Political Science W3921: Gays & Lesbians in American Politics
Fall 2013
Tuesday, 12:10pm – 2:00pm
International Affairs 711

Professor Justin Phillips
(212) 854-0741
jhp2121@columbia.edu
733 International Affairs Building
Office Hours: Monday 2 – 4 pm
& by appointment

The seminar is about the politics of the struggle over gay and lesbian rights. In this course we seek to understand (1) how the movement for gay rights developed and how it has evolved over time; (2) why the battle over gay rights has come to occupy such an important place in American politics; (3) the various strategies (legal and otherwise) that have been used to expand gay rights.

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. Students must complete all of the assigned readings and take time to reflect upon them in a critical manner prior to our weekly meeting. Participation grades are determined by attendance and the quality of informed commentary contributed during in-class discussions.

Short Paper Assignments: Students are required to complete, during the course of the semester, four short (3-4 pages) review papers reacting to the week's readings. The first two must be written in the first half of the semester (by October 8th) and the remaining two in the second half. 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 Monday 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 gays and lesbians in American politics. Students are required to submit a one- or two-page proposal on October 15th. Each student will also be required to give a brief presentation on the preliminary findings of his or her research paper. The presentations will take place during the last week of the course. The due date for the paper will be announced during the semester.

Grades: Grades for the seminar will be determined in the following manner
### Class Participation
- Review Papers: 30%
- Research Paper Proposal: 5%
- Presentation of Research Paper: 10%
- Research Paper: 30%

### Books To Be Purchased
(available at Book Culture, 536 West 112th Street)


### Other Readings

- **Course Packet**: (available at the Village Copier on the corner of Amsterdam & 118th)
- **CourseWorks**: Some of the readings for this course will be available online through Courseworks ([https://courseworks.columbia.edu/](https://courseworks.columbia.edu/)). These readings are posted under “Class Files.”
COURSE OUTLINE

September 3rd: Introduction (no assigned readings)

September 10th: The Creation of the “Straight State”


September 17th: Formation of the Gay Rights Movement


September 24th: Emergence of the AIDS Crisis


October 1st: ACT UP and the Response to AIDS


October 8th: The Gay Rights Movement & the Religious Right


October 15th: Public Opinion & Gay Rights


3. Research proposal due

October 22nd: The Sodomy Cases


2. Listen to the oral arguments presented before the Supreme Court in the case of *Lawrence v. Texas* (a total of 5 audio files) [http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A066F1CADF3C625](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1A066F1CADF3C625)

3. Majority decision, *Lawrence v. Texas* (CourseWorks)

October 29th: Discrimination


3. Majority decision, *Romer v. Evans* (CourseWorks)


November 5th: University Holiday & Election Day!

November 12th: Military Service


Note: We will be joined by Tanya Domi, an adjunct Professor at the School of International and Public Affairs. Professor Domi served in the US Military and has been active in efforts to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

November 19th: The Legal Battle over Same-Sex Marriage

1. District court decision, *Perry v. Schwarzenegger* (CourseWorks)


4. Optional: The dissenting opinions in *Hollingsworth v. Perry* and *United States v. Windsor*
November 26th: Comparing Legal & Legislative Strategies. Which is Best?


December 3rd: Research presentations