

November 2021 Newsletter



Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Graduate Student Spotlight: Gabrielle Nichols

How did you hear about the WGSS MA program?

I learned about the program by doing research. I looked at some schools in my home state of Georgia and even in Texas, but none of them seemed interesting to me. I set my sights on UC. After visiting and speaking with Dr. Currier and Dr. Weinstein, I knew UC was where I wanted to be!

What has been your experience as a graduate assistant?

My experience as a GA has been interesting so far. I am working at the LGBTQ Center on campus, and I absolutely love it. I am learning what it means to be a queer woman while working on projecting in this warm, welcoming space. It is hard sometimes to balance GA work and my studies, but I am sure I can do it. One big project that I am working on is creating a queer GSA, so please stay tuned!



Who are your favorite theorists?

My favorite theorist would have to be Patricia Hill Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Brittney Cooper, and Regina Bradley. All beautiful Black scholars that inspire me!

What excites you about the field of WGSS?

What excites me about the field of WGSS is that it's always changing. The more we discover, the more our world grows and evolves.

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WGSS Affiliate Faculty: Dr. Michael Gott



I did my PhD in French and Francophone Studies with a concentration on Film & Media Studies. My dissertation was about how cultural production forwards alternatives to predominant discourses and constructions of national identity in post-colonial France. I am most interested in what screen media (especially film and television series) and the institutional and industrial structures that create and distribute them reveal about social issues. Those include national and community identities in general but migration, immigration, and borders in particular.

At UC I teach classes in what in Romance and Arabic Languages and Literatures we think of as "Global French" and in Film & Media Studies. During Fall semester ('21) I am teaching a seminar that is cross-listed with WGS 7028 that combines both of those. We are studying the film industry of Quebec and the impact on representation in film productions of a 2018 policy that instituted gender parity in government film funding. I've really enjoyed teaching it and the WGSS students enrolled in the course have brought fantastic perspectives to our weekly discussions. I also teach a seminar on migration and mobility in film that is often cross-listed with WGSS.

Something recent that is most directly connected to WGSS is a chapter in a book called [*Queering the Migrant in Contemporary European Cinema*](#). My contribution examines how migrants queer (in different senses) the traditional concept of family in recent Belgian cinema. The chapter is titled "Inside Out: Invaders, Migrants and Queering the Belgian Family," in *Queering the Migrant in Contemporary European Cinema*, ed. James S. Williams, Routledge. The entire book was published in Open Access so it's easy to access. There are a wide range of fascinating essays.

I'm currently wrapping up a book that I hope will be ready to publish in 2022 about "Screen Borders." In this work I'm interested in how perceptions of European space and its social, cultural, and political limits are represented in and altered by films and TV series. Since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and the so-called "migrant crisis" of 2015 and Brexit, 21st-century Europe has been defined by an overlapping combination of shifting boundaries and border anxieties. Within this framework I look at documentary films about urban train stations, dramas about migrants and refugees, and popular crime TV series such as *The Tunnel*, which starts with a crime scene located exactly at the point where France meets the UK in the middle of the Eurotunnel.

