# WGS CONNECT

The Newsletter of the Women's & Gender Studies Program



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## WELCOME TO 2019!

from WGS Director, Kris De Welde

Happy new year, everyone! 2019 is off to a fabulous start for WGS as you will see in this newsletter. We are offering many exciting cross-disciplinary courses – including a study abroad in Havana, Cuba (with LACS) – and are sponsoring or co-sponsoring dozens of inspiring events, continuing to celebrate the College's **Year of Women**, and launching a new blog site to keep you informed between these biannual newsletters.

We began the new year with a "welcome back" meeting and social, during which the WGS Executive Committee provided updates and announcements about the program. The event was well attended by about 20 affiliated faculty and an equal number of students. And speaking of students, we have 35 majors and 53 minors – a significant uptick from last year! We anticipate continued growth in the program as the interest in and relevance of studying women and gender expands – perhaps one positive outcome of these tumultuous times.

The Year of Women initiative continues to offer opportunities for learning our history and looking toward (while also creating) a more equitable future. WGS's contributions to the Year of Women include educational and social events, many of which are being organized by affiliated faculty such as Kathy Beres-Rogers (English), Cara Delay (History), Tammy Ingram (History), and Sandy Slater (History). Our **"Intersections" series** celebrates the Year of Women through intersectional and interdisciplinary lenses. Fittingly, we will close out the Year of Women and the QEP focus on social justice and fair distribution with a Sustainability Literacy Institute cosponsored keynote address from **Winona LaDuke**, the well-known environmental, race, and gender justice activist. We will conclude this academic year with the second annual *Feminism in Motion*, a student success showcase. Our inaugural event in 2018 was a huge success. At one point you could barely get into the EHHP Alumni Center because there were so many attendees. We hope for equal excitement and attendance this year. We'll have more details soon, but mark your calendars now for the afternoon of April 1.

Of course, it's always the year of women (and all genders) in WGS! While there is much to worry about and work on regionally, nationally, and globally, we do have much to celebrate as our WGS family of faculty, students, staff, and community friends grows and thrives. Personally, I am deeply grateful for this vibrant community that you help create. For me and for many of us it is a sanctuary unlike any other.

## YES! I'M A FEMINIST 2018

#### The Sixth Annual YIAF Celebration!

Our 6th annual "Yes! I'm a Feminist," a kick-ass party for feminists of all kinds, was hosted on September 7, 2018. Thank you to everyone who came to the YIAF celebration this year to celebrate feminism, civil rights, the feminine spirit, and radical women (and all genders) through the years.

WGS is thrilled that over 300 guests attended this year's celebration. Thanks to the outpouring of generosity from our donors and attendees, the YIAF fundraiser was an incredible success, raising over \$15,000 for the WGS program to support student travel, study abroad, and scholarships.

The WGS Program is grateful for the community support it receives all year round, but especially during the 6th annual YIAF fundraiser. We can't wait to see you next year!





# Thank you to all of our generous community sponsors & supporters!



Guests were encouraged to add their many reasons for being a feminist on interactive posters during the event (left).

Partygoers enjoy bubbly and delicious desserts from Sugar bakery under the oaks in Cistern Yard (bottom left).

Director Kris De Welde welcomes guests to the celebration (below).



## **IN GRATITUDE**

On behalf of HSS and WGS we are grateful to Linda Ketner for her dedicated stewardship of the WGS program as well as her commitment to making the College experience more accessible to high-achieving students. The Ketner Emerging Leaders scholarship recognizes and supports student activists. Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2019, more than 60 students have been named "Ketner scholars." These many generations of students have been positively impacted by the financial support provided by the scholarship. They also are inspired firsthand by Linda who mentors each student and encourages their varied commitments to social progress. She is a significant role model to them as a changemaker in her own right.

Asked to comment on Linda's philanthropy, Dean Jerry Hale remarked that her contributions to the College, HSS, the WGS program, and our students were "nothing short of remarkable." Linda received an honorary doctorate from the College in 2018.



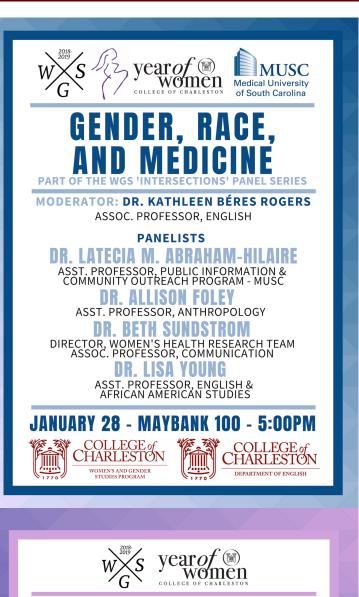
2017-18 Ketner Scholars with Linda Ketner. (From left to right: McKayla Cook, Kionnie Epps, Trisani Mukhopadhyay, Allie Stern, Sydney Davis, Jasmine Shabazz, Linda Ketner, and Tanner Crunelle - with furry friends Willa & Louie)

## YEAR OF WOMEN KEYNOTE SPEAKER 2019



WINONA LADUKE

The College's Sustainability Literacy Institute is concluding its 2018-2019 CofC Sustains/Solves theme, Social Justice and Fair Distribution, by bringing Winona LaDuke to campus. This event will also conclude CofC's Year of Women programming. LaDuke is a First Nations/Indigenous community organizer and campaigner from the White Earth reservation in Minnesota. Her work there focuses on cultural renewal based on traditional lifeways, economic entrepreneurship, and the empowerment of indigenous youth and women. Her talk will explore intersections of traditional ecological knowledge, white settler colonialism and patriarchy, protecting Native lands, indigenous rights, and sustainability. LaDuke's White Earth Land Recovery Project won the 2003 International Slow Food Award for Biodiversity due to its efforts to protect wild rice. She was Vice Presidential candidate in 1996 and 2000 for the Green Party, and in 2007 she was inducted to the National Women's Hall of Fame. LaDuke has five published books on topics related to indigenous rights, women's rights, and sustainability. <u>— by Todd LeVasseur</u>



#### TAKING ON THE SPIRIT AND TONE OF ROBUST MANLINESS: women at the college of charleston





# THE YEAR OF WOMEN AT THE COLLEGE

As we begin the Spring semester, the College's Year of Women continues to inspire many exciting and impactful events on campus. As we highlighted in our last issue, the College's Year of Women initiative spans the 2018-19 academic year and honors the centennial of (white) women's admission to the College, while also "acknowledging all progress and continuing challenges associated with this centennial commemoration" (Board of Trustees resolution, April 2018).

Among the plethora of upcoming events are two exciting panels that are a part of the "Intersections" series that the WGS program is hosting during the Year of Women. Those who have already attended an Intersections event - such as the **Black Women in Higher Education** panel in October with visiting scholars Dr. Sarah Case and Dr. Val Littlefield - know that these events inspire lively conversation and provocative ideas through their focus on the intersections of identities/oppressions and disciplines.

### WGS "INTERSECTIONS" SCHEDULE, 2018-19

- October 25 Black Women in Higher Education (with Dr. Sarah Case & Dr. Val Littlefield)
- October 30 Women, Equality, & Voting: Let's Get This Done!
- November 14 WGS Oral History Reception
- January 28 Gender, Race, & Medicine (with Dr. Latecia Abraham-Hilaire, Dr. Alison Foley, Dr. Beth Sundstrom, & Dr. Lisa Young)
- February 19 History of Women at the College (with Amy McCandless)
- March 13 WGS Alumni Oral History Reception
- April 1 Feminism in Motion Celebration of WGS Student Scholars
- April 17 Winona LaDuke Campus Lecture

Learn more about WGS "Intersections" series and other WGS events on our new program blog, *WGS Connect*!



blogs.cofc.edu/wgsconnect

## **SPRING 2019 WGS & FRIENDS EVENT CALENDAR**

#### January

- Jan. 9 All Faculty Meeting & Welcome Back Social
- Jan. 16 GSEC Restorative Justice Circle
- Jan. 19 Women's Rally & March on Ravenel Bridge
- Jan. 27 Still Jewish and Newly Jewish: Two Histories of Women and Intermarriage in America (with Dr. Keren McGinity and JSP) ◆
- Jan. 28 *Intersections*: Gender, Race, & Medicine Panel (with Dr. Latecia Abraham-Hilaire, Dr. Alison Foley, Dr. Beth Sundstrom, & Dr. Lisa Young) ◆

#### February

- Feb. 12-13 Peterson Toscano Campus Visit (with SLI)
- Feb. 19 *Intersections:* History of Women at the College (with Amy McCandless) ♦
- Feb. 27 GSEC: Black Feminism Workshop

#### March

- Mar. 4-8 GSEC: Gender Equity Week
- Mar. 6 \$tart \$mart Workshop \$
- Mar. 8 International Women's Day Equal Pay Rally (with GSEC) \$
- Mar. 9 Be Well OID Conference
- Mar. 11-15 OID Week ♦
- Mar. 12 Intersections: Activism Panel (with OID) ♦
- Mar. 13 Oral History Reception ♦
- Mar. 14 RBG Movie Screening (with POLI)
- Mar. 18-22 Spring Break
- Mar. 31 Transgender Day of Visibility

#### April

- April Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- April 1 Feminism in Motion �
- April 2 SAAM Day of Action
- April 3 Sara Taksler Campus Lecture (with SLI) �
- April 4-7 LCWA Global Foodways Presents Interpretations of *Oh*, *My Sweet Land: A Love Story from Syria* (with THTR) ◆
- April 8-11 Peter Blaze Corcoran Public Lecture & Workshops ◆ +
- April 11 GSEC: Warrior Women Movie Screening
- April 17 Winona LaDuke Campus Lecture (with SLI)
- April 23 Last Day of Classes
- April 24 Study Day
- April 25-May 2 Final Exams

#### Recurring Events

#### Daily

• Updates, events, & opportunities posted daily to the WGS Connect blog. Visit blogs.cofc.edu/wgsconnect

#### Weekly

- Weekly email bulletin sent every Monday-Tuesday
- Kris De Welde Drop-in Hours W 11-12
- Percy Haas Office Hours MWR 9-3, T 9-4

#### Monthly

- WGS House Events +
- WGS Happy Hours "Final Thursday" (1/24, 2/21, 3/28, 4/18)
- Drop-in Advising with Dr. De Welde & Dr. KC Second and fourth Tuesday of every month from 11-12



- ✤ Year of Women event

## COURSE HIGHLIGHT: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, PREVENTION, & EFFECTIVE ACTIVISM

#### Taught by Meg Goettsches with Alison Berk

One of the best things about the Women's & Gender Studies program (and WGS more broadly) is its interdisciplinary nature, which allows students to take classes that cover a wide variety of topics. Of particular interest to many students are the WGS Special Topics courses, which are semester-long journeys into many captivating and impactful social issues and topics. Meg Goettsches (Adjunct faculty WGS & AAST) teaches one of these amazing classes with Alison Berk (Office of the Dean of Students): *Gender-Based Violence, Prevention, & Effective Activism.* But what is this course? And how did it come to be?

"One afternoon over coffee, Alison and I were chatting casually about gender-based violence and our feelings about activism within campus communities... because this is a totally normal subject for us to speak freely about," explains Goettsches. "We were frustrated with how it seemed like students were lacking intersectional voices with respect to the things that are taking place on our campus such as sexual violence, social justice, and LGBTQI issues. We wanted to build an army; to equip students with the vocabulary and knowledge necessary to facilitate thoughtful dialog and meaningful change."

Goettsches and Berk sought to design a course to do just that. Their aim was "not to create an overly academic inquiry into these subjects as there are plenty of classes here at College of Charleston that do so, but to take real world examples and experiences and analyze them in light of intersectional academia and real-world solution-based approaches." As such, the course is designed to be student-driven, and throughout the semester students develop critical thinking and communication skills "with respect to the ingrained culture of gender-based violence at the individual, communal, and societal levels and its intersection with other forms of violence and oppression." Students taking the course also become nationally certified peer educators through the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

As activism is a crucial aspect of this course, students are asked to identify "instances of disconnect between the student body and intervention programs designed by the College to address sexual violence through various administrative bodies; they are then tasked with coming up with effective activism approaches to bridge this disconnect and are encouraged to do so by not only critically applying classroom discussions, but also seeking out



Goettsches & Berk distributing food at a Lowcountry Food Bank event

those administrators in charge of various projects and working in partnerships with them to develop strategies to help with student investment in the betterment of our campus."

WGS students have used this opportunity for activism to make real impact on campus with their projects. Some examples include designing a way to minimize food waste by connecting on-campus catering services with food insecure students, advocating for student representation and student led think-tank organization between all of the various offices on our campus dealing with gender-based violence, and re-imagining the presentation of selfdefense programs to become more inclusive, to name a few. These projects are semester long, and are equipped with the support necessary to grow even after the course has concluded.

If you want to make an impact, look for the (slightly revised) WGST 350: Gender, Violence, & Prevention course next year!

> We wanted to build an army; to equip students with the vocabulary and knowledge necessary to facilitate thoughtful dialog and meaningful change.

-Meg Goettsches

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# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. KRISTI (KAJ) BRIAN

Dr. Kristi Brian — also known as Kaj — is an adjunct professor of Women's & Gender Studies. Dr. Brian's research focuses on intersectional perspectives on environmental racism, political economy of the family (transnational/transracial adoption), feminist perspectives on mass incarceration, and critical methods for social justice dialogue. Dr. Brian earned her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from Temple University. She is heavily involved in organizations and initiatives that further equity on campus and throughout the Charleston community and beyond. She is also an active steering committee member for the Gender & Sexuality Equity Center (GSEC).

#### What projects are you working on currently?

My daily project is becoming more aware of how I have been socialized by oppressive systems and imagining healthier ways of interacting with fellow humans as I move through the world. Finding new ways to think, act and love as a means of resisting white supremacy and hetero-patriarchy is a life-long project. In addition to teaching, my campus projects are primarily focused around my role as a committee member for the Gender and Sexuality Equity Center (GSEC). I'm excited about planning our annual Gender Equity Week (March 4-8th) as well as our Spring Programming. This semester we are hosting a G- SECond Thursday series featuring dialogues, workshops and film screenings. We're also planning a campus/community Gender Equity march on International Women's Day (March 8).

An on-going, off-campus project of mine is the Transformative Teaching Collective. As a founding member of the Collective, I work with a group of brave, creative and boldthinking comrades to develop curriculum for organizations and government agencies centered on social justice and restorative justice paradigms. This work is life-giving not only because of the authentic, nurturing relationships I have been able to form with

Collective members, but also because developing and sharing ideas about healing the world from oppression is work that is always challenging, unsettling and humbling. Practicing productive discomfort is central to our teaching philosophy.

# What aspects of the courses you've taught recently did you find the most exciting?

I love teaching the Feminist Jiujitsu class because together we create a community of practice intent on learning "physical feminism." As a Learning Community we use both our bodies and our imaginations to creatively fight back against rape culture, gendered violence, and the everyday misogyny that keeps us confined to a particular script. In a sense we re-write scripts for our bodies while tackling questions such as: What does it mean to be feminine? Who gets to be masculine? Who is entitled to the use of anger and aggression? And what are we prepared to do to show that we are serious about cultivating a consent culture? Practicing Brazilian Jiujitsu on the mat with seasoned Jiujitsu instructors (Pat and Maggie McGuigan) and then debriefing our physical practice with feminist theory and creative interactive exercises in the classroom makes for a gratifying, holistic, mind-body experience.





#### If you could teach your dream class, what would it be called, and what would it cover?

I don't think so much about creating a "dream class" but more about ensuring that every class allows students to dream about the future—and not so much about their individual future careers or adventure, but futurity as humans on planet Earth. I'm excited by scholarship and art rooted in Afrofuturism and Indigenous futurism. I want students to feel in awe of activists who are changing the world, and to imagine new realities as they unlearn the patterns we've inherited from settler colonialism and white supremacy. I think dreaming up more sustainable ways of feeding, nurturing, challenging and inspiring each other ought to be a part of all learning environments. I want our classes to open doors for students into their own revolutionary consciousness. I want us to "dream big" together; to queer our assumptions about relationships, kinship, and community, and flirt with letting go of conventional (capitalist) paradigms.

#### What's something your students and colleagues don't know about you?

I grew up in a small town in Kansas, which happens to be located on salt deposits. The salt-mining identity of the town meant that our High School mascot was a Salt Hawk and as a member of the dance team I was a Salt Shaker. Perhaps that explains why I get "salty" about things on occasion, and also why I feel so at home in the ocean.

# **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS**

WGS student-scholars are always getting involved in exciting new initiatives, projects, and opportunities! This issue of WGS Connect highlights a handful of students whose recent or upcoming work is informed by the WGS program's investment in equity, activism, and scholarship.

#### Read Raegan Whiteside's Article in Skirt! Magazine



WGS major Raegan Whiteside is well-known on campus for her involvement with the WGS and English programs. Raegan joins others from WGS, including Misty Antonacci (Mathematics major, WGS minor), in writing an article for *Skirt*. magazine in a new WGSfocused column called *Forward!*. The column, created and named by our director,

Kris De Welde, is a space for WGS voices to be heard and issues to be raised. Raegan's article, "Forward! Feminism not Hate," appears in the December 2018 issue. In her article, Raegan discusses the negativity that often accompanies labeling oneself as a feminist, and dispels the myth that feminists are fueled only by blind hate, discussing in detail the causes, nuances, and misinterpretations of feminist outrage. Be sure to pick up an issue of *Skirt!* (or find the articles online) to read Raegan's piece and the other *Forward!* columns in previous issues. And be on the lookout for future *Forward!* pieces written by WGS students & members of the WGS community. The February issue features CAB member Margaret Pilarski on creating feminist communities.

#### WGS Students Join Program Oral History Project

In Fall of 2018, the WGS program embarked on an oral history project to document and collect the program's rich history. The project is headed by WGS director Kris De Welde, Cara Delay (History, previous WGS Director), and Susan Farrell (English, Previous WGS Director), alongside three current WGS students. These students, Kate



Cockerham (middle), Savannah Crocker (right), and Raegan Whiteside (left), were celebrated at the recent reception this past November, alongside current and past WGS leaders such as directors and associate directors who were interviewed for the project. Their new skills in oral history research and methodologies will serve them well! Tanner Crunelle & Sam McCarthy Presenting Work at SEWSA 2019 Conference

The WGS Program is excited to announce that two of our current majors, Tanner Crunelle and Sam McCarthy, have had their submissions accepted to present their work at the 2019 Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA) Conference!

This year's theme is Envisioning a Feminist and Queer South, and will be held in Oxford, Mississippi at the University of Mississippi.

Sam McCarthy is a WGS and Political Science double-major. Her presentation is titled "The Effect of Women's Education on Confidence and Political Participation." In this she asks the question: what sorts of education that leads to increased confidence which in turn leads to increased political participation among women?

Tanner Crunelle is a double-major in WGS and English. His paper is titled "Post/humanist Activism: An Interpretative Case Study." Tanner will present a case study of the Intersectional Cougar Action Network (I-CAN) at CofC using mixed methods and interdisciplinary knowledges to better understand institutional liberation.

We can't wait to hear back from Tanner and Sam about their SEWSA successes!

# **UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

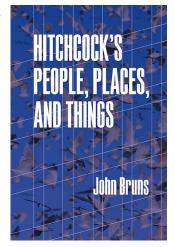
- Ashley Wendt, adjunct instructor of WGS, recently received an ILAS (Innovative Teaching & Learning in the Liberal Arts & Sciences) grant to support innovative programming for students during her forthcoming study abroad with LACS in Havana, Cuba - Spring 2019.
- Ian Sullivan, visiting assistant faculty of WGS, has sent off an edited volume on Asian comparative philosophy that he co-edited for peer review. The volume includes 31 essays from scholars of Chinese philosophy, including his own essay on classical Confucian ethics and queer lives, "The Need for More than (Biological) Family: Queer Identities, Social Groups, and Confucian Role Ethics." He is also preparing for publication another article, "The Junzi's Shame: Moral Emotions and Cultural Politics in Confucian Role Ethics," which he will be presenting to the Society for LGBTQIA+ Philosophy in February, to the South Carolina Society for Philosophy in March, and at the Diverse Lineages of Existentialism conference in June.
- **Myra Seaman**, English, will be publishing *Objects of Affection: The Book* and the Household in Late Medieval England with Manchester University Press.
- Harriet Pollack, Affiliate Professor of American Literature English, will edit and direct a new book series, *Critical Perspectives on Eudora Welty*, to be published by the University Press of Mississippi. Its inaugural volume, *New Essays on Eudora Welty, Class, and Race*, is delivered and forthcoming in 2019. She is also busily organizing, with the help of her colleague and co-director Julia Eichelberger, a three-day international conference, "'The Continuous Thread of Revelation': Eudora Welty Reconsidered," to be held here at the College, February 21-23, 2019.
- Julia Eichelberger, English, co-edited *Teaching the Works of Eudora Welty: Twenty-First Century Approaches* with Mae Miller Claxton. She also wrote an article for the *Post and Courier* (September 2018), "Charleston Must Own Its Slavery Wrongs If It Hopes to Right Them."
- Lauren Ravalico won a Major Grant from SC Humanities (a local division of the National Endowment of the Humanities) to support "Global Foodways," the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs Signature Series in 2018-2019. (http://blogs.cofc.edu/global-foodways) She also has an article forthcoming in *George Sand Studies*: "Silence Over Violence: The Ineffable Power of Affect in *Indiana*," which discusses a 19th-century tale of domestic violence in light of #MeToo.
- Be on the lookout for the forthcoming book from **John Bruns**, English (Film Studies): *Hitchcock's People, Places, and Things*, due May 2019, from Northwestern University Press. Dr. Bruns will also be co-authoring *An Essential History of the Movies* (University of Texas Press) with Charles Ramírez Berg, to be published in early 2020.
- Recent graduate **Cora Webb** ('18, WGS and Public Health major) is the new Program Director for We Are Family.
- **Kate Cockerham** ('18, WGS/History) was offered a position as Teen Educator with the Domestic Violence Action Center in Honolulu, HI.











Stay up to date with the WGS program, community events, opportunities, and so much more!

WGS Connect plugs you in to the latest happenings & gives you the inside scoop on all things WGS!

## **BLOGS.COFC.EDU/WGSCONNECT**



This issue of WGS Connect was designed & edited by **Percy Haas**. Special thanks to **Kaj Brian**, **Meg Goettsches**, **Alison Berk**, and **Todd LeVasseur** for their contributions. Photography from *Yes! I'm a Feminist* 2018 by **Heather Moran**.





WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM

