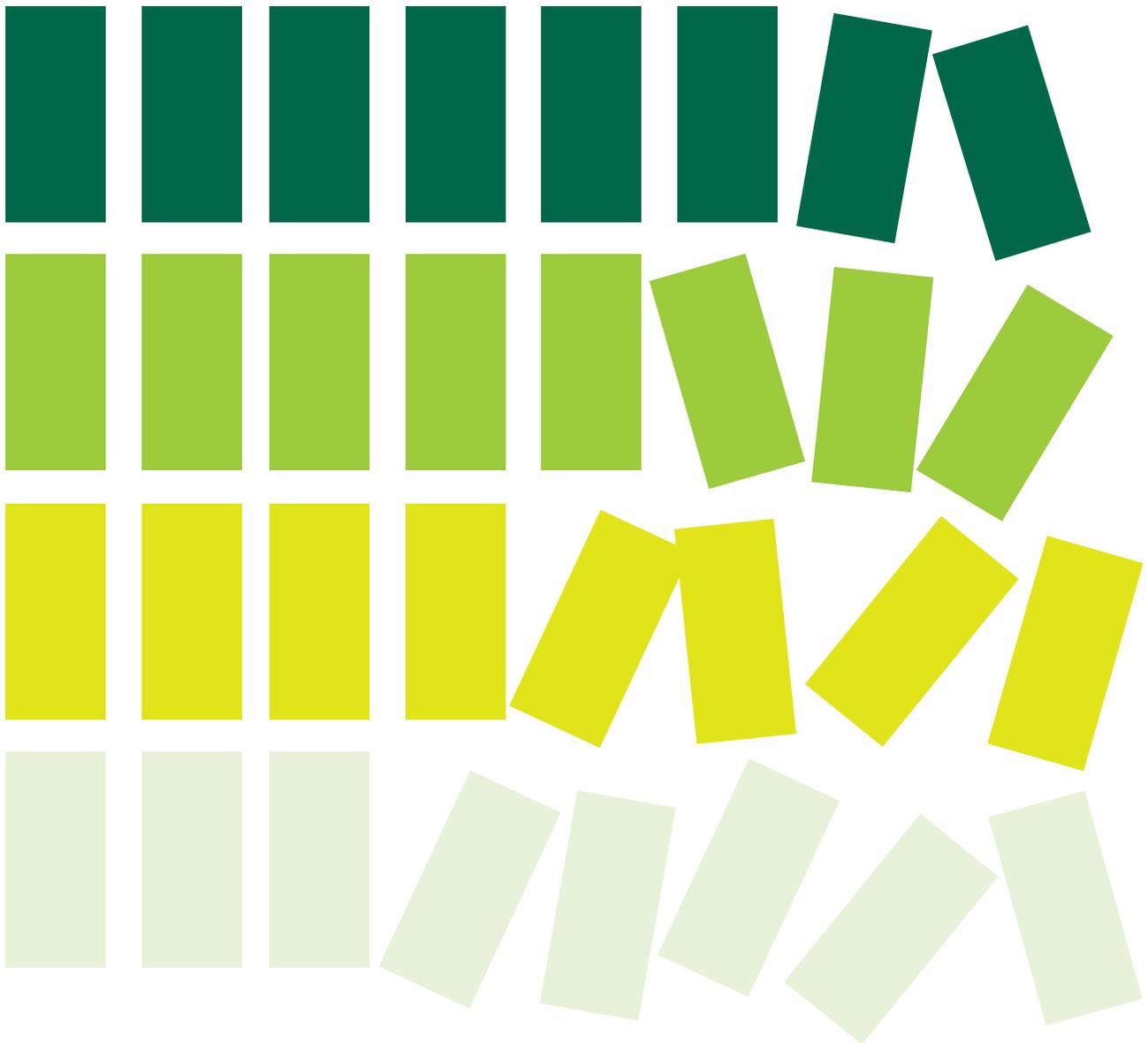
Contact Info:

4202 East Fowler Avenue, CMC 202
Tampa, FL 33620
<http://wgs.usf.edu>
cas-wgs@usf.edu

Spring Newsletter

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*“Being a WGS major
makes you different,
but it is the kind of different
that I feel this world needs.”*

-Yasmine Bazzi, WGS Class of 2019

Chair's Column:

Dr. Diane Price Herndl

We're starting a fund-raising campaign to help our students present their research at conferences.

Every year WGS celebrates our graduating MA students with "Talk and Toast," a chance for our grads to present their thesis, internship, or final portfolio to the whole department and then to be toasted by us all. I never fail to be flabbergasted not only by both the high quality of the presentations and the work that has gone into them, but also by the astonishing growth of our students during the short two years they are with us in the graduate program.

They come in as smart, inquiring, diligent, but raw talents and leave

as polished scholars and activists. That they progress so quickly is a testament to their strong work ethic and to the terrific commitment of the faculty in WGS.

I had the distinct pleasure in November to attend two presentations at the National Women's Studies Association by current WGS graduate students, and I spent most of the sessions gloating about what fine work they had done.

Sunahtah Jones, in "Ain't I a Woman, too?": Toxic Black Femininity, Normalized Transphobia, and Black Trans* Women's Safety," explored the ways that an attitude that favors a particular cisgendered femininity in the Black community proves fatal to many transwomen of color.

Leah Turner, in "The Removal of Fatness from Motherhood: Science, Social Policy, and Exclusion," connected debates over the so-called "obesity epidemic" to the politics of reproductive healthcare to examine the ways that health professionals and systems often discriminate against fat women.

Not only did the students do a splendid job representing USF, they also had a tremendous opportunity to meet and hear other scholars and activists. (See later in this newsletter for



Dr. Diane Price Herndl

some insights from Sunahtah, Leah, and our other spring grad, Cera Shain, on what they've gained from presenting at national conferences.)

Presenting at conferences is an important component of professionalization for our students, but it is often unaffordable. Conference registrations are often discounted for students, but airlines and hotels don't offer student rates. And we all know that graduate student stipends are not exactly luxurious.

Our campaign to raise travel funds for our students can help students become better scholars and activists. Scholarships can sometimes be hard to award, given federal rules governing financial aid, but travel money can go to support students directly.

I hope you'll join me in donating a little bit to the WGS fund to help our students share their excellent work with the world! **To donate, visit: <https://usf.to/wgs>.**

Faculty Research Spotlight: Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller's research focuses on discursive constructions of **motherhood** within law and policy, systemic responses to **violence against women**, and she has recently also been involved with grant-funded research projects that address questions of **diversity within STEM fields**.

In 2018, she was awarded USF's **Faculty Outstanding Research Achievement Award** for her research activities in 2017, including co-editing two books: *Bad Mothers: Representations, Regulations, and Resistance* and *Addressing Violence Against Women on College Campuses*, as well as her work on two successful STEM-related National Science Foundation (NSF) grants that totaled more than \$500,000.

Dr. Hughes Miller's co-edited volume, *Bad Mothers: Regulations, Representations, and Resistance* (2017), addresses a gap in the literature on motherhood. Motherhood studies had previously looked at the idea of the "good mother" and treated everything outside of this idea as an "other." The essays in *Bad Mothers* argue that there also exists an idea of the "bad mother," and that this has become a **trope of punishment** that is used to regulate and control the lives of mothers, particularly their interaction with state agencies and international aid societies.

Her second co-edited volume from 2017, *Addressing Violence Against*



Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller

Women on College Campuses, includes contributions from scholars examining how college campuses understand **violence against women**, how they respond to it, and best practices they should implement to better handle it. The book offers an interdisciplinary approach, including the voices of researchers, activists, practitioners, and administrators.

Dr. Hughes Miller's NSF grant, "Broadening Participation of STEM Faculty Through Work Design," tests work design theory and its applicability to STEM fields. Dr. Hughes Miller worked with Dr. Tammy Allen of the USF Department of Psychology and a team of graduate students to gather data on the **work/life balance** negotiated by STEM faculty and chairs. This multi-year grant is in the data analysis stage, and Dr. Hughes Miller is particularly interested in the **gender differences** that have emerged in faculty members' ability to negotiate work/life balance, and how and why women have less leverage in these negotiations.

Her 2017 NSF grant, "Measuring the Effects of Academic Climate and Social Networks on Persistence of STEM Undergraduates," is an exploratory grant that is investigating the academic climate and networks within STEM programs, and how these factors affect the **success and marginalization** of LGBTQPIA+ students in STEM. Through interviews, Dr. Hughes Miller and her co-investigator are building a dataset of LGBTQPIA+ experiences within STEM, which will inform the development of an inclusive survey that can be used by educators to increase student success.

Currently, Dr. Hughes Miller is continuing her work on her two in-progress NSF grants, has co-authored another NSF grant proposal for \$600,000 to create "enhanced engineering internships" through the integration of ethics training. She recently submitted a chapter on the "Governance of Motherhood" to a Routledge compendium on motherhood, and has coordinated a panel on "Regulating Motherhood" for the 2019 American Society of Criminology conference.

Courses She Teaches:

Undergrad: Gender, Crime and Justice; Women and Social Justice; and Introduction to WGS

Graduate: Gender, Crime and Justice; Politics of Motherhood; Feminist Pedagogy; and Feminist Research Methods

Graduate Student Research Spotlight: Sunahata Jones, Cera Shain, & Leah Turner

WGS Master's students **Sunahata Jones, Cera Shain, and Leah Turner** presented their research on April 26th at the **WGS Talk & Toast** event. Talk & Toast gives soon-to-be graduates an opportunity to share their work with colleagues and celebrate their success.

Sunahata studies social issues that impact Black LGTB+ and Black womxn. The research she presented at Talk & Toast examined the concept of **toxic femininity**, and how Black cisgender women (and women in general) perpetuate violence against Black transgender women. Sunahata argues that this violence is routinely overlooked because normalized misogyny/misogynoir ignores **transmisogynoir** (and violence from womxn in general) as a form of violence.

Cera is interested in media studies, with a focus on **popular culture**. Talk & Toast gave her the opportunity to discuss her research on the documen-



Leah Turner, Sunahata Jones, and Cera Shain at Talk & Toast

tary *Pumping Iron II*, a 1985 film about a women's bodybuilding competition. Cera examined the **gender performance** of Bev Francis, a very muscular and masculine-presenting bodybuilder, and used this as a lens for interrogating how filmmakers view and portray women, particularly subversive women who they see as unruly or too masculine.

Leah's research interests are in the nascent field of **fat studies**, which examines the many ways that fat people are marginalized. She is particularly interested in issues relating to fat women and their sexuality. Her Talk & Toast presentation looked at the numerous ways that the fat sexual body is fetishized, as well as the possibilities for **body positivity** within the constraints of fat sexual fetishization.

Sunahata, Cera, and Leah are each graduating with an **MA in Women's and Gender Studies** this spring and summer. After graduation, Sunahata and Leah are planning to take a year off before continuing on to doctoral studies in Women's & Gender Studies. Both are going to continue the research they started at USF. Cera plans to continue working as an editorial coordinator for *Technology & Innovation*, the academic journal of the National Academy of Inventors.

Conference Participation Matters!

Should WGS students attend and present research at professional association conferences? Yes!

For Sunahata Jones, conference participation was important because she was "able to **be in the same space** as Black womxn revolutionaries that have paved the way for Black queer women academics like me."

Many grad students struggle with "**imposter syndrome**," but for Leah Turner, presenting at conferences helped her realize she is not an imposter and that she does "have a voice that can, and should be, heard by others."

Presenting at conferences is an important part of grad school that makes many grad students nervous,

but as Cera Shain discovered, it is vital as an "opportunity to **grow as a young academic and professional**."

Conferences give grad students many opportunities for networking and growth, but attending can be expensive. If you would like to **donate to support WGS student conference participation**, please visit: <https://usf.to/wgs>.

Graduate Student Reflections on WGS

“WGS is so interdisciplinary that even is what you do in the future doesn’t directly relate, the skills you gain certainly will.”

We asked graduating MA students **Sunahtah Jones, Cera Shain,** and **Leah Turner** to reflect on their time in the WGS graduate program. Here are their thoughts:

Sunahtah:

My time in the WGS department has truly been a **growing experience**. I’ve learned to challenge myself and challenge different concepts.

One thing that I enjoyed the most about the department is that you are constantly encouraged to **go outside of your comfort zones**.

If you have an idea that you are not completely sure about pursuing, professors will work with you to hash it out and encourage you to continue working with concepts that are new to you.

Education in WGS has helped me grow as a **writer, academic, and an individual**, becoming well versed in so many topics, some of which were foreign to me prior to enrolling in a Master’s program.

Cera:

My education in WGS taught me a lot about the inner-workings of the world, the structures that cause privilege and inequality, and, more generally, deepened my own abilities to **think critically** and understand problems from a social/global perspective.

The way that women’s and gender studies in particular taught me how to approach the real problems of the world is **unlike any other program** that anyone will ever experience.

The last two years have been such an exceptional period of growth and development for me just as a human being. I feel like I’m a **more informed thoughtful, discerning, citizen** than I was even just literally two years ago entering the program.

Leah:

Probably the biggest thing that drives me is my passion for helping people. In our world, which focuses so much on difference, I think of women’s & gender studies as a kind of learning which aims to **unify people**. This skill is so, so important for my future because if I’m not helping people in some way then I’m not doing what I want to do.

The professors in WGS are so wonderfully **supportive**. Truly, I couldn’t have done any of this without them. And my cohort! They saved me from breakdowns multiple times.

WGS is so **interdisciplinary** that even if what you do in the future doesn’t directly relate, the skills you gain certainly will.



Sunahtah Jones



Cera Shain



Leah Turner

WGS Faculty Teaching Spotlight: Dr. Tangela Serls & Dr. Milton Wendland

WGS's **Dr. Tangela Serls** and **Dr. Milton Wendland** attended the Sunshine State Teaching and Learning Conference in Daytona Beach this spring to deepen their teaching skills. The conference brought together faculty members and administrators from colleges and universities throughout Florida and other states to discuss current challenges and opportunities in college teaching, and to share pedagogical techniques.



Dr. Tangela Serls



Dr. Milton Wendland

Dr. Serls' Reflections on Teaching:

Teaching is something I feel called to do. It's something I've wanted to do ever since I was a child. To me, teaching means inspiring and encouraging students to think critically about the content they consume and to value marginalized knowledges as much as they value knowledges produced within the academy. I encourage students to use both marginalized and scholarly knowledges to deepen their understanding of the real-world implications of what we do in the WGS field.

For me, teaching means preparing our students to be leaders inside and outside of the classroom and helping them reach their individual vision of student success.

At the conference some of the sessions that were the most useful for me were a session on building community and solidarity among marginalized students, a session on maximizing class participation, and a session on implementing lateral thinking activities to add to students' critical thinking skill-set. I'm sure the strategies I learned

in these sessions will contribute to my future teaching.

Dr. Wendland's Reflections on Teaching:

I want all of my students to graduate and enter successful careers but more than that, I want them to see the world and the people in it from a stance that favors equity and inclusion. I want them to be able to blend theory and advanced research with 'on the ground' understandings of daily life, popular culture, and the everyday world.

Sometimes I'm so busy actually teaching that I don't have the time to reflect and connect with others about teaching. More than anything the conference helped me remember why I love teaching and that some of the frustrations I face are common to the profession – no matter what classes you teach or how many students you have. I felt so energized after the conference, full of ideas to tweak my course designs with a list of new ways to approach class assignments and assessments.

I left the conference feeling excited that I teach in Women's & Gender Studies. I was a little surprised by how many teaching colleagues in other fields were new to issues of classroom equity and inclusion – especially when it comes to first-generation students, students of color, and LGBTQ students. In WGS those issues are foundational to what we do as scholars, teachers, and everyday people!

Courses They Teach:

Dr. Serls teaches Intro to Women's Studies, Literature by Women of Color, Black Feminisms, WGS Capstone, and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Disability Studies.

Dr. Wendland teaches Intro to Women's Studies, Intro to LGBTQ+ Cultures, Sexualities Studies, Queer Film & Television, Careers & Professionalism in WGS, and Internship in WGS

For more information about these courses, visit: bit.ly/ufa2019ug.

WGS Undergraduate Student Spotlight: Yasmine Bazzi

“Having a major in WGS has helped me prepare for my future in so many ways that I could have never imagined.”

Yasmine Bazzi is majoring in Women’s & Gender Studies and will be graduating this spring! She is currently in the process of applying to **medical school** to start in fall of 2020, and plans to eventually specialize in both cardiology and women’s health.



Yasmine Bazzi

Yasmine’s Reflections on Majoring in WGS:

I took my first WGS course my junior year of high school and I fell in love with it. Every time that I would go to class, I would feel safe to express who I was as a person as well as my beliefs.

When I first started college in the summer of 2016, I was majoring in Biomedical Sciences and on the pre-med track. It is now 2019, and I am majoring in Woman’s and Gender Studies with a minor in Psychology and still **on the pre-med track**. After completing my first year and a half, I did some research and came across many articles that said I did not need to have a science degree in order to apply to medical school.

After having learned that information, I decided to change my major to something that I was passionate about. However, before switching my major, I decided to take the Intro to Women’s Studies course just to see if I would be making the right decision. It only really took two weeks with **Dr.**

Wendland teaching the online Introduction to Women’s Studies course to help me make that decision. I felt as if having this

major would not only make me **stand out** from the rest of the applicants but would also allow me to grow as a person and have something to offer to the rest of my community.

Having a major in WGS has helped me **prepare for my future** in so many ways that I could have never imagined. The way the courses were structured allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and learn what it is like to speak up and talk about things that people normally don’t bring up in conversation. It taught me how important it was to look at a situation in every possible perspective; it taught me how to think of things in an intersectional manner.

Being a **physician** means willing to see things with an open mind. It’s about building connections and bonds with everyone that you come into contact with. My time spent in every WGS course allowed me to learn just that. It has prepared me to handle situations that come at me unexpect-

edly. It has taught me how to deal with others who may have opinions that are different from my own. Being a WGS major **makes you different**, but it is the kind of different that I feel this world needs.

My favorite WGS class would have to have been Black Feminisms taught by **Dr. Serls**. Dr. Serls has been my teacher for three different WGS classes. She is without a doubt one of the most influential teachers I have ever had. She reminds me of my teacher in high school who first taught me what it is like to be a feminist and what it is like to love being a woman. Her Black Feminisms class was the kind of class that I couldn’t wait to go to every week. I learned so much in that course, and it’s the kind of information I know that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

I would most definitely **recommend a degree in WGS**, or even just a minor. I recommend everyone to at least take one course because one course is all you need to spark the passion within you that you didn’t think you had to begin with. Having a WGS major teaches you what it means to be an intersectional human being. It makes you realize how important every single aspect of you is and how to use each and every one of them to **create good** in the community you reside in.

If you are interested in the WGS major or minor, or the minor in Queer & Sexuality Studies, visit: **wgs.usf.edu**.

Alumna Spotlight: Tunisia Riley

“We need activists on all front lines, including in corporations.”

Tunisia Riley graduated with her MA in women’s and gender studies in 2009, and is currently a Digital Strategy Senior Associate with the New York Life Insurance Company.

Tunisia’s WGS **research** was inspired by the suicide of her childhood friend at the age of 19. Her thesis, “From the academy to the streets: Documenting the healing power of black feminist creative expression,” explored “how Black women have used creative expression to heal, inspire, and mobilize around traumatic events or pain” to do activism and advocacy work in their communities.

For Tunisia, her experience as a WGS graduate student was about healing: “When I came to USF I knew I wanted to write a thesis that shed light on Black women and give voice to my friend who didn’t have one. I didn’t realize all the work I’d have to do internally to get to that point. The WGS program really made the **personal political** for me and as a result, I was able to honor the legacy of my friend who lost her life to the battle with mental health, and I was able to heal and also pay homage to the Black women who laid a path for me through their research. I also met some **great people** who I’ve remained friends with and who challenge me to shine my light.”

Tunisia graduated at the height of the recession and had difficulty finding employment immediately. But she made the best of the situation and gained new skills by becoming in-

involved in her community through **volunteering** for nonprofit organizations such as Re:Gender, Women’s eNews, the New York Urban League Young Professionals, and the New York Public Library.

Tunisia was then hired by the **Feminist Press** as a Web Editor for their online Women Writing Science project called Under the Microscope. Tunisia was later recruited through her LinkedIn profile by **New York Life**, where she now works as a Digital Strategy Senior Associate. She earned a **second MA degree** in Mass Communications with a Concentration in Public Relations from Kent State University in 2016.

Though her day-to-day work is not focused on issues related to WGS, she still finds that background useful and incorporates it into her job: “In my current role, I manage part of our employee intranet. I write content and curate content for an employee audience to inspire, educate and engage around industry topics, employee announcements and external events that impact our company.”

“But I think one of things I’m most **proud** of and can attribute to my background in Women’s Studies, has been my involve-



Tunisia Riley

ment with our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). I’m active in the Asian, African-American, and Women’s ERGs. I’ve moderated panels, written content, and created an interactive group to educate my colleagues around cultural issues. We need **activists** on all front lines, including in corporations.”

“I am proud of the work New York Life does in the community and

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Alumna Spotlight: Tunisia Riley

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internally through work with the ERGs and I've used a lot of what I've learned to creatively post content around **issues of race, class and gender**, for example writing a post on intersectionality and Juneteenth (2 separate stories) for our company intranet. Or leading a "mindfulness at work" presentation for our Women's ERG Peer Leadership Group."

Tunisia believes that her education in WGS has been very valuable: "It has helped me to **not be silent** around issues of race, class, and gender. And to use wherever I am as a platform to ask the questions and raise my hand when needed. Community wise, I was able to share a lot of what I learned from my "Feminists Perspectives in

Health" class with my family and church family when I was head of Women's Ministries at my church."

"If I had to put it into one sentence I'd say the WGS program taught me to **be my own advocate** and by being my own advocate I can **inspire others** to advocate for themselves, whether around issues of health, race, or gender."

"Feminism and womanism is not relegated just to the walls of academia, at the marches, or in the court rooms. **We need allies in every corner.** And, now more than ever intersectionality is key in making this world a better place."

"I value the education I received in the WGS program, both in the classroom and outside of class because it challenged me to think with an inclusion mindset that I've been able to use in my writing, the images I project on our intranet, and in my involvement with my job and in my church."

"I want to thank the professors who were my mentors and advocates while I was at USF, like Dr. Cheryl Rodriguez, Dr. Gary Lemons, Dr. Kim Vaz, Dr. Marilyn Myerson, Dr. Sara Crawley and Dr. Gurleen Grewal. And my sister scholars while I was there, Dr. Kendra Bryant, Dr. Robin Boylorn, and Dr. Alisha Winn and the many others."

Alumna Spotlight: Vanessa Charles

Since graduating with a BA in Women's and Gender Studies in 2013, **Vanessa Charles** has channeled her passion for feminism and helping women improve their own lives into a successful career in real estate.

Vanessa began working in **real estate** soon graduation. Initially, she worked for others who demanded she suppress her **feminism** on the job, even down to removing her "Feminist" bumper sticker from her car. So, she quit that job, and has been blending real estate and the economic empowerment of women ever since.

She strives to **educate women** who are interested in purchasing a home

about the financial intricacies of home ownership, and has helped same-sex couples deal with micro-aggressions such as outdated "husband and wife" language in contracts. Vanessa has found that overtly embracing feminism and "doing something different" as a real estate agent has greatly **helped her career.**

In addition to her real estate work, Vanessa has her eye on empowering women on a larger scale and recently organized a one-day **conference** in St. Petersburg, Florida called AMPLIFY. The conference brought together just under 100 women to listen to 7 speakers who taught them about how to become more economically successful as entrepreneurs.

Vanessa is already planning a second AMPLIFY

conference for 2020, and is looking towards expanding her work into other realms as well, with a focus on feminist issues.

When asked what her education in Women's & Gender Studies contributed to her career since graduation, Vanessa answered, "**everything.**" In particular, WGS opened her eyes to how people interact with and affect one another, which helps her to **humanize** the real estate business.



Vanessa Charles

WGS Affiliate Faculty Spotlight:

Dr. Aisha Durham

Dr. Aisha Durham is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, and an affiliate faculty member of the Department of Women's & Gender Studies. Using the lens of **hip hop feminism**, her research examines the ways that race, class, and gender have intersected and shaped the experiences of the post-1964 "hip hop generation."

This is the first generation of black Americans to have come of age after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which on paper, implied political, social, and economic equality. For many of this generation though, that equality never materialized and the resulting disconnect between the promises of 1964 and the reality of life for many black Americans afterwards led to a disillusionment that was expressed through the new artistic and cultural form of hip hop.

Dr. Durham is part of this generation and her interest in hip hop feminism derives from her own experiences as a black woman growing up in public housing in Norfolk, Virginia. Since she was young, class has been one of the most "salient" parts of her identity, and this drew her to hip hop because of its roots in working-class communities. She is particularly interested in how hip hop has functioned as a vehicle for working-class women, and her research focuses in particular on black women and women of color.

These issues are explored by Dr. Durham in her 2014 book *Home*



Dr. Aisha Durham

with Hip Hop Feminism: Performances in Communication and Culture, which uses performance-influenced autoethnographic techniques to examine the relationship between "home" – the memory of the experiences she had growing up in public housing in Norfolk, and her work in the present as an academic.

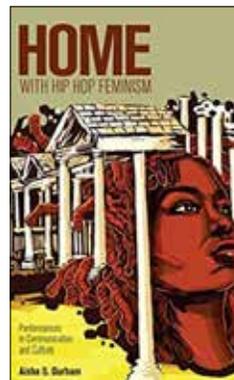
On April 5th, Dr. Durham performed "Between Us: A Bio-Poem," from her book *Home with Hip Hop Feminism* during the event, "I Matter: Autoethnography as Method." The event was centered on doing work that is democratizing, brings people together, and incites reflection and social change.

Last semester, Dr. Durham was in the news for organizing a protest against the November, 2018 performance of R. Kelly at USF because of the ongoing sexual abuse accusations

against him. Dr. Durham had hoped to stop the planned performance but despite community support for the protest, Kelly's performance went on as scheduled.

Recently, Dr. Durham published an article about Beyoncé and critiques of her performances of class over the course of career. The article traces how Beyoncé has moved from an assumed working class identity that was based in ideas of individual mobility and freedom, to a working class identity that embraces collectivity.

Another recent article by Dr. Durham addresses the concept of intersectionality and reasserts its original meaning, which went beyond just multiple identities and instead was focused on the differential impact of power within matrices of domination.



Upcoming projects for Dr. Durham include research on Missy Elliott; a study of Afro-Brazilian women and hip hop, which she will complete in Brazil as a Fulbright recipient this summer; and an American Studies Conference retrospective panel with scholars Robin D.G. Kelley and Mark Anthony Neal on Tricia Rose's 1994 book, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Rose's book was the first cultural studies text to take hip hop seriously as a cultural form. The panel will take place at the American Studies Association annual conference in Hawaii in November, 2019.

WGS Open House & Art Exhibit



Guests Bruce Benidt & Lisa LeFay talk with Drs. Milton Wendland & Kim Golombisky at the WGS Open House on April 3rd.



Artwork by Dr. Gary Lemons on display in WGS.



Students Desiree Mora, Kiandra Valladares, Cassandra Garza, & Sweta Modha attend the WGS Open House on April 3rd.

WGS welcomed students, affiliate faculty, and friends of the department to an **Open House** event on April 3rd. Guests had a great time catching up with one another and meeting new friends, while diving into the spread of seven types of cheeses, fresh falafel and hummus, chips, veggies, and fancy desserts!

During the Open House, WGS also hosted an art exhibit featuring “MYAFRIKA-ART,” a series of paintings by **Dr. Gary Lemons**. Dr. Lemons is a Professor in the USF Department of English, and an affiliate faculty member of WGS.

Dr. Lemons’ art incorporates “colors, patterns, and shapes found in African creative expression. A unifying theme in his paintings is the power of movement materialized through geometric configurations. Lemons also includes mirrors in many of his paintings, as well as other two-dimensional forms. Purposefully, he visually employs mirrors to entreat viewers to see themselves in the creative multi-dimensionality.”

If you missed the event, Dr. Lemons’ art will be on display in the department until the summer semester, and one piece, *Afrikan Queen*, will stay on-loan in the department. **Come by CMC 202 to see it!**

Sexual Assault Awareness Month Event: *I Am Evidence* Film Screening & Panel

As part of **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**, WGS hosted a film screening on April 9th in the Marshall Center's Oval Theater of the award-winning documentary, *I Am Evidence* followed by a panel discussion moderated by WGS Associate Professor **Michelle Hughes Miller**.

I Am Evidence tells the story of the untested rape-kit backlog in the U.S., including how the backlog was discovered and how activists and members of law enforcement are fighting to end it. It focuses on backlogs in Detroit, Cleveland, and Los Angeles and through interviews examines the experiences of women who were raped and how they were let down by the legal system.

The film shows that **race and class** affected whose rapes were taken seriously as “real” by law enforcement, a factor that contributed to the backlog. Over the last decade, as the untested rape kits were discovered and began to be processed, the result has been thousands of DNA hits in law enforcement databases, as well as the identification of many serial rapists.

Panel members, **Dr. Rachael Powers**, Associate Professor in the USF Department of Criminology; **Jessica Pinto**, Advocate Manager at the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, and **Melissa Suddeth**, Crime Laboratory Analyst Supervisor with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, answered audience questions about the backlog and how law enforcement handles sexual assault, particularly in relation

to Florida and the Tampa Bay area.

Suddeth spoke on the technical process of rape kit testing, as well as the response of the Florida legislature to the national public outcry about untested rape kits. They compelled a survey of law enforcement in 2015, which eventually discovered more than 13,000 untested kits in the state. Since then, backlog testing has been ongoing, and Suddeth explained that in the Hillsborough area, all of the FDLE backlog has been cleared, though testing continues in other parts of the state. Suddeth added that Florida passed a law in 2016 designed to avert a future backlog by requiring that law enforcement submit kits to the lab within 30 days and that labs must test all kits they receive within 120 days.

Pinto and Dr. Powers discussed trauma-informed care training, which can teach law enforcement what to expect when dealing with a survivor of a traumatic event. Currently members of law enforcement are not required to receive this training, which is a problem because many of the ways trauma survivors act when reporting to law enforcement go against the “common sense” idea of how they would act. This makes people in law enforcement skeptical of these survivors and affects how seriously they take their complaints. Pinto and Dr. Powers suggested that training could be required for law enforcement, but the people in charge to legislate it have to want to, so voting matters.



The panel members each had concluding thoughts regarding the backlog and law enforcement responses to sexual assault. Dr. Powers pointed out that trauma survivors have two main ways to obtain closure: outcome and process. Even if the outcome is not a conviction, a good-faith effort from law enforcement to obtain a conviction can also bring a sense of closure. Being able to have faith in the legal system is important, and the backlog has eroded that faith for many people. Pinto reiterated a comment made by a survivor in the film – that the system should be better than the criminal, and that trauma survivors should not feel defeated by their interactions with the legal system. Suddeth referred to the discovery of the backlog as a “gut punch to the system” that made people aware of the need for new approaches and new technologies to not only end the backlog, but stop one from developing again in Florida.

If you missed the event but want to learn more, visit: www.endthebacklog.org, or check-out *I Am Evidence* on DVD from the **USF Tampa Library**.

WGS to Host SEWSA Conference in 2020!



The USF Department of Women's & Gender Studies is the host of the **Southeastern Women's Studies Association** annual conference in 2020. The conference will take place **March 26-March 28** in St. Petersburg on the USF St. Pete campus.

The theme for the conference is **Embodying Disobedience, Crafting Affinities**, which figures embodiment and diverse lived experiences as the lifeblood of resistant politics and the livelihood of building alliances across our many differences.

The theme echoes the broader mission of the interdisciplinary field of Women's and Gender Studies (WGS). With its distinctive blend of research, programming, teaching, and advocacy, WGS questions conventional wisdom, challenges the status quo, critiques intersecting gendered, sexual, and racialized inequities and injustices, and strives to create social change for more equitable, ethical, and just futures.

Our theme invites a wide range of interdisciplinary critical engagements with the body politics of disobedience. How, for instance, do different forms and modes of racialized

and gendered embodiment inform strategies of disobedience to state regulation, the criminalization and dispossession of multiply-marginalized populations, and the ongoing upward redistribution of wealth and resources under neoliberalism?

At the same time, the theme invites consideration of how to better craft stronger and more capacious affinities between counterhegemonic projects, for example, between The Movement for Black Lives, disability justice activism, struggles for indigenous decolonization, trans and intersex rights, prison abolition, and intersectional feminist, queer, and anti-racist research and activism. "Embodying Disobedience, Crafting Affinities," then, seeks to emphasize the continuing import of multi-issue politics in efforts to move beyond commodified notions of allyship towards relations of radical solidarity and mutual interdependence.

We invite proposals that envision and examine diverse ways of embodying disobedience and crafting affinities across a wide range of theories, practices, and contexts. All disciplines, methodologies, and styles of presentation are welcome, and from

students and scholars at all levels.

Session Types and Instructions:

- Individual presentation proposals: 200-word proposal
- Panel presentation proposals: 3-4 presenters, 600-word proposal (We strongly encourage panel proposals from graduate and undergraduate students.)
- Roundtable proposals: 6-8 presenters, 10-minutes each (600-word proposal)
- Slow science proposals (works in progress): 3-4 presenters, 600-word proposal
- Workshops: 2-4 presenters, 600-word proposal

Proposal submissions will open soon at tinyurl.com/sewsa20, and the deadline is December 6, 2019.

For More SEWSA Information:

Website:

www.sewsa.net/2020-south-florida

Email:

sewsa@usf.edu

Facebook:

fb.me/sewsa2020

WGS Feminist Research Colloquium

WGS hosted its **8th Annual Feminist Research Colloquium** on April 22nd. This two-hour event gives graduate students in the WGS Feminist Research Methods seminar an opportunity to present their research to the USF community.

The first panel of the evening was focused on *Writing and Revising Stories*. **Colleen Kolba** from English presented “Revising Our Approach: Rethinking How Revision is Taught in Creative Writing Classes.” **Elise Hummel** from Humanities & Cultural Studies presented “Interviews with Women who suffer from Eating Disorders.” **Jessie Assay** from Women’s & Gender Studies presented “Training Frontline Individuals to Improve

Outcomes for Child Sexual Assault Survivors.”

The second panel examined *Social Movements & Positionalities Past, Present, & Absent*. **Toria Kwan** from Sociology presented “Fragmented Masculinities, Marginalized Femininities, & Subordinated Sexualities: A Literature Review of Gender & Sexuality Among Asian Americans.” **Kendra Spaulding** from Humanities & Cultural Studies presented “Illuminations in the Book of Hours: Environmentalism in the Middle Ages.” **Charlotte A. “Cat” Archer** from Sociology presented “Seeing New Social Movement Theories in Contemporary Social Movements.”

The theme for the final panel was *Framed by the Media*. **Berit Van Neste** from Mass Communications presented “Gendered News Frames from the 2019 Los Angeles Teacher Strike.” **Amber Klee** from Africana Studies presented “‘My Son Didn’t Deserve to Go Like This.’ India Clarke & the News Production of ‘Transmisognoir.’” **Breanna L. Carter** from Women’s & Gender Studies presented “Mixed-Up Aspects: How Barack Obama Was Racially Identified by Four Newspapers across the United States When He Announced his Presidential Candidacy in 2007.”

Triota Honor Society: Self-Care Event

On April 11th, the Triota Honor Society held a **Self-Care Event** that had roughly 15 attendees and pizza, including vegan pizza.

Triota President Julianne Dressler read passages from **Sara Ahmed’s** book *Living a Feminist Life* (Duke University Press, 2017). In her book, Ahmed argues that “how we care for ourselves becomes an expression of feminist care” (237). She then quotes Audre Lorde’s famous claim: “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare” (1988, 131). The group discussed their interpretations of these powerful arguments.

As a self-identified “feminist killjoy,” Ahmed encourages readers to construct their own “feminist killjoy survival kits.” Attendees went around in a circle and shared items they would include in their own self-care kits, including: specific books (such as *Sister Outsider*, by Audre Lorde), the music of Nina Simone, spending time in nature, allowing oneself the right to feel angry and also to let go of anger, dancing, laughter, and spending time with loved ones.

Triota is considering organizing a similar event for the fall. If you are interested in learning more, visit: www.facebook.com/pg/triotausf.



Christina Schladen and Alicia Kerr at the Triota Self-Care Event

WGS is Getting a New Website!

WGS is **very excited** to announce that we will be getting a new website this summer! This is something that the department has been wanting for a long time!

Soon, it will be a lot easier to find information about the many undergraduate and graduate opportunities WGS offers, including:

Women's & Gender Studies **major or minor**
Queer and Sexuality Studies **minor**
MA in Women's & Gender Studies
Graduate Certificate in Women's & Gender Studies.

Look for our announcement this summer when the new website is unveiled.

WGS on Social Media



WGS has a **Facebook** page that you should follow! We regularly post information to Facebook about courses, faculty and student achievements, department events, as well as news and pop culture stories that are of interest to WGS scholars and friends.

To follow WGS on Facebook, go to:
www.facebook.com/WGSUSF



WGS has a **LinkedIn** page that you should follow too! We are adding more content to our LinkedIn page starting this summer. We will be using it to keep in touch with our alumni, and to also share job postings and career information relevant to WGS students and graduates.

To follow WGS on LinkedIn, go to:
www.linkedin.com/school/usfwgs

Alumni Survey

The Department of Women's & Gender Studies wants to hear from you!

If you are a former WGS student, please fill out our short survey (link below) about your education and career.

Using the survey, you can also indicate your interest in being a subject of our newsletter Spotlights, or being featured on the Alumni section of our website. We are also planning an alumni panel event for the fall semester - if you are interested in being on the panel, please let us know through the survey.

WGS Survey: <https://bit.ly/2V4JsMz>

WGS Spring Semester Happenings

January:

WGS Associate Professor *Dr. Kim Golombisky* was named interim director of the Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications.

Dr. David Rubin organized the WGS spring semester *Brown Bag Colloquium Series*.

WGS hosted *Dr. Omotayo Jolaosho's* presentation of "Why Self-Care is Not Enough" on 1/24 as part of the department's *Brown Bag Colloquium Series*.

Dr. Milton Wendland did a poster presentation, "It's in the Syllabus," at the Sunshine State Teaching & Learning Conference in Daytona Beach Shores, FL.

February:

Dr. Milton Wendland was invited to present: "Beyond Alphabet Soup: An LGBTQ+ Primer," at the monthly meeting of the Pasco County LGTBTA Democrats in Lutz, FL.

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller was the guest speaker for Jobsite Theatre's *Othello* Talkback on 2/3.

WGS hosted *Dr. Beatriz Padilla's* presentation of "Resistance Practices of Brazilian Women in Portuguese Academia" on 2/21 as part of the department's *Brown Bag Colloquium Series*.

Dr. Tangela Serls led a discussion of Michelle Obama's book, *Becoming*, on 2/28.

March:

Drs. Kim Golombisky, Milton Wendland, and Tangela Serls were panel members for "Teaching Through Thorns: An Interactive Roundtable on Today's Prickly Classroom Issues" at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association annual conference in Oxford, MS.

Dr. Milton Wendland presented "Expansive Mentoring: 10 Tips for Mentoring Beyond the One-on-One Model" at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association annual conference in Oxford, MS.

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller presented "Queer in STEM in the South: Locating Undergraduate Narratives of Inclusion and Marginalization" at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association annual conference in Oxford, MS.

Dr. David Rubin presented "Transing Negative Affect: How to Do Things with Bad Feelings," and "Too Cute to Be Binary": Political Affect in Contemporary Intersex Activism" (invited) at the Southeastern Women's Studies Association annual conference in Oxford, MS.

Dr. Diane Price Herndl was a panel member at the Disaster and Humanitarian Relief Student Collaborative's "International Women's Day: The Fight for Rights" event on 3/6.

Jennifer Ellerman-Queen was interviewed by WMNF for International Women's Day on 3/8.

Dr. Tangela Serls was a panel speaker at the USF Housing and Residential Education event, "I Was Born to Flex: Money, Friendship, & Community Among Womyn of Color" on 3/21.

WGS hosted *Dr. David Johnson's* presentation of "Buying Gay" on 3/21 as part of the department's *Brown Bag Colloquium Series*.

Jennifer Ellerman-Queen presented at the National Organization for Women at USF's "Women's History Month Celebration" event on 3/21.

April:

Dr. Milton Wendland was on the organizing committee for the 2019 USF Lavender Graduation Ceremony for LGBTQ+ and Ally Students.

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller was the keynote speaker at the USF Take Back the Night event on 4/2.

WGS hosted an *Open House and Art Exhibit* on 4/3.

Dr. Diane Price Herndl was a panel member at the Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority's Women's Empowerment Panel on 4/3.

WGS hosted *Dr. Naa Dodua Dodoo's* presentation of "Partner or Chattel?" on 4/4 as part of the department's *Brown Bag Colloquium Series*.

WGS hosted a film screening of *I Am Evidence* on 4/9 for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller co-presented "Not just the Opposite of Good: Examples of the Bad Mother Trope in *Bad Mothers: Regulations, Representations and Resistance*," and chaired the *Mothers and Mothering in the Academe* panel at the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement annual conference in Toronto, Canada.

Dr. Kim Golombisky organized the 8th Annual WGS *Feminist Research Colloquium*, which was held on 4/22.

WGS hosted the *Talk & Toast* graduate student research presentation event on 4/26.

May:

Dr. Kim Golombisky was a faculty mentor for the 2019 USF Sisters of the Academy Research BootCamp, May 5-10.

Thank You WGS Donors!

In 2018-2019, these people generously
donated to WGS:

Elizabeth E. Bell, Ph.D.

Diane Price Herndl, Ph.D.

Jennifer L. Icton

Shayla D. Johnson

Michelle Hughes Miller, Ph.D.

Tangela La'Chelle Serls, Ph.D.

Milton W. Wendland, J.D., Ph.D.

Giving to WGS

If you would like to support **student participation at academic conferences**, or the work of WGS in general, you can do so by making a gift to the WGS fund at the USF Foundation.

No amount is too small - with a gift of any size you can make an impact!

To make a gift, visit: <https://usf.to/wgs>.

WGS Spring & Forthcoming Publications

Dr. Kim Golombisky:

Golombisky, Kim, ed. *Feminist perspectives on advertising. What's the big idea?* Lanham, MD: Lexington/Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Golombisky, Kim. "Chapter 1: An introduction to some big ideas for critical feminist advertising studies." In *Feminist perspectives on advertising. What's the big idea?*, edited by Kim Golombisky, 1-36. Lanham, MD: Lexington/Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Golombisky, Kim. "Chapter 7: Middle-aged women, antiaging advertising, and an accidental politics of the unmarked." In *Feminist perspectives on advertising. What's the big idea?*, edited by

Kim Golombisky, 143-163. Lanham, MD: Lexington/Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Stamps, Jennifer Ford and Kim Golombisky. "Chapter 11: Woman as product stand-in: Branding straight metrosexuality in men's magazine fashion advertising." In *Feminist perspectives on advertising. What's the big idea?*, edited by Kim Golombisky, 239-256. Lanham, MD: Lexington/Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Dr. Diane Price Herndl:

Price Herndl, Diane. "Exploding into Life, Dorothea Lynch and Eugene Richards." In *Disability Experiences*, edited by Susannah Mintz and Thomas

Couser. Layman Poupard Publishing, 2019 (*forthcoming*).

Dr. David Rubin:

Rubin, David A. "Transgender and Intersex Men." In *Handbook of Men's Health Disparities*, edited by Derek M. Griffith, Marino A Bruce, and Roland J. Thorpe, Jr. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Rubin, David A. "Provincializing Intersex: U.S. Intersex Activism, Human Rights, and Transnational Body Politics." In *Women's Reproductive and Sexual Rights: Transnational Perspectives*, edited by Tanya Bakrhu. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Summer and Fall 2019 WGS Courses

Undergraduate Courses:

WST 2250: The Female Experience in America

Offered completely online (Fall: CRN 83571)

WST 2600: Human Sexual Behavior

Face to face on MWF 2:30-4:50 PM (Summer B: CRN 50698)

Face to face on MW 3:30-4:45 PM (Fall: CRN 83570)

WST 3015: Intro to Women's Studies

Offered completely online (Summer B: CRN 52265)

Face to face on MW 9:30 AM-10:35 AM (Fall: CRN 95010)

Face to face on MW 2:00-3:15 PM (Fall: CRN 80572)

Face to face on TR 12:30-1:45 PM (Fall: CRN 93542)

Offered completely online (Fall: CRN 85079)

WST 3324: Women, Environment, and Gender

Offered completely online (Summer C: CRN 53231)

Offered completely online (Fall: CRN 87110)

WST 3311: Issues in Feminism

Face to face on MW 9:30 AM-10:45 AM (Fall: CRN 81292)

WST 3412: Women in the Developing World

Offered completely online (Fall: CRN 89212)

WST 3370: Women & Social Action

Face to face on MW 12:30 PM-1:45 PM (Fall: CRN 95011)

ISS 3420: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Disability Studies

Offered completely online (Summer B: CRN 58137)

WST 3602: Intro to LGBTQ Cultures

Offered completely online (Summer B: CRN 58097)

WST 4106: Global and Transnational Feminisms

Face to face on TR 2 PM-3:15 PM (Fall: CRN 95012)

WST 4262: Literature by Women of Color

Face to face on MW 2:00 PM-3:15 PM (Fall: CRN 84453)

WST 4565: Queer Theory

Face to face on TR 11 AM-12:15 PM (Fall: CRN 85402)

WST 4930: Gender and Science Fiction

Face to face on MWF 9:30 AM-11:50 AM (Summer A: CRN 58098)

WST 4935: Capstone

Face to face on MW 11:00 AM-12:15 PM (Fall: CRN 87120)

For undergrad course descriptions, visit: bit.ly/ufa2019ug

Graduate Courses:

WST 6003: Scholarship and Pedagogy

Face to face on T 3:30 PM-6:00 PM (Fall: CRN 87462)

For more info: <http://bit.ly/2019ped>

WST 6560: Advanced Feminist Theory

Face to face R 3:30 PM-6:00 PM (Fall: CRN 86267)

For more info: <http://bit.ly/2019theory>

WST 6936: Politics of Motherhood

Face to face W 5:30 PM-8:15 PM (Fall: CRN 88240)

For more info: <http://bit.ly/2019mother>

WST 6936: Gender and Science Fiction

Face to face MWF 9:30 AM-11:50 AM (Summer A: CRN 58279)