This month we celebrate our summer holidays. June is LGBTQ+ Pride month! June is also Caribbean-American Heritage and African-American Music Appreciation Month. While on July 4th most Americans celebrate Independence Day, many African Americans also celebrate Juneteenth, the anniversary of the emancipation of enslaved people. In addition, August 10th is the Muslim observance of the 10th day of Muharram, known as the Day of Ashura, often marked by prayer, mourning, abstinence from celebratory events, and/or fasting. If you’d like to contribute to future editions, please reach out to oie@georgiasouthern.edu. We hope you had an excellent summer and wish you a great fall semester!

In this newsletter:

- Eagle Perspectives
- Articles and Readings
- Book Recommendations
- Links and More

Disclaimer: This newsletter and the external references and sources do not represent the opinions or views of Georgia Southern University and are rather intended as learning material to hear from a variety of underrepresented opinions and perspectives. We do not endorse the authors or sources; rather, we hope that readers will critically consume media and use it for reflection and learning in pursuit of inclusion, openness, and cultural enrichment. Some sources may contain mature language or triggering topics, so please read with caution.
Eagle Perspectives

“Statement of Allyship: LGBTQ+ community” by Professor Lisa Costello

My Allyship is something that infuses my daily experience as a professor and administrator. My allyship around LGBTQ+ community has been focused for a long time. As a teenager, I was surrounded by friends who were in the community and often came out to me because there was no one else to whom they could tell safely. In the 1980s, coming out could be especially tough in the era of AIDS and the public stigma around Americans’ lack of knowledge about the disease. When I was hired at Georgia Southern my allyship to the community on the job included being inclusive in my reading lists for classes. I always have readings with these perspectives and they are always intersectional about race and class as well. I have taught Dorothy Allison, Roxanne Gay, Pierre Seel, Bernadette Barton, and Frida Kahlo in classes about writing and gender. Since I am a gender scholar and teach gender focused classes, the LGBTQ+ community is always a topic for discussion. As an ally in the classroom, I respect pronouns and create safe spaces for discussion. But I also work with a lot of students outside the classroom who identified as LGBTQ+ and have mentored many students academically as they went through the difficult process of transitioning. It is through the privilege of being part of these students’ experiences, that I learned firsthand how difficult that transition process was in south Georgia. That transgender allyship became deeply personal when my niece transitioned a few years ago. I continue to highlight transgender issues that are sometimes marginalized in the LGBTQ+ community and also in other communities like feminists.

As an administrator for the WGSS Program, I have been offered unique opportunities to actively advocate as an ally for the LGBTQ+ community. In 2017, we received a $100,000 grant from our donor Ted Tucker, who came out in Statesboro, GA in the 1950s. He said it was an awful experience that he wanted to make better for young people today. We have used his funds to advocate for a special research and resource space. We have purchased LGBTQ+ focused library items and expanded our Gender Minority closet. We started a Lavender Graduation in Statesboro in 2018 and every year the students that participate grows exponentially. We have hosted speakers like Ericka Hart and Bernadette Barton to open the campus and community spaces to issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community and to make this community visible. Events like the creation of a GSA group at Statesboro High could be an effect of a more LGBTQ+ inclusive Georgia Southern campus We have worked hard to expand resources, classes, and research on campus with a vibrant WGSS affiliate faculty community, and in January 2020, we applied for and were awarded a 3.5/5 on the Campus Pride Index, a national tool by which parents and students can assess which universities are LGBTQ+ friendly. We still have a lot of growing to do as a university based in diversity and inclusion, but if each person commits to the work, change will come. I am always ready to do the work!
**Articles and Readings**

**How LGBT Civil Servants Became Public Enemy No. 1 in the 1950s**
by Erin Blakemore, History.com

Most people are taught in school about the “Red Scare” and the extreme, paranoid, and harmful lengths some people were willing to go to in the 50s to identify and excoriate suspected communists. However, most schools leave out the accompanying “lavender scare,” when thousands of LGBTQ+ government workers were driven out of their positions or made to hide their identities for fear of losing their jobs. The State Department under Eisenhower intentionally and methodically sought to identify any “immoral” or “perverted” employees, interrogating and bullying those suspected of being gay. This Lavender Scare wiped out recently-formed underground LGBTQ+ communities, erasing any sense of safety or belonging, though some were brave enough to protest these policies.

**6 Questions About Allyship Answered by LGBTQ Students**
by GLSEN's National Student Council

What do LGBTQ+ youth need from their allies? The participants agreed that they need allies to be willing and enthusiastic about educating themselves, asking questions about the needs of LGBTQ+ people around them, supporting every part of the community, and understanding intersectional identities and how different LGBTQ+ people can have very different experiences. How can LGBTQ+ persons be better allies to other marginalized groups within the LGBTQ+ community? Using their privilege, giving more of the spotlight to these marginalized groups, accepting and acknowledging disabled and overweight LGBTQ+ people in particular, and pushing for better, more diverse representation. Read the article to see the rest of the responses, including to questions such as “How does one find a way to feel safe in a school where they are out but also the school environment isn't so tolerant?” "How can I help to defend my trans boyfriend when being called the wrong name or gender without stepping on his toes?” "Is it counterproductive when potential allies expect you to ask them NICELY for their allyship?” and "In your coming out process, what would be the best things for allies to say?”
Book Recommendations

**LGBTQ Stats : Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People by the Numbers, by Bennett Singer & David Deschamps**
This 2016 book is not just a compilation of numbers, but instead compiles reports, statistics, and surveys into the story of the LGBTQ+ community in the US today. This is the story of the rights of and discrimination against LGBTQ+ folks, just after gay marriage was made legal. It contains a glossary of terms at the beginning and chapters covering activism and politics, AIDS, bisexuality, health, international rights and discrimination, marriage, the media, public opinion, religion, sex, sports, transgender people, the workplace, violence against LGBTQ+ folks, youth and education, and an index of informational resources at the end. It also contains powerful quotes on what it means and feels like to be LGBTQ+ in the US today. Available to read online via EBSCOhost.

**Trans People in Higher Education, by Genny Beemyn**
EBSCOhost description: “While more trans students, faculty, and staff have come out on US college campuses today than ever before, many still report enduring harassment and discrimination. Others avoid disclosing their gender identity because they do not feel safe or comfortable at their schools. This groundbreaking book is the first to address their experiences in a single volume. Genny Beemyn brings together personal narratives and original research...These contributions reveal that despite an improving environment, trans people continue to face widespread interpersonal and institutional opposition on campuses across the country.” Available to read online as a pdf via EBSCOhost.

**Queer People of Color in Higher Education, by Joshua Moon Johnson**
“QPOC in Higher Education is a must-read for anyone who wants to transform their society, campus, or community into places that fully value the complex and beautiful intersections that our diverse communities come from.” This book provides resources for LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff of color, while summarizing current issues and research and discussing the implications for college campuses. It takes a social justice perspective which asks how the systems and cultures can be changed, rather than seeing the oppressed groups as the problem. Available as a pdf online from EBSCOhost.
Nominate someone for us to feature in our next newsletter!

Nomination Information and Link:
https://georgiasouthern.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_879LzXdR1Q4s3gF

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Have comments, concerns, or ideas? Fill out our feedback form here:
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