

Rowan
University

Women's and Gender Studies

Spring 2022 Newsletter



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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



DR. MELISSA R. KLAPPER WGS COORDINATOR

Why did you decide to get involved in Women & Gender Studies at Rowan University?

My doctorate is in American women's history, so when I came to Rowan in 2001 as an assistant professor, getting involved in WGS seemed like a great way to extend my teaching and research interests into serving the university community and raising campus awareness of important diversity issues.

What is your favorite WGS course you've taught at Rowan and why?

I regularly teach both Women and Gender in Perspective and Honors Women and Gender in Perspective, which gives me the opportunity to introduce students from all over the university to the importance of using gender as a lens of analysis. The students often say they'll never see the world in the same way after taking our core course, which is the most gratifying feedback any teacher can ever get.

In what gender topics are you most interested?

My two main areas of scholarship are American Jewish women's history and the history of childhood and youth in America, especially girls. I have written about education, activism, immigration, extracurricular activities, and tourism, all from a WGS perspective that centers the voices of previously unheard historical actors.

What do you hope to see as the future of WGS at Rowan?

I hope that WGS will continue to expand our course offerings and events and attract more and more students from all the colleges and programs. Everyone on campus can benefit from what we have to offer!

DR. ANDREW HOTTLE

Why did you decide to get involved in Women & Gender Studies at Rowan University?

I became involved with the program because I was actively researching and writing about women who worked as visual artists. At the time, I had just made a commitment to focus my research solely on women artists. Like many other academic disciplines, my field (art history) was heavily skewed toward men's achievements. I joined the WGS program as a way to support the study of women and gender on Rowan's campus.

What is your favorite WGS course you've taught at Rowan and why?

It's difficult to choose a favorite because each has been fulfilling in its own way. Survey of Women Artists, which I teach intermittently, is definitely one of them. It allows us to explore the political and social constraints that women have faced across time while also learning about the achievements of artists who haven't been "canonized" in the history of art. In the class, we address sexism in art academies and professional galleries, gender-based remarks made by art critics and historians, and other entrenched patriarchal notions that have excluded women from equal participation and recognition.

In what gender topics are you most interested?

Although my research emphasizes women's historical contributions to the visual arts, I have a broader interest in the cultural constructs around gender and gender identity, especially the way in which language and imagery are used to communicate difference and perpetuate entrenched mythologies.

What do you hope to see as the future of WGS at Rowan?

WGS is a thriving program with excellent courses but I hope to see its offerings expand. With renewed attention to sex-based and gender-based discrimination over the last few years (#MeToo, bathroom bills, "Don't Say Gay"), WGS is well-positioned to facilitate a greater awareness and understanding of these important issues.



Course Spotlight



Women and Gender in Perspective/Honors Women and Gender in Perspective

Course Number: INTR 01130

Rowan Core: Global Literacy

Course Scheduling: Women and Gender in Perspective is offered every semester and online in the summer. Honors Women and Gender in Perspective is offered every fall.

Women and Gender in Perspective is the core course required for all WGS academic programs, including the minor, the two Certificates of Undergraduate Study (CUGS), and the sequence in Liberal Arts.

Women and Gender in Perspective/Honors Women and Gender in Perspective is taught by a rotating group of interdisciplinary faculty members from across the university. As an introduction to women's and gender studies, it includes a range of ideas and topics that reflect the broad scope of the field. The course includes theoretical, sociological, cultural, literary, and historical approaches to the many ways in which societies construct and organize gender. Readings and assignments pay special attention to the many sources and markers of difference, including race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, and geography.

Reclaiming Our Time: Empowering Women of Color

Course Number: WA 01404 2

Course Scheduling: Fall 2022

Professor: Cherita Harrell (Writing Arts)

WGS First Tier Course

Reclaiming our Time: Empowering Women of Color evaluates the societal representation (or misrepresentation) of women of color and how that impacts their social, academic, and professional growth. The course offers a deeper exploration of the lived experiences of women of color, specifically how creative work informed by critical literacy and critical theory can act as a resource for academic, social, and professional development. The course enables students to examine and acknowledge their personal experiences and address the ways that race, gender, sexuality, class, and other aspects of identity intersect and impact academic and social growth. *Reclaiming Our Time: Empowering Women of Color* will also promote the creation of spaces that allow for the exploration of students' lived experiences through forms of expression such as oral stories, narratives, visual media, and other literary contributions.

Gender Dynamics and Working Parents During the Pandemic

October 12, 2021

On October 12, 2021, WGS sponsored "Gender Dynamics and Working Parents During the Pandemic" in collaboration with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Center for Responsible Leadership, and the Rohrer College of Business. The event featured Dr. Kristin Shockley, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Georgia and Associate Editor of both the *Journal of Business and Psychology* and the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Her main area of research focuses on understanding the intersection of employees' work and family lives.

The shift to remote work beginning in March 2020 due to Covid-19 caused Dr. Shockley to ask: How are dual-earner couples with young kids managing during COVID? Since daycares shut down and couples had to find new ways to manage their work and parenting, she studied 274 married heterosexual couples to determine what strategies couples were using and how these strategies were linked to wives' and husbands' family functioning, health and job performance.

Dr. Shockley's research suggests that when the wife works remotely and still "does it all", the couple has the poorest outcomes. Interestingly, the outcomes across the board were pretty good when wives do most of the work, suggesting that when husbands pitch in at least a little, they receive benefits and so do the wives. Of all the strategies Shockley identified, alternating child care days seemed to be the most advantageous. This strategy preserved well-being and maintained adequate levels of performance for both wives and husbands, but this strategy was not remote and involved a reduction in work hours that might not be a viable option for many couples.



LET EVERY VOICE BE HEARD

A SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCERT

March 30, 2022



Let Every Voice Be Heard: A Social Justice Concert, an event co-sponsored by WGS, the Department of Music, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the College of Performing Arts, was held on March 30, 2022. Under the direction of Marian Stieber, Chair of the Vocal Division of the Department of Music, Rowan students and faculty performed songs on the theme of social justice. The performance pieces were by and about marginalized and underrepresented voices and included varied musical styles, including pop, classical, and musical theater.

The performances were followed by a College of Performing Arts student panel discussion about representation and diversity within music, theater, and performing arts education, moderated by Melissa R. Klapper, Professor of History and Coordinator of WGS.



Students and Alumni

Nicole Tota (Class of 2021, English and History major, WGS minor)

Last year, I got the chance to virtually attend the NJWGSC Undergraduate Research Colloquium and present my paper "We Should Have Shocked the "New Woman": Mina, Lucy, and the New Vampire in Dracula." The conference organizers grouped us into panels of four or five, all organized around themes; since my paper concerned the intersection of patriarchy and monstrosity in Dracula, I presented alongside other critiques of gender in literature.

Of everything that I have written as an undergrad, my Dracula paper was my favorite, and it was exhilarating to be able to share the culmination of all my scholarly interests—literature, history, feminism, queer theory—with other like-minded scholars. In my paper and the PowerPoint I presented, I argued that the vampire in Dracula is both the transgressor and the enforcer of gender binaries, revealing "the paradox at the heart of Victorian gender ideals." That Van Helsing persecutes him endlessly, while also being the novel's main repository of vampire lore for both the reader and Stoker's characters, is an indictment of the patriarchy as the real monster.

Although I was worried that I might miss out on the full conference experience by presenting virtually, my concerns were for nothing. I enjoyed watching the other presenters both before and after my presentation, interacting in the comments section, and seeing familiar faces on Zoom: two of my English professors had come out to support me. I also made sure to attend one of the autobiographical/sociological panels that a fellow Rowan undergrad presented at. At the end, I was shocked to find out that I'd won second prize for best paper! Truly, it was one of the highlights of my undergraduate experience, and I'm thankful to the WGS program for giving me this opportunity.



NJWGSC Undergraduate
Research Colloquium
Paper Prize

Jessica Newell (Class of 2022, Communication Studies major, WGS minor)


I received a fall 2021 grant from the NJ Women's and Gender Studies Consortium to subsidize my work with Dr. Julie Haynes, Professor of Communication Studies, for the Center for the Advancement of Women in Communication at Rowan University. The Center is dedicated to promoting gender equity and building a network of female scholars, industry leaders, and students in communication. In the Center's inaugural year, I launched our newsletter and social media accounts, and my team coordinated meaningful in-person and virtual programming. Notably, we spotlighted student scholarship on gender representation in advertisements, hosted Hollywood producer Sue Kroll for a discussion on rising through the ranks as a woman in the film industry, and livestreamed a national conference on female leadership in communication careers at an in-person watch party. My responsibilities were to create promotional material, write questions for the guest speakers, and facilitate the logistical aspects needed for an event to run smoothly. We also received a generous gift from Dr. Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, which will help the Center establish a physical space on Rowan's campus. At the gift announcement, I spoke on behalf of the student body, thanking Dr. Kopenhaver for the ways in which her gift will support the next generation of female leaders in communication. I am currently working with my supervisor to set up this space, and future Profs will get to benefit from its services.

Moving forward, we'd like to expand our Communication and Gender Collective, the Center's affiliated student group. This group aims to produce gender-related media, engage with faculty who teach courses at the intersection of gender and communication, and collaborate with the Center to bring exciting programming to the University. Overall, my WGS minor gave me the tools to immerse myself in the Center's purpose and participate in important conversations surrounding female empowerment and gender equity.



NJWGSC Internship Grant
Recipient

Lekhini Desai (Class of 2023, English major, WGS minor)



2022 Cohen/Caswell Award in
Women's & Gender
Studies Winner

My experience in the WGS program has been invaluable when considering my personal and academic journey here at Rowan. The courses I have taken within the Women & Gender studies program have been truly enriching and fulfilling. The discussions I have had with professors and peers alike have broadened my view of academia beyond the traditional sense. I feel that the WGS minor acts as an effective supplement for almost any major, especially in the humanities. Having a clear understanding of gender theory has been crucial to my work as an English major.

The WGS program has also positively impacted my future professional life, as I strive to be the most inclusive and supportive educator that I can be. The education system is an institution that can be extremely gendered, and I believe that it is important to interrogate this and determine how my own biases might impact my professional life as an educator. My WGS classes have changed the way that I view the education system and the type of educator I want to be.

Finally, I feel that the WGS program has impacted my personal life in extraordinary ways, as it has helped me better understand my own life experiences. It has been incredibly eye-opening to consider the systemic factors that impacted my upbringing and my life today, and the WGS courses I have taken here at Rowan helped me view my experiences through this lens. Overall, I can undoubtedly say that the WGS program has enhanced my life academically, professionally, and personally, making me a more well-rounded and empathetic person.

Students and Alumni

Emily Lowe (Class of 2023, Human Resources & Marketing major, WGS minor)

My first semester at Rowan University, I enrolled in Honors Women and Gender in Perspective. This was a subject I was intrigued by but did not have much expertise in. I was unsure of my ability to succeed in this course as a new college student and business major. Despite my nerves, I fell in love with WGS and declared my minor in the field soon after. The contrast between my peers in my WGS courses, who were overwhelmingly female, and my peers in my Honors and business courses, who were overwhelmingly male, reminded me of my early life. I had always been surrounded by boys and had only my mother as a female role model; she was my escape, the person who taught me about what it meant to be a woman in this world. I felt similarly about my WGS courses; they were the one place I knew I belonged where I resonated with peers who could relate to my experiences as a woman.

I have strived to combine my WGS minor with my dual majors in Human Resource Management and Marketing. I started my journey with student government by serving as the Vice Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, later being elected the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs. I am a member of Women in Business and Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging in business, two organizations that perfectly combine all of my fields of study. I have worked multiple internships as well, but the one I find most relevant was my time as a marketing intern for the Alice Paul Institute. I educated students about who Alice Paul was through writing blog posts and designing a web page devoted to her efforts as a suffragist. This summer, I will be interning with Capital One as a Diversity Recruiter dedicated to hiring candidates of all backgrounds.



Matthew Bourne Reed (Class of 2023, Electrical and Computer Engineering major, WGS minor)

I love the WGS program! As an engineering student, most of my curriculum is centered around lecture and lab-based courses, which is why I really enjoy the discussion-based courses that the WGS programs have to offer! It is so nice to discuss with classmates and professors real issues that are prevalent in society, especially in the field of STEM. Taking these courses helps me analyze society and media critically, has developed my writing and public speaking skills, and challenges me to think in ways that are different and more nuanced than the "right" or "wrong" answers of my engineering major.



Mikaela Litchfield (Class of 2018, Development Manager at Share Food Program)

WGS has been a guidepost for me—one that has transcended far beyond Rowan's campus. The courses themselves were infinitely fascinating, collaborative, and—of course—academically rigorous. But beyond any syllabus, concentrating in WGS equipped me with an analytical framework that constantly informs both my professional and personal trajectories. The ability to investigate how dynamics of gender, race, class, national origin, sexuality, and disability status coalesce to shape our cultural and political landscapes continues to be one of the most valuable skills I gained throughout my time in school.

I brought the concentration's interdisciplinary and global analysis with me into every lecture hall I sat in. WGS became the throughline of all of my research for my History, International Studies, and Africana Studies coursework, allowing me to draw connections between my classes. And, while my academic focus was largely historical, WGS offered an avenue to translate my studies into a career in nonprofit work. Qualitative research and an understanding of contemporary issues through a historical and sociopolitical lens are fundamental to my current work at a hunger relief organization in Philadelphia, and I can sincerely thank WGS for providing a space to sharpen these skills.

On a personal note, I found WGS to be an inherently self-reflective academic field; even if a course focused on macro-level dynamics, WGS nevertheless asks us to consider our position in nuanced, historically-entrenched structures of power and marginalization. In this way, WGS was an incredibly meaningful tool that made me better suited to navigate interpersonal situations and contextualize global events. But more importantly, while it encouraged insight into my own relationship within such intersecting identities, I will always be grateful to Rowan's WGS program for deepening my understanding of the world beyond my own experience of it.



WGS REQUIREMENTS

MINOR REQUIREMENTS

Each student enrolled in the Women's and Gender Studies minor is required to complete 18 credit hours of Women's and Gender Studies courses. Courses should optimally be taken in a sequence from general introductory courses to more specialized, upper division courses.

Each student is required to take:

The core course, Women and Gender in Perspective OR Honors Women and Gender in Perspective (INTR 01.130); and

Fifteen (15) additional credits of approved WGS courses (ranked First and Second Tier), of which nine (9) credits must be from the [First Tier and up to six \(6\) credits must be from the Second Tier](#).

Sample First Tier courses:

CMS 04320 Communicating Gender
HIST 05424 Women in Modern American History
REL 10335 Sex and the Bible

Sample Second Tier courses:

ENG 02205 Adolescent Literature
PSY 05310 Psychology of Human Sexuality
RTF 01403 Deconstructing Disney

CUGS REQUIREMENTS

Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Women, Gender, and Media

INTR 01130 Women and Gender in Perspective
OR Honors Women and Gender in Perspective
And three electives drawn from the course list below:

ARHS 03340 Survey of Women Artists
CMS 04310 Images of Gender in Popular Culture
CMS 04320 Communicating Gender
ENGL 02210 Gender, Sexuality, and Literature
RTF 03272 Images of Women in Film

Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Women, Gender, and Society

INTR 01130 Women and Gender in Perspective
OR Honors Women and Gender in Perspective
And three electives drawn from the course list below:

ANTH 02322 Sex and Sex Roles in a Cross Cultural Perspective
LAWJ 05346 Women, Crime, and Criminal Justice
HIST 05423 Women in Early American History
HIST 05424 Women in Modern American History
PHIL 09328 Philosophy and Gender
POSC 07311 Women in American Politics
PSY 01200 Psychology of Women and Cultural Experience
SOC 08370 Sociology of Women