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Subject: Ten Questions for Faculty Series
Date: Thursday, August 20, 2020 9:04:51 AM
Attachments: [image007.png](#)
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The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to present the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*. The series is dedicated to helping faculty to stay connected with one another while working remotely. Every week, a faculty member will have the opportunity to answer ten questions about themselves and about navigating the changes brought about by COVID-19. This week, we are pleased to feature Janes Charles, Faculty Librarian and Professor of History.



Jane Charles
Faculty Librarian
Professor of History

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Buffalo, New York.

Which college or university did you attend?

I earned my B.A. from the University of South Florida, my first master's degree from North Carolina State University, and my second master's from the University of Pittsburgh.

When did you begin teaching at FSW?

I began teaching at the college in Fall 2004.

What made you become interested in your academic discipline?

Librarianship: I started out as an archivist working in academic libraries, as many archivists do. For my first adult post-grad job, I became the Associate Archivist of the Historical Collections & Labor Archives within the Special Collections Library at Penn State, where I had the opportunity to collaborate with librarians and teach students in the Social Sciences and Arts & Sciences subject libraries. I earned my MLIS to become a more marketable archivist, and fell in love with academic librarianship in the process.

Teaching History: When I was 10 years old I saw an angry white mob set a young black man on a bus on fire on TV. I'll never forget the image of an elderly white woman jumping up and down and clapping while a fellow human being suffered. This drew me to studying the Civil Rights Movement. I was a 6 year-old on vacation with my family in Florida when I met a kind, elderly woman in a sauna who had a series of numbers tattooed on her arm. I asked her about them. With a heaviness I can still feel, she told me to ask my mother someday. This drew me to studying the Holocaust.

What is your favorite food?

My favorite meal is Huevos Rancheros.

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?

Jesus. I'd ask him how exactly does heaven work because it doesn't make a lick of sense to me. (I was raised Catholic.)

What is your favorite local restaurant?

My favorite local restaurant is Osteria Chelli.

What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 & working remotely?

I've become more appreciative of K-12 school teachers. I nearly pulled my hair out while simultaneously homeschooling my 8-year-old and working full-time. I've learned not to take my physical body for granted. Some people want to move, but their bodies won't let them. I've learned not to underestimate the number of people in the world who are generous, kind, and righteous. With regards to how my outlook on life has changed, I shall quote P.J. Fleck, head coach of the University of Minnesota football team, "Mother Nature is basically telling us to slow down. She basically told us all to go to our rooms and think about what we've done...out of this, we're going to find a way to be better for it." Ski-U-Mah Row the Boat.

What are you doing (exercise, cooking, reading, etc.) to take care of your mental and physical health during social isolation?

With 10 roommates—my spouse, 3 step-children, the child from my womb, 1 dog, and 4 cats—I'm not socially isolated, but I still tend to my physical and mental wellbeing, and theirs. We bought a ping pong table, 2 Razors (1 for me), a basketball hoop, and new board games. I learned I'm terrible at ping pong. I regularly have scooter races and hula hoop contests with my 8-year-old, Matilda. I lose almost every time. I've exercised every day since the lock down, not only because of the not-taking-my body-for granted statement above, but also because I found excellent yoga studios from across the globe that offer free live online classes. I meditate, lead the human genome project (our 12-year old twin boys) and my 8-year-old through guided meditation, spend time in nature, and my 8 year-old and I read together.

Travel is good for the mind and body. My family took a 2-week vacation to California in June. (We were supposed to go to Italy, which turned into California and Hawaii, and then California only.) We started in San Diego, went to Three Rivers (population 2,000), drove to Midpines (population 1,000) to stay on a

ranch and pet and feed National Park Service horses, and ended in San Francisco. We did a lot of walking, hiking, and experiencing. This was exciting: A ring of thieves tried to break into our rental car in San Francisco. Upon returning to our rental after a long day of walking the streets of SanFran, we saw several flashing police cars and undercover officers surrounding our car, with handcuffed thieves sitting in front of it. My stepson Ben's sweatshirt, designed to resemble a black striped prison uniform from Alcatraz, ironically was the only personal item we had left in the car.

What advice do you have for your colleagues on how to navigate social isolation and changes from COVID-19?

The problems we had pre-COVID haven't disappeared because of it. Be extra kind to yourself and others.

If you would like to be featured in the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*, please contact Kelly Westfield, Coordinator of Marketing & Technology for the Teaching and Learning Center: kwestfield@fsw.edu



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