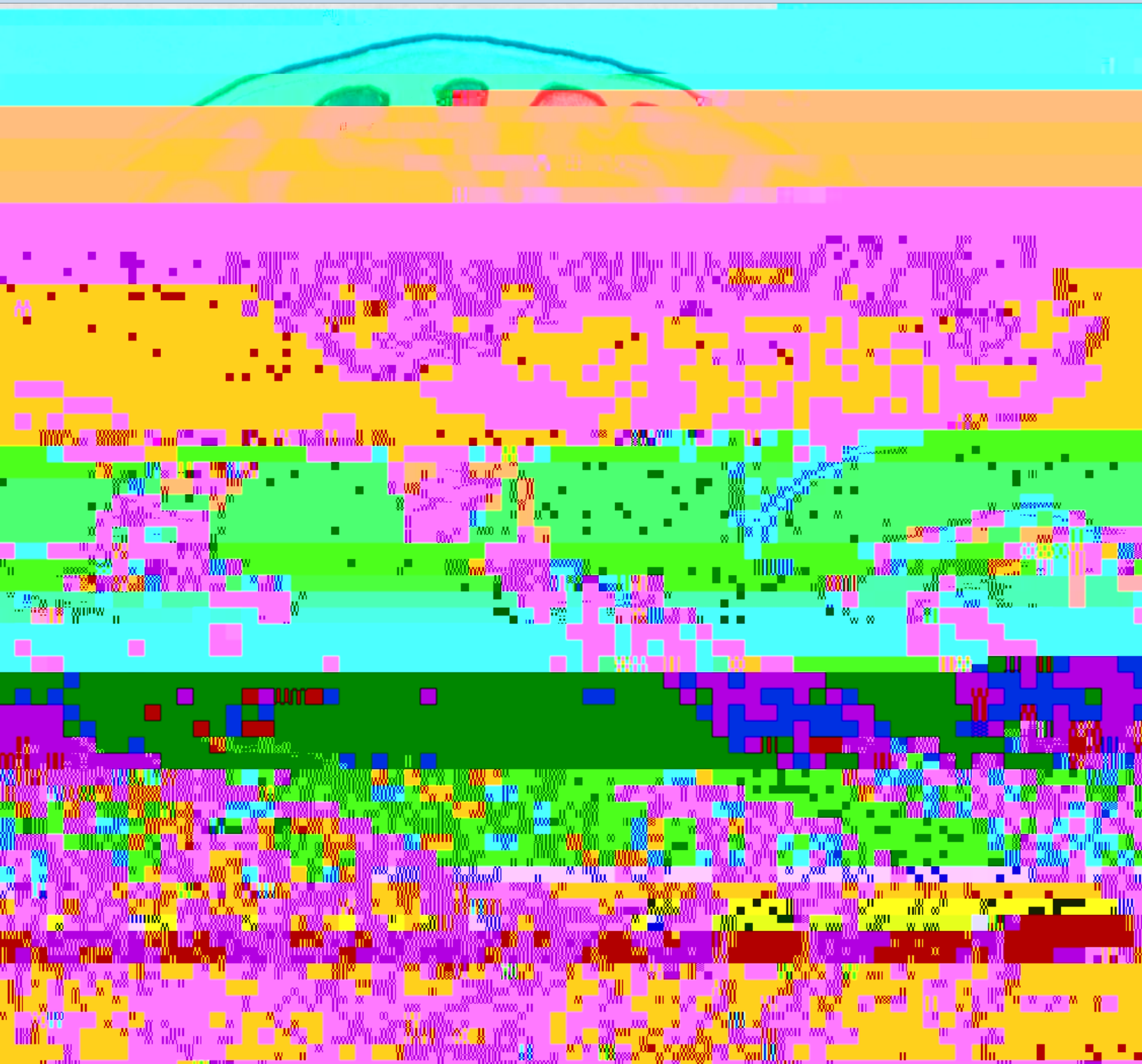


WGSnews

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



Chair's Column: Dr. Diane Price Herndl



WGS Alumni Spotlight: Samantha Heuwagen

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

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

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

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

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

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

WGS Faculty Research Spotlight: Dr. David A. Rubin

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

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

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

WGS Visiting Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Helis Sikk

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

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

Her co-edited collection of essays, *The Legacies of Matthew Shepard* (Routledge 2019) considers the effects of post-1998 federal policy changes on rural America, the relationship

WGS Visiting Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Melinda Mills

Dr. Melinda Mills joined WGS as a visiting instructor in the fall of 2019 and will be with us thr

WGS Undergrad Spotlight: Daynah Singh

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

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

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

WGS Grad Student Spotlight: Bre Carter

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

WGS has offered Bre a variety of practical media-centered skills that are useful for managing, organizing, and spreading knowledge.

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

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

media studies are my main research focuses. I have worked on a paper discussing how Barack Obama was racially identified in four newspapers

across America in 2007 when he announced his presidency. I also wrote a paper that analyzed the themes found

in two children's books made for multiracial children and how mothers of multiracial children can use these books as tools to help their children

shape their racial identities. I am a multiracial American woman, and the experiences of multiracial people are fascinating. Living in ambiguity can be very difficult in a world that loves to put people into boxes. When multiracial identity intersects with economic status, race, gender, sexuality and media, a lot of interesting occurrences can happen.

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



Bre Carter

may not have let me.

Bre plans to use the knowledge gained in WGS in useful ways outside of academia. Even though I do not want to be a professor I believe that no matter

WGS Talk & Toast

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

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

Fyn Asay:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jonathan Rosenstadt:

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

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

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

Welcome Incoming WGS Grad Students!

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

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

Tasnim Mahbuba Rahman: Tasnim has a Bachelor's in Business Administration from North South University

in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where she focused on finance and accounting, and economics. She will be on the thesis track in WGS.

"I have a willingness to conduct research on 'Representational practices' of 'Muslim woman' identity by the faith based organizations, to explore the representational practices of Muslim woman by the secular development organizations (SBOs) and faith based organizations (FBOs), and figure out if the practices differ, and if so, how? I also want to dig deeper to see if the FBOs offer alternative forms of representational practices to counter



WGS Degrees

Undergraduate Programs:

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

Minor in Women's & Gender Studies: 18 hours.

This minor offers students from other majors the opportunity to learn more about feminist analysis, research, and activism.

Minor in Queer and Sexuality Studies: 18 hours.

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

Graduate Programs:

M.A. in Women's & Gender Studies: 36 hours.

The M.A. is useful for students and professionals who are preparing for advanced degrees, ~~the~~ ^{non} sector employment, and those interested in broadening their understanding of WGS topics. ~~Deadline~~ ^{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 ~~Cer~~ ^{Cer} ~~tificate~~ ^{tificate} provides an opportunity for graduate students and other professionals to gain a more inclusive knowledge of women's and gender issues in society, including feminist studies.

WGS Faculty

Dr. Diane Price Herndl
Professor and Chair

Jennifer Ellerman-Queen
Instructor and Graduate Program Coordinator

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

Dr. Michelle Hughes Miller
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

Dr. Melinda Mills
Visiting Instructor

Dr. David A. Rubin
Associate Professor

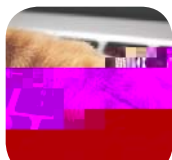
Dr. Tangela Serls
Instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies

Dr. Helis Sikk
Visiting Assistant Professor

Dr. Milton Wendland
Instructor and Internship Director

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