

# WGS CONNECT

WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES - DECEMBER 2022 - ISSUE 9



RESIST TOGETHER

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# A NOTE FROM WGS DIRECTOR

KRIS DE WELDE (SHE/ELLA)

When we started working on this newsletter in August, we were all still reeling from and raging about the June SCOTUS decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which effectively overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the law that ensured access to legal abortion in the U.S. Though the threat of *Roe's* demise was a constant for decades, the gravity of this decision for the reproductive autonomy of anyone who can be pregnant signaled to us (again) that our freedoms are fragile. And yet, the "freedom to choose" has never been fully realized for

most people who could be pregnant, even with *Roe* intact. Reproductive justice – and not reproductive choice – is the real struggle, and one in which we must remain vigilant and steadfast.

It is with that commitment that we launched this academic year, holding on the second day of classes a campus-community event: Women's (In)Equality Day, riffing off of Women's Equality Day (held annually on August 26 to commemorate the 19th amendment, yet another piece of legislation that remains unrealized. We brought together campus and community experts to get educated and get organized for the long struggle that we are in, and raised our voices for justice. We also professed and held space for self-care, because *when engaged in revolutionary work*, self-care is self-preservation and an act of political warfare (quoting Audre Lorde). Our event "gave 'em H.E.L.L." (Healing, Education, Liberation and Love), guided by the image of a uterus on fire (we are grateful to Mary Jo Fairchild for that tattoo-worthy symbol!). We hence took up Reproductive Health and Access as our programming theme for the year. From supporting the visionary performances in *The Stories Behind Abortion* organized

and produced by Lisa Ross (Psychology), Jenn Greenspan (WGS student) and Linda Eisen (community partner), to the "Say Abortion!" Teaching to Engage and Activate (T.E.A with WGS) workshop, our commitment is to center reproductive justice in this year's events. The spring will offer a robust and exciting lineup of speakers, events, and workshops on this theme...stay connected, and check out page 12!

I know that many of us are often asked how we can remain hopeful (even if by a thread) despite the very real victories of "imperialist white supremacist capitalist [hetero]patriarchy" seemingly at every turn (bell hooks). For me, and on most days, I remain hopeful because of this broad, inclusive and fiercely committed WGS community, on and off campus. From our students organizing and mobilizing, launching careers in social justice work, and affirming each other in kind ways, to our faculty colleagues designing and delivering transformative courses on wonderfully diverse topics, engaging in influential leading edge research, and individually mentoring student scholar-activists, and to our community supporters who show up for WGS again and again with their talents, connections, financial gifts, and unwavering confidence that what we do matters. Because, **what we do matters**. In the pages of this newsletter you will learn about our newest faculty and community board colleagues, read about what some of WGS's alums are doing, add excellent titles to your libraries, reflect with us on a very successful Yes! I'm a Feminist, look forward to spring events, and hopefully be reminded of how special and powerful our community is.

Community is light in the darkness, respite in the chaos, hope in the bleakness. **Community matters**. We each play a part in our WGS community, which we need – without apology or shame – on days when things feel okay enough and also when we feel lost, unmoored. I hope these pages help you feel connected to WGS and informed about our collective work, and that you will join us throughout the spring for educational, inspirational, and joyful events.

Finally, in the shadow of recent terrorizing violence directed at LGBTQIA2S+ people in Colorado Springs, CO, our community mobilized and held a vigil to honor and celebrate those whose lives were lost and those whose sense of safety has been upended (again). We're especially grateful to Dr. Cristina Dominguez (WGS) and Dr. Naomi Simmons (our new GSEC director) for holding that space, and closing out the fall semester in such a meaningful way (see below). Here I'd like to offer a personal note to folks in our community who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ that **you matter**. You belong here and everywhere and always.

In solidarity and in community,  
Kris

#### VICTIMS OF THE CLUB Q SHOOTING:

ASHLEY PAUGH, 35

DANIEL ASTON, 28

RAYMOND GREEN VANCE, 22

KELLY LOVING, 40

DERRICK WAYNE RUMP, 38

## RECAP: VIGIL FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE CLUB Q DOMESTIC TERRORISM ATTACK

On Monday, November 21st, GSEC Director, Dr. Naomi Simmons (she/her), and WGS faculty member, Dr. Cristina Dominguez (they/them), organized a vigil at Stern Center Gardens to honor those murdered and injured in Club Q shooting that occurred in Colorado Springs, CO, the night of November 19th.

The vigil served as impromptu sacred space for the CofC community to gather in mourning, bear witness to the lives lost, reflect on the continued fight for equality and equity for LGBTQIA2S+ persons, and to defy the terrorist act and supremacist rhetoric by refusing to back down, to hide, to be silent.

Students, faculty, and staff read aloud an adapted version of Amy Brooks's "[We Bear Witness](#)". A few of the poignant assertions include:

To the record of human lives extinguished, simply because these people dared to live authentically,  
**we bear witness.**

To the many lives in the community who have forever been changed,  
**we bear witness.**

On this day, we who are queer folk and allies, gathered together, speak to and uphold the inherent worth of dignity of every person,  
**we bear witness.**

For those who exist, boldly, unapologetically, in public space as fully authentic LGBTQIA+ people,  
**we bear witness.**

Sacred, LGBTQIA+, transgender, genderqueer, and nonbinary lives do not go unnoticed by us,  
**we bear witness.**

# MEET WGS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

**LAUREN RAVALICO (SHE/HER)**

WGS is a critical lens for interpreting history, for seeing the world as it is, and for envisioning the horizon of justice and universal flourishing.

I apply this lens to my teaching and research. Currently, I'm working on the question of Orientalism in the Occidental (Western) imaginary. This research is taking shape as separate but interrelated projects on two feminized spaces in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French cultural production: the Algerian harem and the colonial island garden. I'm writing a piece called "Renoir's Dollhouse" about the Impressionist painter's brief but significant flirtation with harem imagery. Thanks in part to a WGS Research Grant I received this past spring, I went to the National Gallery in D.C. to work with one of my primary sources. And with support from an LCWA Faculty Research Grant, in December I will travel to the National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo to work with the other primary source. Another project that I've developed with a colleague from Scripps College focuses on the conceptualization of the "toxic" as both environmental and social sickness. We presented our work on toxicity in the agrarian island landscape and utopian matriarchy of a very influential French Romantic novel, Paul and Virginia, at the University of California, Santa Barbara in October.



Photo Credit: Priscilla Thomas

In terms of teaching, I am currently designing a 400-level course for next semester based on my research called "French Colonial Exotique" that covers the rise of Exoticism in French literature and art as a privileged (and enduring) representational mode for propagating imperialism in the modern era. It consistently achieves this by instrumentalizing the racialized and gendered body.

When asked about something that she is often asked about, Dr. Ravalico said: I get asked about my surname pretty often. "Ravalico" (Rava-LEE-ko) is from my husband's paternal side in Northern Italy. Taking his name was my version of getting a tattoo that pays tribute to the proud heritage of his family, the major sacrifice my husband made in uprooting himself from Italy to come join our lives together here, and my own Italian acculturation.

The "maiden" surname I surrendered, "Fortner," also tells an immigration story, but it's a diasporic one. I come from Russian, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian Jews, some of whom managed to escape various grim persecutions in the years

# "WGS IS A CRITICAL LENS FOR INTERPRETING HISTORY, FOR SEEING THE WORLD AS IT IS, AND FOR ENVISIONING THE HORIZON OF JUSTICE AND UNIVERSAL FLOURISHING."

leading up to the World Wars. Among them was my paternal great-grandfather, who fled the pogroms in St. Petersburg and headed to New York in about 1905. His surname was "Pirochinsky." Upon arriving at Ellis Island, he was granted asylum and put on the books with the name "Pirate." Despite his new moniker (the anti-Semitism of which he did not grasp because he spoke no English), he made a good living with a pushcart business selling lamps. But he had respiratory problems and was (ill) advised to move to Denver for its high altitude. He suffered an asthma attack in Ohio during his journey westward and was treated by a very kind physician named Dr. Fortner who managed to communicate that "Pirate" was derogatory. And so, as part of his physical recovery and cultural assimilation, my great-grandfather chose to adopt this nice WASP's name for himself and his descendants.

I like the story of my names, and I take pride in its echoes of resilience and choice. But in the end, and like the name stories of so many women, I do reckon with the fact that it reflects, and thereby perpetuates, the narcissism of patriarchal history.

**Lauren Ravalico** grew up in Denver, Colorado, moved eastward for college, and ended up building a life and career on this coast. She holds a B.A. from Cornell University, an M.A. from Tulane University, and a Ph.D. from Harvard University. Her specialty is feminist and feminocentric approaches to the interpretation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French literature, art, and culture. Before her current position, Associate Professor of French, Francophone and Italian Studies at the College of Charleston, she held faculty positions in French studies at The Ohio State University and Boston College, as well as summer instructorships in art and architectural history with Miami University of Ohio at the Université de Bourgogne in Dijon, France. Lauren's scholarship on literature, art, and the history of emotions after the French Revolution has appeared in *The Comparatist*, *George Sand Studies*, *Women in French Studies*, and an edited volume, *Germaine de Staël's Philosophy of the Passions*.

At C of C, she is proud to have served as inaugural director of the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs (LCWA) Signature Series, a year of high-impact, interdisciplinary programming about "Global Foodways" that Lauren curated with the support of a major grant award from South Carolina Humanities. She created a French cultural history course on food for the Signature Series and published an essay about its design in a recent Routledge volume, *Teaching Diversity and Inclusion*. In addition, she built "¡Adelante!", an LCWA mentoring and scholarship program that liaises with the Office of Institutional Diversity to support students' academic achievement and well-being at the College. Lauren is a recipient of the ExCEL Award for Outstanding Faculty Member in recognition of her commitment to creating a campus environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, and excellence.

She enjoys teaching all levels of French and Francophone Studies as well as in WGS, where she has taught special topics, independent studies, and now, WGST 381, the experiential learning course for students doing internships in the community. Lauren is especially interested in the relationship between classroom environment and student learning outcomes. With grant support for innovative teaching, she began working on this problem by staging a pop-up Montessori environment for a WGS sci-fi film course she gave in a traditional campus classroom. That experiment was interrupted by the start of the pandemic, but Lauren hopes to resuscitate it in spring 2023 to produce publishable results.

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Marissa Haynes (SHE/HER)

## Q. WHAT IS THE WHAT IFF? PODCAST ABOUT?

What IFF? stands for Intersectional Feminist Futures. The questions the podcast aims to answer are: How do we apply intersectional feminism in our every day lives and in our activism so that we guarantee ourselves an equitable and just future and what activism is already being done in our college community and beyond is already applying these ideas? The guests on our show are students, alumni, faculty and other great contributors to the social change we are seeing at and around CofC. The show aims to inform listeners about the work towards social justice that's already being done and the ways that they can get involved.

## Q. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE WITH THIS PODCAST?

Over the last four years of being a WGS major, I have been in countless conversations with friends and otherwise people who are really interested in the topics I get to study in my classes but who also might not know where to begin when it comes to educating themselves. If you're not a WGS major, you might go your entire college career without stepping into a classroom that centers intersectional thought and encourages you to be an active changemaker in order to better yourself and your community. And, I think that's a real shame, so this show, for me, is an ode to those people who just need some encouragement and hope to believe in their potential and in their community. During trying political times, it's easy to feel lost and even useless, and I hope this podcast urges listeners to reflect on their own lives and know that they have what it takes to make the changes they want to see in the world. Every small effort counts.



## Q. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO LAUNCH THIS PODCAST?

Between friends, I have said for a couple years now that I could totally see myself hosting a podcast but never would have prioritized this ambition if it had not been for Dr. De Welde. At the end of the Fall 2021 semester, Kris presented me with this opportunity to work with and learn from an organization she has been a member of for decades called Sociology for Women in Society (SWS). I signed onto the internship with the intention of helping them start up the organization's podcast. After some meetings, Kris and I thought it was the perfect opportunity to take what we were learning from SWS and apply it to our own program. Thus, What IFF? was born.

What I love about podcasts is that they have the potential to reach people in a more comfortable and intimate way than a classroom setting. For many people, the time they spend listening to podcasts is often a time to unwind whether that is on their drive home or in their headphones on a walk, or alone at home. Because of this, I think it is a great media platform to engage people in discussions about social issues and activism.



## WHERE TO LISTEN

<https://whatiff.buzzsprout.com>



"I HOPE THAT BY UPLIFTING THE VOICES OF THOSE ON THE FRONT LINES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM AND INVITING OTHERS TO LEARN AND LISTEN WE WILL BE ABLE TO INSPIRE A GENERATION OF CHANGEMAKERS."



Photo Credit: Priscilla Thomas

**Marissa Haynes** is a double major in Sociology and WGS with a minor in Spanish. After graduation, she plans to enter into social services and fight for the most vulnerable members of society, children from marginalized families of lower socio-economic status. She plans to advocate for better support and more effective systems that proactively and sustainably assist those in need and prioritize keeping families together. Marissa has also worked in Charleston's hospitality industry and sings with a local bluegrass cover band and with The Charleston Vibes, an acapella group.

*You may have seen her performing live at Yes! I'm a Feminist, and if you didn't, you missed out!*

**Q. DO YOU CONSIDER WHAT IFF? TO BE A PART OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM? IF SO, WHAT DO YOU HOPE IT'LL CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS?**

I definitely consider the show to be a part of social media activism. We created the show with the intention of making a platform for local activists to not only talk about the important work that they're doing but to also engage in conversation about the personal journey they've taken to get there. I hope that by uplifting the voices of those on the front lines of social justice activism and inviting others to learn and listen we will be able to inspire a generation of changemakers.

**Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO ADD ABOUT THE PODCAST?**

This is my final semester at The College, so we are looking for a WGS major to replace me. I'd love to get an idea of who might be interested in taking the reins after I graduate in December.

**Q. WHAT SUPPORT OR CALL TO ACTION DO YOU NEED FROM WGS (STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF) TO ENSURE WHAT IFF? HAS THE EFFECT THAT YOU HOPE IT CAN?**

I want this show to not only be a place for WGS affiliates to participate in these conversations about activism but also a place for other inspired members of the CofC community to step outside their comfort zones and engage themselves in discussions about complicated but important issues. As for a call to action for WGS, I'd love any ideas and feedback on the show, and I would love to know if anyone wants to nominate an activist to be a guest speaker on the show. I want the show to represent who we are as a program.



Photo Credit: Priscilla Thomas

# LISTEN UP

What IFF?'s next episode features several WGS majors discussing their internships during the fall semester. One student, Ahmira Lucas (she/her), is interning at EMPOWER whose mission is to reduce the onset of substance abuse and prevent the transmission of HIV, Hepatitis, and other sexually transmitted infections (STI's) as well as prevent unintended pregnancy in minority youth and young adults in the Charleston area. Listen in for more about Ahmira's work (as well as Taylor McElwain's with Lutheran Services Carolinas)!

## WGS EVENTS

Check social media and weekly faculty/student bulletins for more details on these upcoming events!

### JANUARY

- WGS Faculty Welcome Back Gathering, 1/26
- T.E.A. with WGS (TBD)

### MARCH

- Women's History Month Lecture
- Reproductive Justice workshop

### MAY

- WGS Intersections at the Halsey, 5/23, Carla Ginnis exhibition
- SC Leadership Institute (for students, TBD)

### FEBRUARY

- Consuela Francis Emerging Scholar Lecture, 2/7 (w/ African American Studies), Dr. Tara Bynum,
- Black History Month Lecture (w/ History Dept.), Dr. Tamika Nunley
- WGS Intersections at the Halsey, 2/8, Jovencio de la Paz exhibition

### APRIL

- Queer Reading of Hitchcock's *Psycho* (w/ Film Studies), Dr. David Greven
- Black Maternal Health Week, 4/11-4/17
- Feminism in Motion, 4/19



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## WGS Alumni Updates

**Ruby McChesney (she/her, '09)** earned a Master's degree in Human Services Counseling in Trauma and Crisis Response and now works as a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.

**Leigh Deckle (she/her, '10)** is Associate Director of Instructional Support for Instruction Partners, and lives in Washington D.C.

**Sarak Kate Hampton (she/her, '11)** earned a Master of Science in School Counseling from Mercer University and has been working in the technology field since 2019. Currently, she works as a Senior UX Researcher in Atlanta, GA and completed a 10-week User Experience Design Bootcamp with the General Assembly.

**Clara Brown (she/her, '12)** Earned a Master's degree in Macro-level Social Work Studies and works as a Team Manager piloting an integrated health home program for unhoused adults living with severe and persistent mental illness. She is also an avid cyclist and a housing justice activist in Providence, RI.

**Lindsey Breitwieser (she/her, '12)** earned a Ph.D. in Gender Studies and is currently an Assistant Professor of Gender Studies.



Mother/worker/scholar/activist, **Drisana McDaniel (she/her, '13)** is working on her PhD in Philosophy and Religion with a focus on Women's Spirituality at the California Institute of Integral Studies, where she recently completed

her M.A. in Women, Gender, Spirituality and Social Justice. Her work is published in a new book by Demeter Press, *Mothering Outside the Lines: Tales of Boundary-Busting Mamas*, which will be released in October 2023. She'll be teaching a course for WGS this coming spring semester!

**Johnna Menke (she/her, '15)** Earned a Juris Doctorate and works as an attorney in Columbia, SC.

**Katie Forrest (she/her, '16)** earned a Master's in Social Work and currently works as a Trauma Therapist. She continues to be involved in rape crisis related work in Chicago, IL.



**Percival Haas (they/them, '18)** is pursuing a Literatures in English Ph.D. and a Graduate Certificate in WGS from Rutgers University, in addition to three certificates in Graphic Design from Wake Technical College. They live in New Brunswick, NJ.



**Tessa Torgovitsky (she/they, '19)** has recently been accepted to the Bachelor's of Science in Nursing program at George Washington University. She has been working for the Carolina Youth Action Project as a Campaign Organizer for Sex Education Beyond Abstinence while also teaching religious school, facilitating sex education workshops at the College, and engaging in coalition work across Charleston.



**Reagan Williams (she/her, '20)** is a Project Associate at Keecha Harris and Associates, and resides in Charlotte, NC. She also serves as co-chair of the WGS Student Advisory Committee.

# ARE YOU A WGS ALUMNI? RE-CONNECT WITH US!



# MEET OUR NEW WGS COLLEAGUE

## CRISTINA DOMINGUEZ (THEY/THEM)

WGS is my life's work. Both my scholarship and pedagogy are deeply relational, embodied, and transformational. In my scholarship and teaching I center subjugated knowledge, highlighting the ways in which people in the everyday are knowers, or, more specifically, highlighting the ways in which our ideas, actions, and movements are, as Mohanty puts it, "communally wrought." In the tradition of feminist praxis this is alive in both the topics/area of focus I select for my research, writing, and teaching and in the methods, analysis, pedagogy I take up. In short, I engage research, writing, and teaching as places to, with others, authentically, compassionately, and creatively analyze the world as it is, imagine more liberatory possibilities, and work together to bring those possibilities into reality.

There are so many classes I am excited to teach now that I am here, at CofC, many of which I would love to team teach including Southern Social Justice History, Bible Belt Queers: Stories of LGBTQ+ People from the South, LGBTQ+ Reproductive Justice. I would also love to revisit the Feminist Pedagogy course I previously taught, this time teaching it alongside Dr. De Welde and Dr. Butler [a dream course of theirs in the making]. In addition to being a space for deep study of various feminist and liberatory pedagogical approaches I envision the class as being a place for practice. Ideally a great deal of the course would be devoted to engaging students in experiential learning with students designing and teaching classes and working interdependently to design future courses or workshops for their final project.



Right now I am working on being really intentional about how I arrive and take root here in Charleston. As someone who profoundly believes in the liberatory power of the relational I am trying to be really deliberate about how I show up here and move into relationship with others as a teacher-scholar-community member.

I do wish to revisit and re-work chapters of my dissertation, a post qualitative research project looking at how Black, Brown, and white anti-racist LGBTQ+ social justice workers in North Carolina are bringing into the here and now more just and liberatory worlds for all through taking up queer kinship solidarity as a liberation praxis.

But, in terms of the kinds of reworking I'd like to do, I am hoping to create collaborative pieces of writing in partnership with the folks who participated in that project. So I have begun reaching out to some of the folks from that project, many of which I'm lucky enough to call friends and kin and am waiting to hear their thoughts about what we could do together.

As I said during my interview process, I do dream of participating in a large scale CBPAR project examining the learning, teaching, and relationship building possible among LGBTQ+ social justice organizations on, off, and in the

spaces between the college campus and surrounding community. This project would be designed and executed by a collaborative research circle comprised of faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Lastly, I am also hoping to make time for auto-ethnography again. A short forum piece I wrote when I was pregnant and finalized when my little one wasn't yet a year, "We're Having a Baby!: A Story of Chosen-Created Queer Trans Family and Futures", was published in 2022 and while there were auto-ethnographic components in my dissertation I have not given myself over to auto-ethnographic writing for some time. I think that, with the personal transitions and challenges I'm experiencing and the intense and critical political times we continue to find ourselves in, it might be a powerful time for me to return to that kind of inquiry work, perhaps even in collaboration with others in a sort of duo or collective ethnographic project.

I'd like folks in my new community at CofC to know that I am a very open, authentic person and share quite a bit about myself in my writing and my teaching. I deeply desire to build with folks in person. Let's catch up in person at the next WGS event and/or let's get in touch so we can find a day to grab a coffee and go for a walk together on or near campus.

**"I ENGAGE RESEARCH,  
WRITING, AND TEACHING  
AS PLACES TO, WITH  
OTHERS, AUTHENTICALLY,  
COMPASSIONATELY, AND  
CREATIVELY ANALYZE THE  
WORLD AS IT IS, IMAGINE  
MORE LIBERATORY  
POSSIBILITIES, AND WORK  
TOGETHER TO BRING  
THOSE POSSIBILITIES INTO  
REALITY."**

**Cristina Dominguez** is a queer interdisciplinary and intersectional feminist teacher/learner-thinker/writer-kin/community member for collective liberation. While they were born and lived the first fourteen years of their life in Northern New Jersey, Dominguez came of age and was consciousness raised in Charlotte and then Greensboro, North Carolina. Dominguez earned their Bachelor's in Criminal Justice from UNC Charlotte, their Master's in Women's Studies from San Diego State University, and their Ph.D. in Educational Studies from UNC Greensboro. In addition to their studies Dominguez has been involved in feminist, LGBTQ, anti-racist campus and community grassroots social justice education and organizing. Since 2010 Dominguez has designed and taught undergraduate courses in Women's and Gender Studies at San Diego State University, Guilford Technical Community College, Bennett College, and UNC Greensboro. Dominguez's teaching and scholarship are rooted in intersectional feminism with a focus on anti-racist, decolonial, anti-capitalist, queer and trans feminisms. Their research interests include social justice education and action work, critical community building and solidarity relationships, and liberatory pedagogy and curricula, with a focus on the everyday and relational. Dominguez has used qualitative methods including focus group, interview, observation, and arts-based methods. Dominguez also engages in critical autoethnography and conceptual/theoretical research. Their most intensive scholarly work to date is their dissertation, a post-qualitative research project that, engaging verbal and visual narratives from pairings and groups collected through focus groups, creative methods, and follow-up conversations, takes up an in-depth exploration of how Black, Brown, and white anti-racist LGBTQ+ social justice workers in North Carolina are bringing into the here and now more just and liberatory worlds for all through taking up queer kinship solidarity as a liberation praxis. Additionally in collaboration with mentor and friend Dr. Silvia Bettez, Dominguez has conducted qualitative research-based equity audits and reports and has co-facilitated workshops for social justice education leaders in K-12 and Higher Education on fostering critical community through community commitments, relational culture, and somatic practices.

# RACE, EQUITY, & INCLUSION CURRICULUM

## REI reflections with WGS student Kristen Graham (she/her)

The Race, Equity and Inclusion curriculum (effective Fall 2023) requires that all undergraduate students of the College of Charleston complete six credit hours of "REI" courses, with 3 hours focusing on a U.S. Context and 3 hours focusing on a global context. Here we ask a WGS scholar-activist who has been involved in the REI initiative from the beginning about her perceptions.

**Kristen,** you were a student activist with the Black Student Union and ICAN when the demands were made to the upper-administration for a curriculum requirement that addressed issues of race and racism; this happened two years in a row (208 and 2019). You then served for two years (2019-2021) as the student representative on the REI Faculty Senate Committee to investigate ways to implement a required curriculum. And you made a personal statement on the Faculty floor during deliberations on the REI implementation in 2021. Now, in your final semesters at the College, and looking back on all that needed to happen to bring this to fruition, what reflections do you have about the REI and your involvement as a student activist in its success?

In full transparency the feelings I'm still carrying are bitter sweet. The beautiful part of this journey has been working alongside the faculty who have been committed to this work for so many years. They inspire me to keep fighting for justice and equity in all the ways I can and are a huge reason why I agreed to continue serving on the REI advisory committee. The hard truth is that systemic change is slow because of the colonized bureaucracy we have to maneuver within. As an institution CofC is 20-25 years behind similar institution CofC is 20-25 years behind similar sized Universities throughout the South which is why the question has never been 'do we need this?', but rather 'how can we get our institution to support it?'

I am the first in my family to attend a university, so I was completely unaware of all the red tape and politics that pervade educational systems. This whole process has



given me tremendous insight as an education advocate. My activism as a student over the years has had a profound impact on me while simultaneously being attached to most of the traumas I have experienced and am still healing through. This type of work comes with a lot of intellectual and emotional labor and for a poor student like myself it also comes with its fair share of burdens. I believe it is worth the personal cost and sacrifices though, because true activism is about paying it forward. We are not engaged in this work out of selfish recognition or payout. We do this for the betterment of our community. For me I have witnessed the decrease in student engagement and activism since the pandemic. I think this requirement will birth more thought leaders and change agents across disciplines or at the very least get students to think more critically about their own positionality as global citizens.

My hope is that more students and faculty will begin engaging in racial equity and education equity work in the future. This REI requirement is just the beginning, because the more we as a community to elevate our collective consciousness around equity, the better we can be both individually and in relation to one another. I believe CofC is taking a substantial step in the right direction of social justice with this implementation. As an institution the College is still currently reckoning with its embedded coloniality. However, bearing witness to this continuous effort and collaboration amongst our community gives me hope that CofC can become a leader for racial, equity and inclusion in South Carolina.

WGS will be contributing courses to the REI including Introduction to WGS and Global Feminisms



# PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Be sure to check **WGS Connect** for spotlights on staff, faculty, and more!

- **Deborah Boyle (she/her)** received the College of Charleston 2022 Distinguished Research Award for her extensive and important contributions to her field of the history of modern philosophy, and in particular female philosophers such as Margaret Cavendish.
- **Michaela Carroll (she/her), Cara Delay (she/her), Beth Sundstrom (she/her) & Annie Gjelsvik**, "Our Darkest Hour: Women's Experiences of Violence under Ireland's Eighth Amendment," *Feminist Encounters* 6,1 (2022).
- **Jennifer Cavalli (she/her)**, awarded best article from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender for "Crisis Management: Women's Letters of Assistance and Commiseration in Sixteenth-Century Northern Italy," *Early Modern Women*, volume 16.
- **Kris De Welde (she/her)** had her article "Minding and Mending the Gap Between Academic Kindness and Academic Justice" accepted to *Queer-Feminist Science & Technology Studies Forum*, Vol. 7 (forthcoming).
- **Cara Delay (she/her) & Beth Sundstrom (she/her)**, "'In Her Shoes' and In Her Words: Silences, Voices, and Bodies in Irish Women's Abortion Narratives," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, volume 43, Number 2 (2022): 139-168.
- **Christopher Day (he/him)**, released a book in May 2022, *Rethinking Civil-Military Relations in Africa: Beyond the Coup d'État*. ---, book review editor for *African Studies Review*.
- **Caroline Guthrie (she/her)**, released a book, *The American Historical Imaginary: Contested Narratives of the Past*, with Rutgers University Press in October 2022.
- **Sheridan Hough (she/her)**, appointed as the Lightsey Humanities Chair for a three-year term, beginning in the 2022-23 academic year.
- **Lauren Ravalico (she/her)** (Department of French, Francophone, and Italian Studies) received one of two CETL SoTL grants for Spring 2023 for her project "The Pop-Up Montessori Classroom".  
- "Connecting French Studies to the World through Global Foodways." *Teaching Diversity and Inclusion: Examples from a French-Speaking Classroom*, edited by E. Nicole Meyer and Eilene Hoft-March, Routledge, 2022, pp. 139-148.
- **Lisa T. Ross (she/her) & Jenn Greenspan (student, she/her)**, organized *You're the Only One I've told: The Voices Behind Abortion* performances. Over 150 attendees viewed the performances. The organizers also encouraged voter registration on-site and wrote messages to lawmakers.
- **Sandy Slater (she/her)**, signed a book contract with the University of Florida to publish *Henry & George, A Civil War Love Story*.

# PROMOTIONS & RECOGNITIONS

- **Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure:** Irina Erman (German & Russian Studies), Sarah Hatteberg (Sociology & Anthropology), Aisha Haykal (Libraries), Julia McReynolds-Pérez (Sociology and Anthropology), Lauren Ravalico (French & Francophone Studies), Elena Rodriguez (Libraries)
- **Promotion to Professor:** Kathleen Beres Rogers (English), Marian Mazzone (Art & Architectural History)
- **Successful Third-Year Review:** Shannon Eaves (History), Brigit Ferguson (Art & Architectural History), Kristen McLean (International Studies), Maren Trochmann (Political Science)
- **Successful (Superior) Post-Tenure Review:** Chris Korey (Biology)

# NEW FACULTY AFFILIATES!

Julia Arroyo (she/her), Sociology  
Brigit Ferguson (she/her), Art and Architectural History  
Sarah Maness (she/her), Health and Human Performance

John Thomas (he/him), Political Science  
Mary Trent (she/her), Art and Architectural History

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The WGS Executive Committee consists of faculty from across the College whose scholarship and/or teaching align with the mission of the program. The Executive Committee participates in program decision making, mentoring students, and represents the program on campus and in the community.



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022-23

Cara Delay (she/her)  
Cristina Dominguez (they/them)

Aisha Haykal (she/her)  
Melissa Hughes (she/her)  
mutindi ndunda (she/her, on sabbatical)

Lauren Ravalico (she/her)  
Julia McReynolds-Pérez (she/her)



# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**John Thomas (he/him)**

## **Q. HOW DO YOU INCORPORATE WGS IN YOUR SCHOLARSHIP AND CLASSROOM?**

I want my students to understand that gender should not be an add on but must be embedded into how we view and analyze the world. I want them to come away naturally asking the question, "How does gender impact this situation?" I do this by explicitly applying this lens in class as well as providing additional readings and perspectives to round out what we see in textbooks. Likewise, in my scholarship, I have been challenged to see how race and gender intersect to impact Black movements in the countries that I study with very real consequences. My first academic article was a co-authored piece on the emergence of the Black women's movement in Peru.

## **Q. IF YOU COULD TEACH YOUR DREAM CLASS, WHAT WOULD IT BE TITLED, AND WHAT WOULD IT COVER?**

My dream class is LACS 340: Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin Studies and I look forward to offering a version of it on campus in Spring 2023.



Photo Credit: Reese Moore

## **Q. WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON CURRENTLY?**

I am currently working on the "Virtual Survey of Afro-Peruvian Youth", a project done in cooperation with the Center for Ethnic Development in Lima, Peru. We collected responses from 400 persons aged 18-30 between April to June 2021 covering attitudes towards COVID-19, political participation and ideology, gender and racial discrimination and other topics. The survey report will be released in the Winter of 2023.

## **Q. WHAT'S SOMETHING THAT YOUR STUDENTS AND COLLEAGUES DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU?**

I have a collection of over 500 Starbucks mugs from around the world and have visited three of the six Starbucks Roasteries worldwide.

**John Thomas** is Assistant Professor of Political Science who hails from Nashville, Tennessee, and is a dual citizen of the United States and Barbados. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Spanish from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. He also holds a Master of Public Affairs Degree from the Princeton University School of Public and International Affairs. His Doctor of Philosophy degree is from the University of Chicago in Political Science.

His most recent academic position was at Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, Ohio, where he held a presidential fellowship through the Gift of Black Theology Program. He also taught courses at Chicago State University and was a teaching consultant at the University of Chicago Center for Teaching.

His research interests are comparative race politics, social movements, public policy, minority rights and democratic consolidation with a regional focus on Latin America and the Caribbean. John's dissertation focused on the evolution of Black movements in Peru and Ecuador from 1980 to 2016 and how the governments of these states responded through policies and institutions.

John serves the African Methodist Episcopal Church globally as the Editor of The Christian Recorder, the denomination's newspaper. In this capacity, he also holds seats on the board of the Associated Church Press and the World Association of Christian Communicators. John is a member of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists LGBTQ Task Force. Within the local Charleston Community, he is a member of the Beta Mu Sigma Chapter of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

# CAB'S NEWEST MEMBER

## KATE PERALTA (SHE/HER)

Welcome Kate Peralta to the WGS **Community Advisory Board** (CAB). Kate obtained her B.A. with a double major in Women's and Gender Studies and History in 2018. While at the College, Kate was passionate about political efforts to further women's rights in the Charleston area and worked with the League of Women Voters, WREN, and other influential women in the area to pass an adoption of the CEDAW resolution in Charleston County. In so doing, she has left a significant mark on Charleston and those she worked with.

After graduating from the College in 2018, Kate moved to Honolulu, HI where her husband was stationed with the Navy. While there, she earned a Masters of Public Administration and Policy from American University. She has been cultivating a successful career in grants management and fundraising, most recently at the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i and Nourish International (we are thrilled

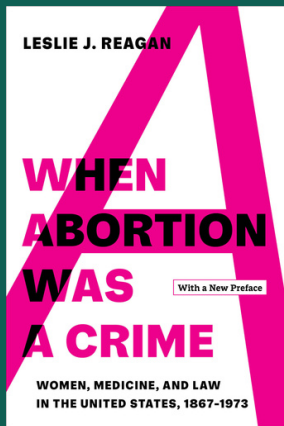


about this expertise!). Kate is passionate about advancing women and minority rights.

She is excited to re-connect with WGS again now that she has relocated to the Charleston area, but her excitement can't top ours! We are confident that she will be a truly spectacular addition to the board.

# LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

**WGS Inspired Reading List Compiled By  
Library Liaison Aisha Haykal (she/her)**

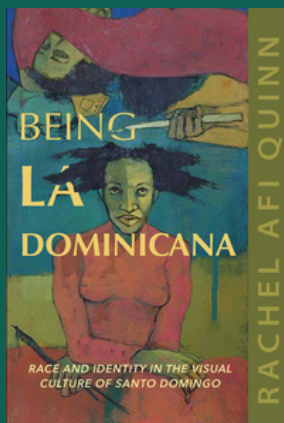
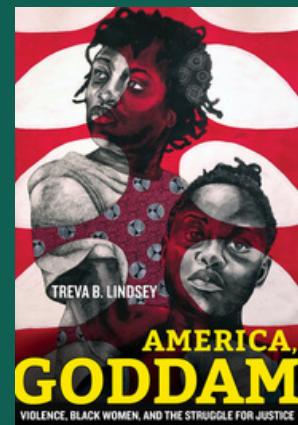


**WHEN ABORTION WAS A CRIME : WOMEN, MEDICINE, AND LAW IN THE UNITED STATES, 1867-1973**  
**AUTHOR: LESLIE J. REAGAN**

When Abortion Was a Crime is filled with intimate stories and nuanced analysis, demonstrating how abortion was criminalized and policed—and how millions of women sought abortions regardless of the law. With this edition, Leslie J. Reagan provides a new preface that addresses the dangerous and ongoing threats to abortion access across the country, and the precarity of our current moment.

**AMERICA, GODDAM : VIOLENCE, BLACK WOMEN, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE**  
**AUTHOR: TREVA B. LINDSEY**

Through personal accounts and hard-hitting analysis, Black feminist historian Treva B. Lindsey starkly assesses the forms and legacies of violence against Black women and girls, as well as their demands for justice for themselves and their communities. Combining history, theory, and memoir, America, Goddam renders visible the gender dynamics of anti-Black violence. Black women and girls occupy a unique status of vulnerability to harm and death, while the circumstances and traumas of this violence go underreported and understudied.



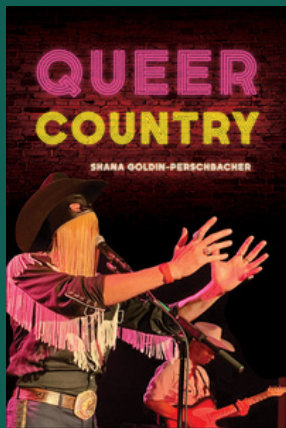
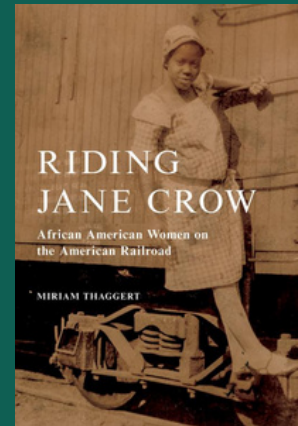
**BEING LA DOMINICANA: RACE AND IDENTITY IN THE VISUAL CULTURE OF SANTO DOMINGO**  
**AUTHOR: RACHEL AFI QUINN**

Rachel Afi Quinn investigates the ways Dominican visual culture portrays Dominican women and how women represent themselves in their own creative endeavors in response to existing stereotypes. Delving into the dynamic realities and uniquely racialized gendered experiences of women in Santo Domingo, Quinn reveals how racial ambiguity and color hierarchy work to shape experiences of identity and subjectivity in the Dominican Republic. She merges analyses of context and interviews with young Dominican women to offer rare insights into a Caribbean society in which the tourist industry and popular media reward, and rely upon, the ability of Dominican women to transform themselves to perform gender, race, and class.



### **RIDING JANE CROW : AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN ON THE AMERICAN RAILROAD** AUTHOR: MIRIAM THAGGERT

As Jim Crow laws became more prevalent and forced Black Americans to "ride Jim Crow" on the rails, the train compartment became a contested space of leisure and work. *Riding Jane Crow* examines four instances of Black female railroad travel: the travel narratives of Black female intellectuals such as Anna Julia Cooper and Mary Church Terrell; Black middle-class women who sued to ride in first class "ladies' cars"; Black women railroad food vendors; and Black maids on Pullman trains. Thaggert argues that the railroad represented a technological advancement that was entwined with African American attempts to secure social progress.



### **QUEER COUNTRY** AUTHOR: SHANA GOLDIN-PERSCHBACHER

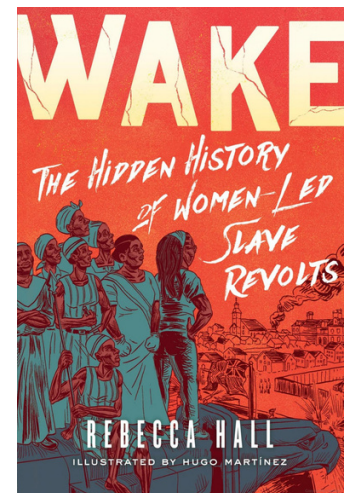
Though frequently ignored by the music mainstream, queer and transgender country and Americana artists have made essential contributions as musicians, performers, songwriters, and producers. *Queer Country* blends ethnographic research with analysis and history to provide the first in-depth study of these artists and their work. Shana Goldin-Perschbacher delves into the careers of well-known lesbian artists like k.d. lang and Amy Ray and examines the unlikely success of singer-songwriter Patrick Haggerty, who found fame forty years after releasing the first out gay country album. She also focuses on later figures like nonbinary transgender musician Rae Spoon and renowned drag queen country artist Trixie Mattel; and on recent breakthrough artists like Orville Peck, Amythyst Kiah, and chart-topping Grammy-winning phenomenon Lil Nas X. Many of these musicians place gender and sexuality front and center even as it complicates their careers. But their ongoing efforts have widened the circle of country/Americana by cultivating new audiences eager to connect with the artists' expansive music and personal identities.

## **BOOK CLUB: CO-SPONSORED BY CAROLINA LOWCOUNTRY ATLANTIC WORLD, AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES & WGS**

From Simon & Schuster:

Part graphic novel, part memoir, *Wake* is an imaginative tour-de-force that tells the "powerful" (The New York Times Book Review) story of women-led slave revolts and chronicles scholar Rebecca Hall's efforts to uncover the truth about these women warriors who, until now, have been left out of the historical record.

*Wake* tells the "riveting" (Angela Y. Davis) story of Dr. Rebecca Hall, a historian, granddaughter of slaves, and a woman haunted by the legacy of slavery. The accepted history of slave revolts has always told her that enslaved women took a back seat. But Rebecca decides to look deeper, and her journey takes her through old court records, slave ship captain's logs, crumbling correspondence, and even the forensic evidence from the bones of enslaved women from the "negro burying ground" uncovered in Manhattan. She finds women warriors everywhere. Illustrated beautifully in black and white, *Wake* will take its place alongside classics of the graphic novel genre, like Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and Art Spiegelman's *Maus*. This story of a personal and national legacy is a powerful reminder that while the past is gone, we still live in its wake.



Contact Dr. Sandy Slater (slaters@cofc.edu) if interested in joining the book club and receiving a copy of *WAKE*.



# 10 YEARS OF *Yes!* I'm a Feminist.



Photos by Reese Moore

Yes! I'm a Feminist celebrated 10 years as an annual event organized by WGS Community Advisory Board in support of the Women's & Gender Studies Program at CofC.

We gathered in community to celebrate shared values and our hope for a feminist future. The work is far from over, but together we fight for justice and inclusivity and support the next generation of changemakers!

**Thanks to YOU**, our generous friends and supporters, YIAF was a great success! These funds support student scholarships, research, and activism.

We offer deep gratitude to everyone who made a financial gift and to our event sponsors - we couldn't do this without you!

View a slideshow of photos from YIAF on our blog, [WGS Connect!](#)





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Special thanks to the Band!: Marissa Haynes, Bridie Molen, Kris Manning, Kelly Sánchez, and Laurin McGee

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SAVE THE DATE!  
FEMINISM IN MOTION  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19  
STERN CENTER BALLROOM

VIEW PHOTOS FROM FEMO 2022 ON OUR BLOG, WGS  
CONNECT, AT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/3WIBMVZ](https://bit.ly/3wibmvz)

Special **THANK YOU** to all the  
professors, students, and alumni  
featured in this issue, assembled and  
edited with care by Priscilla Thomas.