From Exclusion to Inclusion?
Sexuality and Citizenship in American Politics
Fall 2016
Wednesday, 4:10pm – 6:00pm
International Affairs Building 711

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00pm-4:00pm

For much of the 20th century, the American political system excluded lesbians and gay men from full citizenship. This course seeks to understand the political and social forces shaping the transformation of these sex nonconformists from a pariah group into a viable social movement and eventually into a powerful constituency within the Democratic Party. Special emphasis will be placed on the state’s role in defining lesbian and gay identities, the ways in which gender and racial diversity have shaped the LGB movement, and the role that partisan electoral strategies played in ushering sexuality to the center of American political conflict.

Course Requirements:

**Attendance & Participation:** This class is conducted in a seminar format. Attendance is mandatory and will be taken weekly. Only university-approved absences are permissible. Typically, I will send discussion questions via email prior to our weekly meeting. Students should (minimally) complete all of the assigned readings and be prepared to answer the discussion questions. Participation grades are determined by attendance and the quality of informed commentary contributed during class time.

**Reaction Papers:** Students are required to complete, during the course of the semester, three short (3-4 page) papers reacting to the week’s readings. Students must choose in advance the three weeks for which they will write a paper. Papers should avoid excessive summarization, and instead forcefully pursue an original argument. Papers must have a clear thesis statement! Successful papers usually do one of the following:

1) Challenge a central claim or argument made by an author;
2) Offer an alternative interpretation of evidence presented in a reading;
3) Identify an important oversight in a reading and reflect upon how this oversight biased the author’s conclusion;
4) Explain how and why a reading challenges or confirms a key argument made by one or more readings from a prior week.

The aim of these papers is to help students develop skills in the art of scholarly argumentation and writing. No late papers will be accepted. These papers must be turned in (in hard copy or electronically) no later than 5 p.m. on the day prior to class.

**Research paper:** Each student is required to complete a 15-20 page research paper on a topic of his or her choosing. The topic must be approved by Professor Phillips and cover some general theme related to lesbians and gays in American politics. Students are required to submit a one- or two-page proposal.

**Short Assignments:** Periodically, students will be asked to complete a short (no longer than one page) assignment. Often these assignments will be related to the week’s discussion questions or to the research paper.

**Grades:** Grades for the seminar will be determined in the following manner

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Papers</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Books To Be Purchased**


Other Readings

CourseWorks: Some of the readings for this course will be available online through Courseworks (https://courseworks.columbia.edu/). These readings are posted under “Class Files.”

COURSE OUTLINE

September 7th: Introductory Meeting (no assigned readings)

September 14th: The Construction of the “Straight State”


September 21st: The Persecution of Lesbians and Gays in Cold-War America


(2) “The Homosexuals” CBS Documentary (1967) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2UNcDHa5ao)
September 28th: Early Lesbian & Gay Rights Organizations


October 5th: Identity & Group Formation

(1) “American Experience: Stonewall Uprising” PBS (view on amazon.com for $2.99)


October 12th: Gender, Race, & Class: Intersectionality in the Early Movement for Lesbian & Gay Rights


October 19th: The Entry of Lesbian & Gay Rights into American Politics


October 26th: Emergence of the AIDS Crisis


November 2nd: ACT UP and the Response to AIDS


(3) “How to Survive a Plague,” Documentary by David France (can be rented on Amazon.com for $4.99)

November 9th: Lesbian & Gay Rights Become Partisan


(2) Krimmel, Kate, Jeffrey Lax, and Justin Phillips. Forthcoming. “Gay Rights in Congress: Public Opinion and (Mis)Representation.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* (CourseWorks)

November 16th: The Decriminalization of Sodomy

(2) Listen to the oral arguments presented before the Supreme Court in the case of Lawrence v. Texas as well as the reading of the opinion announcement (https://www.oyez.org/cases/2002/02-102)

November 23rd: Class is canceled for Thanksgiving Break

November 30th: Winning Marriage Equality


(2) Majority decision, Obergefell v. Hodges (CourseWorks)

December 7th: Twilight of the Struggle for Lesbian & Gay Rights?