Dear Alumni, Friends, and Allies:

This last year has been truly extraordinary. As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a move to all remote instruction mid-way through the Spring 2020 semester and our courses remained remote through the end of this year. I became Chair of the Department in the midst of these troubling times and I remain grateful for a Departmental community that continues to support one another and our students.

Despite these challenges, the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at UNC has continued our mission of teaching, research, and service on topics related to gender, sexuality, power and inequity. We welcomed our newest Assistant Professor, Jacob Lau, who has already transformed our curriculum with new course offerings in Masculinities and Trans Studies. And hundreds of students from across the university (and the world), received remote instruction in courses including Women in Contemporary Art, Women and Science, and Gender and Spirituality.

This year also marked the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. constitution. Faculty and students discussed the complicated legacy of suffrage in the classroom and at community events (held virtually, of course!)

As the nation continues to battle the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and institutionalized racism, the perspectives that WGST can offer are more important than ever. I hope you will consider making a gift in recognition of the essential work of feminist teaching and research and for all that it can help us learn and understand about the past, the present, and our shared future.

With gratitude,

Ariana E. Vigil, Professor and Chair

Please consider making a donation here.
Letter from the Outgoing Chair

On July 1, 2020 I completed five and a half years as a Chair of the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies and handed over the “chairship” to Professor Ariana Vigil. A Chair’s job is never done but I feel confident that this unit’s path forward is promising and full of potential, despite the difficult times that we are all experiencing right now. I am proud of all the accomplishment of the past six years, our amazing students, dedicated staff Karen Thompson (who retired January 1, 2020) and Suzannah Price, and every single faculty member in the unit and all our affiliated faculty. Our passion for research and scholarship, dedication to teaching, and most importantly working together as a collective are obvious to anyone who comes to Smith Building or interacts with us on campus. As I step aside, I am grateful for the leadership opportunity that I was given and the support of the entire department along the way. I will always be connected to the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at UNC Chapel Hill, no matter where we find ourselves in the future.

Silvia Tomášková

Student Corner

Chelsea Richardson was one of four students in Professor Harbage Page’s III Course 190.07 “Experiencing Latin America: Bodies, Nature, Belonging” who presented their artwork at the QEP Research and Making Expo on December 4th, 2019 at UNC. Chelsea presented her embroidered “Counter-Cartography Project” which maps the violence of forced sterilization in Peru by El Sendero Lumino-sa (The Shining Path).
People have always asked me what I want to be when I grow up, and I think the freedom to say “I don’t know” was the best thing that ever happened to me. Because of that freedom, I enrolled in my first Women’s and Gender Studies course without having any idea what I was doing – and years later ended up becoming a leader in the civil rights movement to end sexual violence on college campuses. In my WGST classes, I learned about different forms of inequality and oppression, as well as how various academics, activists, and leaders have mobilized and fought back. What I love about the WGST department in particular is that both faculty and students are typically well-rounded people who don’t just hit the books – they constantly push their community to be a better place through everyday advocacy. Having seen professors joining local marches, signing petitions, and leading educational events, I decided in my final year of college that I wanted to be a professor. From the moment I said my dream out loud, WGST professors stepped in to help me get there. Dr. Berger got me into my first conference through the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association, and helped me win a travel grant to get to Boca Raton, FL to present a paper I wrote in her class. Before traveling to Florida with me, she booked an empty lecture hall on campus so that I could practice my talk – she coached me through my nerves. When I was accepted with a full six years of funding to the Ph.D. program in Sociology at the University of California, Irvine – one of the top sociology programs in the country – the first people I celebrated with were the WGST professors who had supported my application. To this day, I remember Dr. Vigil taking me out to Vimala’s to celebrate my accomplishment.

My work has been recognized both nationally and internationally. I have won over $112,000 in funding from fellowships and grants, including from the UC Irvine Initiative to End Family Violence. Before its unfortunate cancellation due to COVID-19, I was accepted to speak at the United Nations Commission for the Status of Women on behalf of Sociologists for Women and Society. I have an upcoming opportunity to speak on a panel at Berkeley Law. Most excitingly, the Sabanci University Gender Center in Turkey invited me to deliver a lecture as part of their international webinar series on sexual harassment this past summer. Last, but not least, I taught my first course – the Sociology of Sex and Gender – at UC Irvine this year. I have big plans for the future, and I have the WGST department to thank for getting me this far.

In June 2021, I will be the first in my family to obtain a Ph.D. I am so excited to complete my dissertation, which looks at how feminist survivor activists, university administrators, and men’s rights groups shape the meaning of Title IX sexual harassment laws in U.S. universities. In the dissertation, I show how men’s rights groups (a backlash movement to the feminist movement) rendered Title IX ineffective in reducing violence on college campuses. I am writing the dissertation in the hopes of converting it into a book written for public audiences titled The Feminist Playbook for Winning Back Title IX. The book will be written as a strategy playbook for feminist activists to understand how to shape Title IX law so that it delivers on its promise to reduce sexual harassment in educational settings.

Jessica Cabrera
WGST Class of 2015
This paper aims to uncover the relationship between social networks and antioppression in Orange County violence prevention work. Antioppression—defined and analyzed in this paper using theories of Cultural Competence, Intersectionality, and Critical Race Theory—refers to the work that practitioners do to account for and fight against the oppression of their clients, both on an institutional and an individual level. Two participants each from Compass Center for Women and Families and Orange County Rape Crisis Center were interviewed to elicit their social networks and determine how these networks affect their work. Practitioners indicated that their networks were highly relevant to their antioppressive services and standpoints. Networks were described as a tool to increase organizational capacity, do outreach, and make their voices heard. However, for most, networks also proved to be a defining feature in how participants understand antioppression in the specific sociopolitical context of Orange County, NC.

Mary Turner Lane Award 2020 Winner: Ezra Wright
for the essay “Community Connections: A network analysis of antioppression in Orange County violence prevention and survivor services.”

As a mother of three young daughters, the study and application of feminist theory is particularly personal for me. However, I originally came to the Women's and Gender Studies major as a supplement to my Sociology major. Upon exploring the major requirements, I became especially excited after seeing numerous courses that explored topics I am passionate about. The courses I have taken so far have solidified my passion for continued studies and concentration in this major. Ultimately, my interest in social stratification has made this major a valuable resource in deepening my studies of inequality. Through this major, I have been able to begin exploring theory from an explicitly feminist standpoint. My main interests lie in studying social movements and the ways in which feminist theory can help explain the participation and recruitment of sexual and gender minorities into contemporary movements. I am also interested in the feminization of labor activism, poverty, incarceration, and other ways State violence affects the lives of marginalized peoples. I hope to extend my research in these areas to graduate level studies as I pursue a PhD in Sociology and a graduate certificate in Women's and Gender Studies. Upon completion of these degrees, I would like to pursue a career in higher education by becoming a professor. I believe that we have an obligation to help move the world towards justice and equity and, for me, becoming educated and then sharing that education with others is an integral part of doing that. My Women's and Gender Studies major is foundational for my role in achieving that change.
Good afternoon graduates, loved ones, and WGST faculty,

Congratulations on this incredible accomplishment. It is an honor to deliver these remarks today. I was asked to talk about my feminist writing and activism, and as I prepared this speech, I kept returning to the ways in which abolitionist praxis has transformed my work and my relationships. It’s possible that many of you, like most Americans, were first introduced to the movement of abolition this summer, in the wake of the police killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Rayshard Brooks. Over the past few years, as I wrote my dissertation on sanctuary and began organizing for immigrant defense in the Sonora-Arizona borderlands, abolition has become crucial to how I understand the world and my role as an activist scholar. While working with migrants and other activists in the militarized borderlands, abolition became a way to connect across bars and commune with people on the other side. I think abolition has much to offer you as new graduates.

Black feminist scholar Angela Davis taught me that abolition is not only a process of dismantling and tearing down but also one of building up and creating new institutions. Many hear the word abolition and think about destruction. But scholars like Durham local Alexis Pauline Gumbs write that abolition is about creativity, experimentation, and imagining alternative worlds in the present. For me, as someone who studies immigration and border enforcement, learning from and organizing alongside abolitionists taught me to see our struggles as entangled and inseparable, taught me that radical means to grasp by the root (to paraphrase Davis), that abolishing borders and prisons and detention centers is not only about getting rid of these structures but about imagining otherwise possibilities, other sets of relationships, other ways of repairing harm, other ways of addressing violence, other ways of interacting with our neighbors. My writing and activism is about grasping at the root and working towards abolitionist worlds where punishment is replaced with accountability, where we can melt the bollards dividing Mexico and the United States and use the steel to build schools and bridges and make piano wire and play music and create beauty. What do you want to dismantle and rebuild? What sorts of otherwise possibilities are you committed to creating in your lives? What do you want to melt and repurpose?

Abolitionist Mariame Kaba insists that abolition is about nurturing healing, caring, nurturing relationships. She writes, “We have to transform the relationships that we have with each other so we can really create new forms of safety and justice in our
communities.” And I think that in commencement speeches we often hear about achieving success in our careers and making a difference through our professions. But I also invite you to think about abolition as a set of relationships, and to consider how you can nurture healing relationships that would render prisons and policing unnecessary. How can you build a community that keeps each other safe? How can you care for and care about others in a way that heals wounds and repairs harm and transforms lives? UNC professor China Medel writes about abolitionist care in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*; she writes that abolitionist care embraces the criminalized migrant, that it defends those disavowed by the state, that it refuses to draw lines between the deserving and undeserving, that it fails to distinguish between the “good” and “bad.” Abolitionist care asks us to think about how we are all entangled in webs of relation. As you leave UNC and begin a different chapter of your lives, how can you also practice abolitionist care?

A few years ago, I read Octavia Butler’s speculative story *Parable of the Sower* in a seminar on Black feminisms taught by Dr. Michele Berger. And I want to close these remarks by thinking alongside Lauren Olamina, the fifteen-year-old Black protagonist of Butler’s work, who is living in Los Angeles in 2024, a society facing climate crisis and staggering wealth inequality and food scarcity. To protect themselves from the chaos and uncertainty of the outside world, Lauren’s family lives in a walled neighborhood, believing that enclosure and isolation is the only way to survive. But when outsiders infiltrate the protected community and the walls come down, survivors have to create a new abolitionist world rooted in care, mutual aid, and community defense. They join together and create a mobile community of sanctuary, traveling as one, crossing borders, seeking safety. Lauren’s theory of the world, which she calls Earthseed, understands that marking yourself off from the world around you cannot protect you, that the walls have to come down, and that experimentation, change, and transformation are crucial to creating freer futures.

I’m closing with *Parable of the Sower* because abolition is about change and experimentation, abolition is a practice of science fiction because it is about making freer futures possible right here and now. And you, leaving UNC, beginning anew, changing locations and titles and careers and homes, are experiencing both the destructive and creative aspects of change. What
religious studies scholars would call the positive and negative sacred. And, according to *Parable of the Sower* and the Earthseed philosophy, change is divinity. Butler writes, “All that you touch, you change. All that you change, changes you. The only lasting truth is change. … As wind, as water, as fire, as life, God is change.” Many of the migrants and activists I worked with in the Sonoran Desert understood and embraced this principle—some reluctantly, others enthusiastically. Change is everywhere in the militarized desert; people are fleeing their homelands and crossing over into a new country, hopeful, ambivalent, vulnerable, exhilarated, devastated all at once. Change is the only constant.

And as you move forward and seek opportunities and think about how you can build abolitionist worlds, I hope you will embrace this earthseed teaching, that God is change. I hope you will be inspired by the conviction that all that you touch you change. That all that you change, changes you. Be open to the transformative and abolitionist possibilities of change. And be willing to commit to change that fosters more abolitionist—healing, feminist, transformative, accountable—worlds.

*Graduation photos feature class of 2019 WGST graduates*
Graduate Certificate in Women’s and Gender Studies

Over 10 MA and PhD students have earned a Graduate Certificate in WGST since the program’s launch in 2016. Two recent graduates share their current work and success with us.

Emily Freeman
I am an Assistant Professor in the newly renamed department of Education for Justice and Equity at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. I earned my Ph.D. in Education with a focus on Cultural Studies and Literacies at UNC and completed a graduate certificate in Women's and Gender Studies. While at UNC, I was a teaching assistant for WGST 101: Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies, which I taught during summer school. I also taught WGST 230: Gender and Popular Culture. I currently teach pre-service teachers at UWEC in the introduction to education course and literacy methods courses for middle grades and secondary grades. I incorporate feminist pedagogies and intersectional analysis in both my teaching and research. My research examines how teachers understand and work to dismantle systems of oppression using feminist theories and feminist schoolwork. My current project is an extension of my dissertation, *Becoming Feminists: Case Studies of Curriculums, Voices, and Ethics of Feminist Teachers in U.S. Public Schools*. This project focuses on the ways we can weave justice oriented and feminist pedagogies into teacher education to ensure teachers value the full humanity of all students and that they teach children and young adults how to be advocates for equity in their schools and communities.

Katherine Calvin
As a feminist art historian of the early modern period, my research and teaching are deeply engaged with the ways in which images construct and communicate understandings of place and identity. My dissertation and first book project both examine how representations of antiquities and ancient sites, such as Palmyra and Nineveh, informed European and Ottoman ideas about religious history and nationalist politics in the eighteenth century. Much of the interdisciplinary nature of my scholarship stems from my experiences in the WGST program at UNC. Taking courses outside art history challenged me to nuance my own methods by incorporating approaches from diverse fields such as feminist informatics, critical race theory, and geography. Another highlight of the certificate program was collaborating with four other graduate students, all from different disciplines, to work as teaching assistants for WGST 101. Their pedagogical creativity, compassion for students, and dedication to social justice both inside and outside the classroom continue to inspire my teaching at Kenyon College, where I began as Assistant Professor of Art History in August 2020. My courses on early modern European art, as well as my introduction to African art, put questions about gender, sexuality, empire, and race at the center—rather than the margins—of all our discussions about art and visual culture, both in the past and today.
Gender, Health and Civic Engagement Under Lockdown
Instructor: Nora Augustine

I am a PhD candidate in the department of English and Comparative Literature at UNC, specializing in health/medical rhetoric and community literacy with a graduate certificate in Women's and Gender Studies (WGST). In the fall 2020 semester, I had the pleasure of designing and teaching a new COVID-19 Investigations course titled “Gender, Health and Civic Engagement Under Lockdowns” for the Carolina Away program (for remote students). Having taught and TA’d for several WGST courses in the past, I was extremely excited for the opportunity to work with Professor Tanya Shields on this initiative. Put simply, the goal of my course was to introduce students to the field of WGST with a focus on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—or alternatively, to work together to approach key issues of the pandemic through the lens of WGST, highlighting how gender and other intersecting identities are shaping people’s experiences in this moment. I wanted my students to understand that, although the pandemic affects all of us, it does not affect us equally, and feminist analysis adds essential nuance to our understandings of this global health crisis. Given Carolina Away students’ distance from UNC’s campus, the COVID Investigations instructors were also asked to feature a large number of guest speakers in our class sessions. We wanted the students to feel thoroughly connected to UNC’s community and resources, even if they could not physically be here. Early in the planning process, I decided to use my course to showcase the work of local feminist activists and artists all around the Triangle area in addition to integrating scholarly perspectives. Each of our weekly lectures began in a somewhat similar fashion: I would ask our visitors to describe their field/profession, how their work had been affected by COVID-19, and the innovative strategies they had developed to respond to the pandemic. The virtual format of this course allowed for a range and depth of guest lectures that far exceeded anything I could have hoped for. We had conversations with representatives from a local rape crisis center, a reproductive justice fund, a domestic violence agency, an LGBTQ center, and more. In their final essays for the course, students were asked to reflect on how our readings and discussions had contributed to their long-term goals (educational, professional, personal, etc.). Numerous students reported that this course had expanded their worldviews to a profound degree and inspired them to get involved in social justice causes—and continue their WGST educations in future semesters at UNC. Despite the unusual circumstances of the fall semester, I would have to say that leading this course was one of the most rewarding professional experiences I’ve ever had, and it was certainly the most unique! If you would like to view a video testimony that one of my students recorded for Carolina Away, you can visit this page, and a testimony from me is also available here.
Dear Friends and Alumni,

I hope you are all staying safe and doing well as we wrap up a historic year. I am a newly appoint-ed tenure-track Assistant Professor in the Women's and Gender Studies Department and the new Director of the Sexuality Studies Program, my research is in queer/transgender of color critique and Asian American Studies. For the past two years I was a fellow through the Carolina Postdoctoral Program for Faculty Diversity at UNC.

This past year has been one of exciting changes for the program. We are now housed in the Women's and Gender Studies Department, and in the midst of reimagining the minor's curriculum to be more reflective of current conversations happening in the interdisciplinary field of LGBTQIA Studies examining intersections between race, ethnicity, nationality, and class, in the study of sexuality and gender identity. This fall the program partnered with other centers on campus for two major events: the first annual Queer MiniCon in conjunction with the LGBTQ Center and Honors Carolina Pride, and the keynote kick-off of the Ackland Art Museum’s yearlong LGBTQ-themed book and queer cinema series.

The first event, Queer MiniCon, was a two-day online conference featuring a keynote address “Wayne Loves Baby: Queering Intimacy in Hip-Hop Culture” by UNC’s own Dr. Antonia Randolph (American Studies). The conference took place October 9th and 13th and brought together LB-GTQIA+ affirming work from undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff.

On October 21st, I was in-conversation with transgender literary critic, poet, and professor Stephanie Burt (Harvard University, English) to discuss her poetry collection *Advice from the Lights* (2017) as part of the kick-off event for Ackland Art Museum’s yearlong LGBTQ-themed book and queer cinema series. The series is part of the Ackland receiving a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Grant.

In the upcoming Spring Semester, Sexuality Studies will partner with the Asian American Center to bring poet and translator Rajiv Mohabir to campus for a workshop and public event. As the year unfolds, I invite you check our website for more events and news about cross-campus partnerships and programing.

Warmly,
Jacob Lau
How does American history look from women’s point of view? Every fall, about 150 undergraduate students and I explore that question, with the understanding that women have been as diverse as the nation itself. Through lectures, discussions, readings and written assignments, we examine both the forces that maintained gendered order and the aspirations and agency of those who sought to change it, paying careful attention to women’s differences of race, class, and region.

By inserting women into the story of American history, I hope to show students how male-centric their prior knowledge often is. For example, most come to class with some understanding of the abolition movement, the mid-19th century movement to end slavery in the United States, but few are aware of women’s importance to that effort. Women, enslaved and free, worked to end slavery through their communities, churches and political institutions. They leveraged their moral authority and collective power to force the nation to the bloody reckoning of the Civil War.

By semester’s end, I hope students are convinced that women, gender relations, and notions of sex difference have fundamentally shaped American history and continue to define our world today.

I also seek to convey that the category of “woman” has been flexible, unstable, and far from monolithic. When historical actors have discussed women as a single category, they have revealed the limits of their own vision. As suffragists advocated for women’s voting rights in the late 19th and early 20th century, many invoked women as a united group even as whites relegated women of color to subordinate roles within their organizations. When the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920, removing sex as a barrier to voting rights, it did not touch the race and literacy-based limits in Southern and Western states that continued to disenfranchise women of color well into the 20th century.

The course next aims to reveal to students that exploring the past from women’s perspective can change the meaning of a historical era. Students are often aware of Rosie the Riveter, the iconic figure who represented the millions of women who entered new forms of work during World War II. Fewer have considered how the mid-1940s was an especially liberating time for queer women. As most men departed the domestic scene and women’s fashions became more androgynous and utilitarian, masculine women and women who desired women could dress and socialize more comfortably. The end of the war reshaped American culture with rigid new ideals of femininity that marked a loss of freedom for many queer women.
Ariana Vigil is a Professor whose teaching and research focus on U.S. Latinx literature and culture. In particular, she examines how gender, race, sexuality, and class are deployed in various national and transnational contexts. She is dedicated to expanding the traditional boundaries of U.S. Latinx Studies to incorporate Central American-American communities, a commitment evidenced in her 2018 book, *Understanding Francisco Goldman*. Published as part of the *Understanding Contemporary American Literature* series from the University of South Carolina Press, this book was the first in the series dedicated entirely to a U.S. Latinx author. Her approach underscores that Goldman is a truly American (in the hemispheric sense) writer whose fiction and non-fiction grant agency and attention to those whose stories largely remain untold – those who are poor, women, mixed-race, immigrants, indigenous and/or undocumented. Her most recent book is *Public Negotiations: Gender and Journalism in Latina/o Literature* (2019). Published as part of the *Global Latinidades* series from The Ohio State University Press, the book argues that Latina/o authors utilize the figure of the journalist to reflect negotiations around the Latina/o public sphere. In analyzing both well-known and lesser-known texts, the book makes a compelling argument for the persistent interest in questions of media production, distribution, and access on the part of late 20th and early 21st century Latina/o writers. She explains how Latina/o works and authors engage with questions of mass media, and detail how issues of gender are negotiated by characters and texts to put forth new ideas about a U.S. Latina/o public sphere. This is a timely analysis that considers not only how questions regarding journalism and mass media are taken up in creative works but also what creative works and writers might contribute to our understanding of race, nation, gender, and the public sphere. She is currently working on a new book-length project that examines migrant mothers in Latinx cultural production.

Michele Tracy Berger is an Associate Professor whose research interests continue to concentrate on African American women and girls’ health. The past several years have been highly dynamic ones for Dr. Berger as she found ways to integrate many of her academic and creative interests. She has taught the department’s first APPLES service learning course: *A New Body Politics: Contemplative Practices and Social Justice*. Guided by the work of contemporary feminist, womanist and women of color scholars and activists the course explored the role that contemplative practices and spiritual activism can play in the efforts for social justice. Student internship projects included creating a mindfulness program serving homeless youth and at-risk youth, developing a parents and children yoga free community class at Kidzu Museum and doing strategic planning work with the local Y.O.G.A for Youth organization. She completed her sixth year as co-PI and collaborator with Professor Keval Kaur Khalsa through Duke University’s Mindfulness in Education and Human Development--Bass Connections’ project. This grant brings UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke students together in an experiential learning opportunity to conduct research. Since fall 2014, she has been researching the mental and physical health effects on middle school children, mostly girls of color, who participate in an after-school yoga program. During 2018-2019 they were able to implement a yoga and mindfulness program for 7th and 8th graders during the school day. Her articles have appeared or are forthcoming in *Critical Public Health, Meridians, Feminist Formations, and Race and Yoga*. In 2018 Ms. released her co-edited digital reader: *Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies: So You Want to Change the World?* Her second monograph *Black Women’s Health: Paths to Wellness for Mothers and Daughters* will be published in spring 2021 by NYU Press. Her sci-fi novella “Reenu-You”, about a mysterious virus transmitted through a “natural” hair relaxer, was recently published by Falstaff Books. She has given readings and book talks about Afrofuturism and how it enables new narratives by women of color.
Faculty Profiles

Tanya Shields is the Bowman and Gordon Gray Distinguished Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Director of Undergraduate Studies for our unit. She is also Director of Carolina Seminars and a past fellow of the Carolina Women's Center Faculty Fellowship program, the Institute of Arts and Humanities Faculty Fellowship seminar and a fellow of their Academic Leadership program. Her research focuses on Caribbean studies and plantation logics. Her book, *Bodies and Bones: Feminist Rehearsal and Imagining Caribbean Belonging* (2014), examines the ways in which rehearsing historical events and archetypal characters shapes belonging to the region using feminist rehearsal as a methodology. Currently, she is at work on a second monograph, “Gendered Labor: Race, Place and Power on Female Owned Plantations,” a comparative study of women who owned plantations in the Caribbean and U.S. South. She has been excited to share this work with colleagues and students at Sam Houston University and Davidson College. In addition to these talks, she has published in a number of venues including the journals *Souls, Women, Gender, and Families of Color, and Identities*. Recent publications include “Writing and the Responsibility to Memory: The Role of White Female Planters in Contemporary Caribbean Novels” (2020) in *Caribbean Literature in Transition*, vol. 3, “Hell and Grace: Palimpsestic Belonging in The True History of Paradise and Crossing the Mangrove” (2018) and “Magnolia Longing: The Plantation Tour as Palimpsest” (2017). She edited a special issue of *Cultural Dynamics* called, “Collisions: Home, History and Storytelling,” which includes essays from presenters at the “Telling Our Stories of Home: Exploring and Celebrating Changing African and African Diaspora Communities” conference, which she convened with Professor Emerita Kathy A. Perkins in 2016. Additionally, Kathy and she contributed the essay, “Telling Stories of Home: Pedagogy, Practice, and the Potential for Lasting Change” (2020) in *Engaging the African Diaspora in K-12 Education*, a volume that incorporates Africa and its diaspora in the K-12 classroom. This work has been significant as a way of connecting our research with the wider community. Her research, teaching and service are interwoven. She teaches classes on the Caribbean, the arts of activism, growing up girl globally, and the continuing influence of plantation economics and politics. In fact, her class, “Rahtid Rebel Women: An Introduction to the Caribbean,” was listed as number 7 on Elle Magazine’s “63 College Classes that Give Us Hope for the Next Generation.” Like research and teaching, service brings together issues of art and activism. She is incredibly excited about her collaboration with the Houston-based Progress Theatre’s “Plantation Remix” project because as a dramaturg for the production, it allows her to stretch her intellectual and creative wings.

Emily Burrill is an Associate Professor. Her research centers on twentieth century francophone West Africa and histories of gender and power within colonial and postcolonial contexts. She is the author of *States of Marriage: Gender, Justice, and Rights in Colonial Mali* (Ohio U. Press, 2015, winner of the 2016 Heggoy Prize from the French Colonial Historical Society), and the co-editor of *Domestic Violence and the Law in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa* (with Elizabeth Thornberry and Richard Roberts, Ohio U. Press, 2010) and *Legislating Gender and Sexuality in Africa* (with Lydia Boyd, U. Wisconsin Press, 2020), and numerous book chapters and articles. She is currently working on a book-length project on themes of gender, mobility, citizenship and political belonging in post-WWII Francophone West Africa. Her research has been funded by fellowships through Fulbright, Mellon, and the Institute of Arts and Humanities at UNC-Chapel Hill. She teaches courses on feminist theory, gender and imperialism, West African gender history, and law and society in historical perspective. She also serves as the Director of the African Studies Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, a Title VI National Resource Center.
Faculty Profiles

Sarah Bloesch is finishing her first year at UNC as a Teaching Assistant Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies. Her courses include “Gender and Spirituality,” “Sexuality and Salvation,” “Gender and Film,” as well as the department’s required courses. Her manuscript project, Salvation of Desire: Melancholic Bodies, Deified Flesh, is a multidisciplinary project that contends Christian articulations of salvation are embedded in U.S. public life. She examines how public rhetoric depends on salvation and the afterlife to categorize racially gendered, sexual, and national identities. She terms the conflation of evangelical Christian notions of salvation and neoliberal policies ‘neoliberal salvation’ and argues that it creates and maintains the prison industrial complex, fuels debates about the southern border wall, and influences ideas of belonging and citizenship. Excavating a counter-archive to identify a ‘salvation of desire’ resistant to neoliberal salvation, she examines the premodern form of salvation called deification, or union with God, systematized by Byzantine monk Maximus the Confessor (d. 662 CE). She analyzes the relationship of these two types of salvation through the psychoanalytic process of melancholy, critical race theory, autobiography, and contemporary queer writings. If salvation is intimately part of the political, cultural architecture of the United States, then experiencing God through minoritized bodies points to this-worldly, communal, and relational sites of resistance to hegemonic religio-cultural systems. Sarah has also co-edited Cultural Approaches to Studying Religion: An Introduction to Theories and Methods (2018) along with an accompanying primary source reader; it is the first textbook in religious studies that focuses on the methodological contributions of ten theorists who have shaped the field in the last fifty years yet are systematically omitted from classroom engagement because of gender, race, and sexuality. Additionally, she has published articles in Culture and Religion and Theology and Sexuality and is co-chair of the Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit of the American Academy of Religion.

Karen Booth is an Associate Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies. In her work, she applies methods and theories from cultural studies, political sociology, and critical science studies to feminist analysis of the politics of HIV and reproductive justice. Recently, she has written about debates over HIV testing and treatment in relation to pregnant women in the U.S. and globally and the contradictory ways in which gay-identified news media and activists represented and responded to feminist concerns about reproductive justice, especially abortion, before and during the HIV/AIDS crisis. She has also published research on both international and US domestic battles over research, clinical, ethical, and journalistic interventions in women’s reproductive and sexual health. She is currently collaborating on an analysis of social media and the feminist “identity work” of college students. Her teaching reflects these research and advocacy interests. Her favorite course is the “International Politics of Sexual and Reproductive Health,” in which students and she examine the differences and the sometimes surprising similarities across debates over eugenics in mid-twentieth century North Carolina, female circumcision, abortion, and sexually transmitted infections in colonial and post-colonial Kenya, HIV/AIDS treatment and vasectomies in Mexico today, and the commercial surrogacy industry in India. She also loves teaching her classes on “Introduction to Sexuality Studies” and “Comparative Queer Politics,” and courses on feminist theory and methods. She is excited about teaching our new advanced undergraduate course in feminist theory. She is the faculty adviser for Feminist Students United, serves on the Board of the Sexuality Studies Program and the University-wide Commission on the Status of Women, and is the secretary/treasurer of the UNC-CH chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).
Maria Gutierrez is a 2020-2021 ACLS Emerging Voices fellow in the Center for the Study of the American South with an affiliation to the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She received her Ph.D. in Native American Studies from the University of California at Davis in June 2019. Her dissertation, “Jatsintaparini: Rooting Intercultural Education in Communal Pedagogies in the P’urhépecha Region,” examined the connection between intercultural education and community-based knowledge and practices in indigenous bilingual education in the P’urhépecha region of Michoacán, Mexico. Her current research, titled “Juchari Anapu Jimpo! Reclamation of the Heritage Language and Identity: Social Processes, Oral Memory, and Innovations in the Non-P’urhépecha-Speaking Communities of Lake Pátzcuaro, Michoacán,” focuses on the links between ethnic identity and cultural and language revitalization in the P’urhépecha region of Michoacán through community-based practices and digital means. This project investigates the historical processes that have led to indigenous language loss in the Lake Pátzcuaro region in Central Michoacán and examines current efforts to revitalize ethnic identities in communities that have very few speakers or that no longer speak the P’urhépecha language. In her work, she is centralizing the role of women in community-based media and in other communal, social, and public spaces. She is examining how revitalization projects are linked to community-based intercultural communication, particularly in indigenous community radios, as an educational tool for revitalization, autonomy, and resistance. Broadly speaking, her work incorporates questions about race, culture, gender, and community-based pedagogies and epistemologies tied to indigeneity, as well as autonomy and the use of technology and digital means. Her work is grounded in Indigenous Studies theoretical and methodological research frameworks. She also approaches her work from a hemispheric perspective.

Silvia Tomášková In addition to her role as a Chair, Silvia Tomášková continued to work in South Africa on a long-term research project of prehistoric engravings in the Northern Cape Province. Supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Geographic Society, she spent every summer in the field recording and mapping engravings made by the ancestors of the San people. She and her local assistant worked every year, with the occasional luxury to watch antelopes in the distance. They regularly entertain school visits; a role they take very seriously as African prehistory in the area is not well known, most of the pupils do not know what scientists may do and cannot see themselves in such a position. They also have a strong commitment to the local Sol Platje University (UNC: University of the Northern Cape), founded only in 2015. Every year Professor Tomášková gives a talk about their research to the faculty and students in the Heritage Management Program. The Northern Cape is rich in diamonds, yet gainful employment is elusive to most, young and old, everyday scarcity is the experience of the majority of the people who live nearby. Her community engagement is to broaden educational horizons, suggest local opportunities and highlight the richness of prehistory of the region. On a regular basis, she has conversations with people from various of backgrounds about “science”, who can participate, what it takes to be a scientist, what kinds of questions we ask, and what kinds of question we should ask. The other central topic of her research is “heritage”. The prehistoric engravings were made hundreds, and in some places thousands, of years ago by ancestral San. Yet the local San communities were resettled nearby only in the 1990’s, in the post-apartheid era; Angola War trackers who have been used and abandoned by pretty much every political regime in southern Africa. Last year she received a residential fellowship at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies in South Africa to write on the topic, now postponed to 2021. It is her hope that once we can travel again, she will be able to join other scholars, and devote herself fulltime to thinking and writing about indigenous heritage, justice and the various forms that historical reconciliation may take.
Nicole Else-Quest is a feminist psychologist and an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies. She is also adjunct Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience. A first-generation college student, Dr. Else-Quest earned her Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Wisconsin—Madison in 2006, specializing in women's health and gender development. In addition to her training in psychological science, she also trained as a childbirth doula to work with adolescent mothers and incarcerated mothers. In her research, Dr. Else-Quest uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to address three major research questions: First, What is the magnitude of psychological gender differences? For example, she has used the technique of meta-analysis to synthesize the literature on psychological gender differences and similarities in psychological constructs such as childhood temperament (Else-Quest et al., 2006), attitudes, affect, and achievement in math (Else-Quest et al., 2010), and self-conscious emotional experience (Else-Quest et al., 2012). Many of her projects challenge widely believed but problematic gender stereotypes and provide new insights about gender that extend our knowledge about diverse groups. Next, How are psychological gender differences linked to sociocultural context and inequality? To address this question, Dr. Else-Quest has written extensively on implementing an intersectionality framework within psychological research using quantitative methods (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016a-d, forthcoming), positing that mainstream quantitative psychology will be strengthened by the incorporation of intersectionality and that intersectionality can be explored using quantitative techniques. Utilizing such techniques, Dr. Else-Quest used a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop the Philadelphia Adolescent Life Study (PALS) and recruit a sample of nearly 400 adolescents (and their parents) in Philadelphia. Studying those families longitudinally across the high school years, she examined the development of gender similarities and differences within and across diverse racial/ethnic groups. One paper from PALS demonstrated that the oft-cited gender differences in math and science motivation and achievement reflect the psychology of white youth and are not generalizable to youth of color (Else-Quest et al., 2013). Another set of papers (Else-Quest & Grabe, 2012; Grabe & Else-Quest, 2012; Else-Quest & Hamilton, 2018) focused on the quantitative assessment and analysis of gender equity and equality as a context for girls’ development. Finally, How can we reduce gender differences and improve outcomes for women? Current projects in Dr. Else-Quest’s lab, funded by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, are focused on developing and implementing interventions to improve women’s participation and persistence in undergraduate and graduate STEM education. Undergraduate and graduate students play an active and crucial role on these projects within her lab, co-authoring papers and conducting independent projects. In addition to her scholarly work, Dr. Else-Quest is co-author of the undergraduate textbook, Psychology of Women and Gender: Half the Human Experience+ (Sage, 2018). She has been teaching a psychology of women and gender course since 2004, and she has also taught courses in lifespan development, aging, and research methods, as well as women in science. Dr. Else-Quest is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association via Division 35 (Society for the Psychology of Women) and a member of Division 44 (Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity). She serves on the Editorial Board of Stigma and Health.
Jacob Lau joined the Women’s and Gender Studies Department at UNC-Chapel Hill as an Assistant Professor and the new director of the Sexuality Studies Program in July. For the previous two years he was a Postdoctoral Fellow in the department through the Carolina Program for Faculty Diversity. His work theorizes transgender through postcolonial, queer of color, historical materialist, and women of color feminist theorizations of time and historicism. Lau’s current book project, provisionally titled *Falling Between the Times: Trans-Temporality, and Cisnormative Historicity* situates materials from queer archives, trans memoir, Asian American and Asian diasporic texts within a transnational critique of what he is calling “trans-temporality.” By looking at how state-enacted forms of time regulate and discipline the experience of embodiment, through processes like immigration and administrative documentation Lau argues that cisnormative (non-trans) time allows some bodies more time to be visible, celebrated, and claimed by the nation, state, and transnational capital while trans bodies (particularly trans bodies of color) are decried as sexually aberrant, out-of-sync with the progress of the nation-state. Looking at historical figures that have been claimed as trans not because of their identities, but due to their positionalities and analytics, Lau rereads the archives of Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Dr. Laurence Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka, and Christopher Lee for temporal disjunctures, out-of sorts feelings, and complicated relationships to and within cisnormative time. Along with Cameron Partridge, Lau is an editor of Dr. Laurence Michael Dillon/Lobzang Jivaka’s 1962 trans memoir *Out of the Ordinary: A Life of Spiritual and Gender Transitions* (Fordham University Press, 2016), for which he also co-authored an introduction. Dillon was the first man assigned female at birth to medically transition with both testosterone and top and bottom surgeries, as well as the first European ordained in Tibetan Buddhism. Importantly, Dillon’s memoir demonstrates connections between the development of new medical technologies to “repair” the male body post-WWII in midcentury, the spread of Buddhism in Euro-America, and the rise of transsexual and transgender subjectivities within a colonial context. Lau has been interviewed by PRI’s *The World* for his work on Michael Dillon, and his research on writing has appeared in the *Los Angeles Review of Books, TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly, Graduate Journal of Social Science*, and *Feral Feminisms*. Lau currently has a couple of articles forthcoming. First, “His Body of Work, The Work of His Body: The Chronicles of Christopher Lee and Respect After Death,” in *Amerasia Journal* which examines the cultural and political work of transgender Chinese and Polish American filmmaker Christopher Lee through the unruly affects of Lee’s autobiographical documentary short *Christopher’s Chronicles – Chapter 1* (1996). The article connects those affects to Lee’s queer/trans of color family efforts to pass California’s Respect After Death Act (2014) which allowed Lee’s correct gender identity to be recorded on his death certificate. Second, a critical genealogy for “Trans” in New York University Press’s volume *Keywords in Gender and Sexuality*. In the past year, Lau presented his research on Christopher Lee for the Sexuality Studies Department at San Francisco State University. He facilitated a conversation at UNC’s Institute for Arts and Humanities on Carolina Performing Arts’s transgender-themed opera As One. Lau also chaired a conversation on the politics and aesthetics of resistance in the study of trans historicities, temporalities, and archival practices in the global south at the 2019 American Studies Association Conference in Honolulu, HI.
Susan Harbage Page is a conceptual visual artist with a background in photography and site-specific installation. Her work explores immigration, race, gender, bordering practices, nation states, and belonging. She lives in Durham, North Carolina and maintains a studio in Spello, Italy. Her work has unfolded in two parts. She is well-known for her work on the U.S.–Mexico Border which has been shown at major museums including the Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, and the Baltimore Museum of art. Most recently she had a solo exhibition at the Gregg Museum of Art and Design, Raleigh, North Carolina (2019). The U.S.-Mexico Border Project (2007-present) has unfolded in three major parts including the “Anti-Archive of Trauma on the U.S.-Mexico Border” of circa 1,000 objects, 30,000 photographic images, and over 15 site-specific actions and interventions in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas. Fieldwork for the project also includes interviews with border-crossers and community members in Texas and North Carolina. The intent of this work is to reveal a history of continuing trauma produced by bordering practices that is being carried out along our borders. Her second area of exploration is textile production and the traditional forms of gendered labor both in the U.S. and Italy. Currently she is drawing and painting images based on textiles (lace collars, doilies, movements in weaving) on 200 year old antique Italian books asking questions about who has been traditionally seen as the creator of knowledge. How these handmade objects can unpack the economic and social histories of women that have been previously overlooked. Her gendered body unites the past with the present as she works back into the marginalia of these pages produced and written largely by males at a time when many women were not taught to read. Her musical background and interest in the work of John Cage and indeterminacy also influences her work as she creates a kind of “music for the eye.” Susan Harbage Page has exhibited nationally and internationally at major museums and public institutions in Bulgaria, France, Italy, Germany, Israel, England, the United States, and China. Her work has been collected by nationally recognized museums including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, the Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland, the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, and the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. Amongst Page’s awards are fellowships from the North Carolina Arts Council, the Camargo Foundation, and the Institute for Arts and Humanities, UNC-Chapel Hill, as well as funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation and the Fulbright Program. She is an awardee of the Bernice Abbott International Competition for Women in Documentary Photography.