SEWSA 2020
**Embodying Disobedience, Crafting Affinities**
Tampa Bay, FL

**Call for Papers**

The Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of South Florida (USF) is pleased to host the 2020 SEWSA Annual Conference in Tampa Bay, Florida. Our theme—**Embodying Disobedience, Crafting Affinities**—figures embodiment and diverse lived experiences as the lifeblood of resistant politics and the livelihood of building alliances across our many differences. The theme echoes the broader mission of the interdisciplinary field of Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS). With its distinctive blend of research, programming, teaching, and advocacy, WGS questions conventional wisdom, challenges the status quo, critiques intersecting gendered, sexual, and racialized inequities and injustices, and strives to create social change for more equitable, ethical, and just futures.

Our theme takes special inspiration from the work of feminists of color and their allies—including early abolitionists like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, civil rights activists such as Fannie Lou Hamer, Septima Clark, and Rosa Parks, groups such as the Combahee River Collective, writers and teachers like Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Mitsuye Yamada, Cherrie Moraga, and Gloria Anzaldúa, The Movement for Black Lives, founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, the #sayhername campaign, the reproductive justice movement, and the work of researchers and theorists such as bell hooks, Angela Davis, Kimberle Crenshaw, Lila Abu-Lughod, Emma Perez, Saidiya Hartman, Gayatri Spivak, Dean Spade, Jasbir Puar, Fred Moten, C. Riley Snorton, and the late Saba Mahmood, among many, many others. The work of these scholar-activists is a source of critical insight into the workings of what the Combahee River Collective called interlocking systems of oppression, and a reminder that disobeying unjust state logics and challenging administrative and other forms of violence is literally a matter of life and death, more so for some populations than for others. For this reason, so too do these trailblazing and cutting-edge activists and scholars prompt us to recall the imperatives of self-reflexivity, critical positionality, and situated knowledges in confronting inequality and injustice from a variety of intersectional and transnational perspectives.

In these ways and others, our theme invites a wide range of interdisciplinary critical engagements with the body politics of disobedience. How, for instance, do different forms and modes of racialized and gendered embodiment inform strategies of disobedience to state regulation, the criminalization and dispossession of multiply-marginalized populations, and the ongoing upward redistribution of wealth and resources under neoliberalism? At the same time, the theme invites consideration of how to better craft stronger and more capacious affinities between counterhegemonic projects, for example, between The Movement for Black Lives, disability justice activism, struggles for indigenous decolonization, trans and intersex rights, prison abolition, and intersectional feminist, queer, and anti-racist research and activism. “Embodying
**Disobedience, Crafting Affinities,** then, seeks to emphasize the continuing import of multi-issue politics in efforts to move beyond commodified notions of allyship towards relations of radical solidarity and mutual interdependence.

In the current historical moment we are witnessing unprecedented interest in feminism and a resurgence of activism in the same space as increasing white nationalist, anti-trans, anti-immigrant, and anti-choice rhetoric, policy, and legislation. In such a climate, this year’s SEWSA takes the opportunity to draw insight and inspiration from the past and chart a course toward different, hopefully more just—and perhaps also more queer—futures. As 2020 marks the 50th quadrennial presidential election, the centennial of the 19th Amendment, and the fiftieth anniversary of the first women’s studies program, we want to remember the ways in which women’s studies has linked theory to practice, not only to transform the present but also to know the past differently and to imagine and create a world beyond it. Women’s studies, from its inception, ranged across the disciplines, found resources where it could in the name of survival and resilience, and insisted on forms of interdisciplinary inquiry that today demand questions of gender, race, and sexuality to disrupt the naturalized status quo. Women’s and Gender Studies, at its best, embodies disobedience—to the disciplines, reigning ideas of sex and gender, the nation, racial capitalism, and single-issue politics—while simultaneously fighting to craft political and intellectual affinities that will make a difference in the world.

We invite proposals that envision and examine diverse ways of **embracing disobedience and crafting affinities** across a wide range of theories, practices, and contexts. All disciplines, methodologies, and styles of presentation are welcome, and from students and scholars at all levels.

**Possible presentation topics might include (but are not limited to):**

- The history, current state, and future of feminist, LGBTQ+, and anti-racist activisms
- Political participation and movement building leading up to the 2020 U.S. election
- Linkages between Black Lives Matter, disability justice activism, immigrant rights, and trans and intersex mobilization for self-determination and bodily integrity
- The uses of anger (in Audre Lorde and beyond)
- Politics and affect (outrage, repugnance, disgust, humor, pride, envy, loss)
- Scholar-activist coalitions
- Settler colonialism and decolonial feminist resistance, especially within Caribbean and diasporic feminisms
- Increasing women, POC, and LGBTQ+ political representation
- Possibilities and limitations of the #MeToo movement
- Challenges to Title IX under the Trump Administration
- Humanitarianism and neoliberalism
- Digital media and activism
- Interdisciplinary public scholarship in the era of “fake news”
• Feminist and queer performance studies as disobedience
• Afro-Latina identities and politics
• Black feminist leadership and social movements
• Disability studies: pedagogies and politics
• Fat studies, embodiment, and activism
• Trans and intersex studies and public policy

Session Types and Instructions:

• Individual presentation proposals: 200-word proposal
• Panel presentation proposals: 3-4 presenters, 600-word proposal (We strongly encourage panel proposals from graduate and undergraduate students.)
• Roundtable proposals: 6-8 presenters, 8-10-minutes each; can include works-in-progress/slow science (600-word proposal)

Proposal submission deadline is **December 6, 2019** and proposals should be submitted to: [https://tinyurl.com/sewsa2020](https://tinyurl.com/sewsa2020). If you have a proposal idea that is not listed above, such as a performance piece or art submission, email conference staff at sewsa@usf.edu to discuss options.