

USC DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES FACULTY PROFILES

Core Faculty



Dr. Loron Benton, Assistant Professor of WGST

Research Areas: Black women's cultural production and political traditions in the twentieth and twentieth-first centuries, Black feminist theory, womanist theory and theology, affect theory, queer theory, women of color feminisms, and the intersections between sexuality, creativity, and spirituality.

Dr. Loron Benton is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and an inaugural member of the Bridge to Faculty Program in the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of South Carolina. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in English and Women's Studies at Emory University, became a middle school reading teacher, and later completed her Master of Arts in Women's Studies at Georgia State University where she received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Dr. Benton earned her Ph.D. in Gender Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles and her dissertation—"Interior Spaces, Spiritual Traces: Theorizing the Erotic in the Cultural Works and Creative Lives of Black Women Writers and Artists, 1930-1970"—is an interdisciplinary study of the theoretical utility of Lordean erotics as an epistemological source for spiritual and political power. Dr. Benton's 2023 article "Dripping in Molasses: Black Feminist Nostalgia and Kara Walker's A Subtlety" examines the artistic and historic bricolage of sugar, slavery, memory, and mammy in Walker's 2014 public art installation and is published in a special issue on Black nostalgia in the Cultural Studies Journal.



Dr. Flora Blanchette-Oswald, Professor of WGST

Research Areas: liberation through a feminist lens, health disparities, abolitionist politics, and sexual liberation

Dr. Oswald's program of research focuses broadly on liberation through a feminist lens, with specific areas of interest including: (1) liberating marginalized group members from health disparities through a focus on social determinants of health; (2) fat liberation and upward resistance among fat people; (3) abolitionist politics and liberation from carceral systems; and (4) sexual liberation, particularly liberating marginalized group members from systems of sexualized violence.

In addition to this work, Dr. Oswald is interested in feminist methodologies, feminist philosophies of science, and feminist metascience, particularly in the context of the open science movement. Her research has been supported by funders including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Relationship Researchers Interest Group, Women and Gender Equality Canada, the McCourtney Institute for Democracy, and the Connecticut Institute for the Brain and Cognitive Sciences.



Dr. Dawn Campbell, Senior Instructor of WGST & Undergraduate Director of WGST

Research Areas: Gender-based violence, with an emphasis on the impact of gender and culture norms and social movements in contemporary contexts

Dr. Campbell is a senior instructor and currently serves as undergraduate director in Women's and Gender Studies. Dr. Campbell's research interest and area of expertise includes gender-based violence, with an emphasis on the impact of cultural norms and social movements within contemporary contexts. She designs online and classroom curricula and implements a variety of pedagogical practices. She serves as internship coordinator and the WGST 112 textbook editor.





Dr. Cara Delay, Professor of Women's and Gender Studies

Research Areas: Health, Gender, and Culture in Europe and the United States, with a focus on reproduction, pregnancy, and childbirth.

Dr. Cara Delay, Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Carolina, holds degrees from Boston College and Brandeis University. Her research analyzes health, gender, and culture in Europe and the United States, with a particular focus on reproduction, pregnancy, and childbirth. Her award-winning body of scholarship includes more than 30 scholarly journal articles and chapters. She is also author or co-author of *Women, Reform, and Resistance in Ireland, 1850-1950* (Palgrave), *Irish Women and the Creation of Modern Catholicism, 1850-1950* (Manchester), *Birth Control: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford), and *Catching Fire: Women's Health Activism in Ireland and the Global Movement for Reproductive Justice* (Oxford). She teaches courses in women's health, women's history, and reproduction.



Dr. Kathryn Luchok, Senior Instructor of WGST & Graduate Director of WGST

Research Areas: Global women's health, gender and health, reproductive health, health equity, diversity and inclusion

Dr. Luchok's expertise is in medical and applied anthropology and she is cross trained in Anthropology and Public Health. She specializes in women's reproductive health, pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum, maternal and child health, and health equity. Her work is interdisciplinary and she has research experience in the US, Togo, Nigeria and Nepal. She is very engaged in the community serving as a technical advisor to Women's Rights and Empowerment Network, a featured speaker at Save the Children Action Network events, a speaker at Rotaract Carolina and Timmy Global Health events, a member of the SC Birth Outcomes Initiative, and a member of the State Alliance for Adolescent Sexual Health in SC.



Dr. Ed Madden, Professor of English and WGST

Research Areas: Sexuality studies & Irish studies, Irish masculinities, gay rugby, Irish literature, poetry

Dr. Madden's scholarship falls at the intersection of Irish studies and sexuality studies, with recent publications on queer migrant writing, queer archives, and gay rugby. He has also published five books of poetry. He is currently juggling three projects: a study of queer and marginal masculinities in Irish culture; a memoir based in part in his residency in Brazil, and a new collection of poetry.



Dr. Emily Mann, Associate Professor of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior and WGST

Research Areas: Gender and sexuality studies, feminist studies of health and medicine, reproductive justice, LGBTQ health, qualitative methods

Dr. Mann is a sociologist whose research focuses on sexualities and reproduction. These emphases are connected through an emphasis on sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice; healthcare and medicine; and intersectional social and health inequalities. Her work uses qualitative research methods to examine how health promotion efforts unfold in variety of institutional contexts and explore how structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual factors shape the social regulation and decision making of people of reproductive age regarding sex, pregnancy, childbirth, contraception, and parenthood. In particular, her work centers adolescent and young women, economically and racially marginalized women, and LGBTQ+ people. Her scholarship has been published in journals such as *Contraception*, *Critical Public Health*, *Gender & Society*, *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, and *Symbolic Interaction*.





Dr. Allison Marsh

Research Areas: Women in science & technology, gender representation in museums

Professor Marsh combines her interests in engineering, history, and museum objects to tell stories of technology through historical artifacts. As a public historian, her main research interests revolve around how the general public comes to understand complex engineering ideas, especially outside the classroom—through museums, documentaries, TV shows, and so on. Her work focuses on gender representation in museums and women in science and technology. During the 2024-25 academic year, Dr. Marsh was the NEH Fellow in residence at the Linda Hall Library for Science, Engineering, and Technology in Kansas City, MO. Her research involved combing through the former library of the United Engineering Society and the publications of the IEEE (Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers), and its predecessor organizations, the IRE (Institute of Radio Engineers) and AIEE (American Institute of Electrical Engineers), to create a database of women who contributed to these professional societies. In advance of the upcoming 150th anniversary of the IEEE, she plans to create a digital visualization and an accompanying book to shine a light on the women who have always been there, yet who are rarely recognized. Professor Marsh is the Co-Director of the Ann Johnson Institute for Science, Technology & Society, a center on campus promoting interdisciplinary collaboration among humanists, scientists, engineers, and medical professionals. Before coming to USC, she was Curator and Winton M. Blount Research Chair at the Smithsonian Institution National Postal Museum.



Dr. Leah McClimans, Professor of Philosophy and WGST

Research Areas: Feminist philosophy, philosophy of medicine, medical ethics

Leah McClimans is Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of South Carolina and co-director of the Ann Johnson Institute for Science, Technology & Society. She received her PhD at the London School of Economics in 2007. She has authored numerous articles on measurement in quality-of-life research, medical ethics and the entanglement of ethics and evidence. Her first monograph, *Patient-Centered Measurement: Ethics, Epistemology, and Dialogue in Contemporary Medicine* was published with Oxford University Press in 2024. Before coming to the University of South Carolina Leah had a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Toronto's Joint Centre for Bioethics (2006-2007). She has also held an Ethox Research Fellowship (2009-2011) at the University of Warwick Medical School and a Marie Curie ASSISTID Fellowship (2016-2018) at the University College Cork School of Nursing.



Dr. Lauren Sklaroff, Professor of History and WGST

Research Areas: History of American popular culture, History of gender and sexuality, History of race and ethnicity in Modern America

Dr. Sklaroff's research specializes in the ways that cultural institutions shape identity formation. She is author of *Black Culture and the New Deal: The Quest for Civil Rights in the Roosevelt Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009) and *Red Hot Mama: The Life of Sophie Tucker* (University of Texas Press, 2018) as well as several articles and book reviews. Her work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Salon.com, the Chicago Tribune and several other media outlets as well as the Journal of American History and American Quarterly. Her research has been supported by the Smithsonian, the New York Public Library, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Her new book project, *Bohemian Kings: The Making of Queer Artistic Cohorts in Modern America* traces the formation of artistic cohorts featuring some of America's most famous musicians, writers, actors and filmmakers in the period from 1930-1970. Positioning the centrality of queer identity at the center of the research, Dr. Sklaroff explores the formation of personal and professional networks, the hierarchies of art, and the impact of the Red Scare on social activism.





Dr. Tia Stevens Andersen

Research Areas: Feminist criminology, the school-to-prison pipeline, gender and justice, resilience, media constructions of girls' violence, and youth mentoring

Dr. Tia Stevens Andersen holds a joint appointment in Women's and Gender Studies and Criminology and Criminal Justice. She uses qualitative and mixed methods to study how exclusionary school discipline, juvenile justice policies, and structural inequality shape the lives of young people, especially those removed from traditional educational settings. Grounded in feminist criminology and intersectional frameworks, her research examines how gender, race, trauma, and place influence pathways into alternative schools and justice system involvement. She also investigates how supportive relationships, like mentoring, can disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and foster resilience.

Her current research, funded by the National Science Foundation, is a multi-year study following cohorts of expelled youth over time. The project explores long-term patterns in positive youth development and risk behavior, with a focus on identifying protective factors and strengths. Additional studies examine how trauma, victimization, and inequality shape girls' pathways into alternative schools, how youth cope with school exclusion, and how the media constructs narratives about violent girls. In addition to her research, Andersen directs a university-community mentoring program that matches college students with youth in a disciplinary alternative school, integrating research, teaching, and practice in the service of social change.



Dr. Leland Spencer, Professor and Chair of WGST

Research Areas: feminist rhetoric, gender, sexuality, and gender identity, and religious communication.

Dr. Leland Spencer has been studying gender and sexuality for over two decades with a focus on feminist rhetoric as well as gender and sexuality in communication.

His teaching experience includes Multicultural Women in the US, Women and Difference, and Intro to LGBT Studies. His research includes four books: Transgender Communication Studies; Women Bishops and Rhetorics of Shalom; Campuses of Consent; and Rape, Agency, and Carceral Solutions in addition to several articles in journals like Quarterly Journal of Speech, Journal of Homosexuality, Women's Studies in Communication, and Women & Language. He has earned research awards from the National Communication Association, the Southern States Communication Association, and the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender.



Dr. Suzanne Swan, Professor of Psychology and WGST

Research Areas: Interpersonal and dating violence, sexual violence, and drugging

Dr. Swan is a Professor in the Departments of Women's and Gender Studies and Psychology. Dr. Swan's program of research follows the tradition of Kurt Lewin's dictum that "there is nothing so practical as a good theory". Her research focuses on 1) health disparities, particularly as related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2) gender-based violence, especially intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and drugging (i.e., administering a drug or alcohol to someone without their knowledge or consent). In a landmark study, Dr. Swan and colleagues found that 1 in 13 college students reported that they had been drugged, and 1.4% of students reported drugging someone or knowing a druggier (Swan et al., 2017). In the first empirical study in which individuals who have drugged others are interviewed, Dr. Swan and colleagues use the Theory of Coercive Actions to understand druggers' motives (Swan et al., in progress). Common motives found in the study include excitement (drugging others "for fun"), compliance (making the drugged person do what the druggier wants), and social identity (drugging someone to establish an identity, such as masculinity). The ultimate goal of Dr. Swan's research is to create knowledge that will illuminate solutions for the problems of health disparities and gender-based violence and the suffering they cause.



Teaching Faculty



Dr. Mary Baskin-Waters, Teaching Faculty of WGST

Research Areas: Civic responsibility, service-learning, Archiving South Carolina Women Collection

Dr. Baskin-Waters, associate editor of *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies 112* (2021), is a member of the teaching faculty of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of South Carolina. She currently is a member of the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Council and the Carolina Guardian Society. The local community recently honored her with the prestigious Tribute to Women in Industry (TWIN) Award for Education given by the Palmetto Center for Women. In 2015, she established a lectureship series in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and in 2020 she partnered with the USC Library System to establish the Archiving South Carolina Women project to collect and preserve the papers of South Carolina women activists. Dr. Baskin-Waters is currently teaching a service-learning section of WGST *Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies 112* in the South Carolina Honors College.



Dr. Annie Boiter-Jolley, Teaching Faculty of WGST

Research Areas: Gender and politics, inclusion and representation, political, feminist and democratic theory, social movements, the gender politics of the US South

Dr. Boiter-Jolley is an adjunct professor in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies. Her research interests and areas of expertise include gender and politics; inclusion and representation; political, feminist, and democratic theory; social movements; and the gender politics of the US South. Dr. Boiter-Jolley regularly teaches WGST 112, but one of her favorite classes to teach is WGST 298 - Contemporary Gender Issues in Law and Order: SVU. She also teaches courses in American Politics and Political Theory in the Department of Political Science.



Dr. Anette Madlock, Teaching Faculty of WGST

Research Areas: health communication, gender, culture, spirituality, and womanist approaches to ethics and social justice

Dr. Annette D. Madlock (Ph.D., Howard University) is an independent scholar and entrepreneur. She currently serves on the board of the Organization for the Study of Communication Language and Gender and is the President of the Religious Communication Association. Madlock is an experienced speaker who has given many national and international presentations and workshops.

As an award-winning author, speaker, and educator, Dr. Madlock's work has appeared in the American Medical Association's *Journal of Ethics*, the *Journal of Women and Language*, *Women's Studies in Communication*, *FIRE*, the *Multimedia Journal for Black Studies*, various Sage Encyclopedias, and other peer-reviewed works. Her notable publications include *Health Communication and Breast Cancer Among Black Women: Culture, Identity, Spirituality, and Strength* (Lexington); *Communicating Women's Health: Social and Cultural Norms that Influence Health Decisions* (editor, Routledge); and *Womanist Ethical Rhetoric: A Call for Liberation and Social Justice in Turbulent Times* (co-editor). Dr. Madlock also served as the *Journal of Communication and Religion* guest editor.

Recent work includes book chapters "Womanism and Phenomenology as Dialogic Lens." In I. Sayrak, J. Harden Fritz, and K. L. Majocho (Eds), *Dialogic Editing in Academic and Professional Writing: Engaging the Trace of the Other* (Routledge) and "A Womanist Ethic of Care and Semioethics: Shared Ethical and Moral Expression." In S. Petrilli & S. Mancino (Eds), *Communication, Dialogue, and Responsibility: Semioethic Approaches* (Taylor & Francis).



Dr. Rebecca Weissman, Teaching Faculty of WGST

Research Areas: Intersectionality, critical literacy, multicultural education, the history of white supremacy in education in the south

Dr. Weissman has taught Women's and Gender Studies and Educational Studies courses at numerous universities including The University of South Carolina and Washington and Lee University. Her research areas include intersectionality, critical literacy, multicultural education, and the history of white supremacy in education in the south. Her recent publications include "The role of white supremacy amongst opponents and proponents of mass schooling in the South during the Common School era" in *Paedagogica Historica* and "Alternatives in Assessing Mental Health Care Disparities Using the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System" in *Health Equity*.

Dr. Nima Yolmo, Teaching Faculty of WGST

Research Areas: Economic Anthropology, Digital Finance, Gender, Feminism, Labor, Peace & Conflict Studies, South-Asia

Dr. Yolmo has taught Women's and Gender Studies and Anthropology at UC-Irvine and the University of South Carolina. She received her PhD of Anthropology from the University of California- Irvine with a focus on *Graduate Feminist Emphasis and Critical Theory Emphasis*. She is the author of, *Central Bank Digital Currency: Implications for Credit Unions, Filene Credit Union*, "Globalization and Outsourcing", and "Digitized money transactions and cultures of malling: Frauds and debt-making in 2014 New Delhi." Dr. Yolmo currently teaches WGST 112, with a heavy focus on Feminist Theory and Anthropology.



WGST Faculty Research Areas:

Leland G. Spencer, Professor and Chair

Gender and sexuality, feminist rhetoric, religious communication, transgender studies

Kathryn Luchok, Senior Instructor and Graduate Program Director

Global women's health, gender and health, reproductive health, health equity

Dawn Campbell, Senior Instructor and Undergraduate Program Director

Gender representation in media and pop culture, contemporary feminist social movements

Loron Benton, Assistant Professor

Black women's cultural production and political traditions in the twentieth and twentieth-first centuries, Black feminist theory, womanist theory and theology

Flora Blanchette-Oswald, Assistant Professor

Abolition, stigma, sexualized violence, social perception, social determinants of health

Cara Delay, Professor

Health, gender, and culture in Europe and the United States, with a particular focus on reproduction, pregnancy, and childbirth

Ed Madden, Professor

Sexuality studies & Irish studies, Irish masculinities, gay rugby, Irish literature, poetry

Emily Mann, Associate Professor

Gender and sexuality studies, feminist studies of health and medicine, reproductive justice, LGBTQ health, qualitative methods

Allison Marsh, Associate Professor

Women in science & technology, gender representation in museums

Leah McClimans, Professor

Feminist philosophy, philosophy of medicine, medical ethics

Lauren Sklaroff, Professor

Relationship between culture and the construction of racial and ethnic identities

Tia Stevens Andersen, Associate Professor

Feminist criminology, the school-to-prison pipeline, gender and justice, resilience, media constructions of girls' violence, and youth mentoring

Suzanne Swan, Professor

Interpersonal and dating violence, sexual violence, drugging

