

POLS 3400: LGBTQ Politics

Fall 2022

Online

Professor Richard Price

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30-11:30, Thursday 10:30-11:30 [via Zoom]

Appointments available by request

Course Description

American politics has long evolved as society shifted. One representation of that evolution is seen in the way that once outsider groups have been incorporated, in part at least, into politics and life. Through an examination of LGBTQ politics since World War II we will explore the social, political, and legal tactics that activists deployed to fight against a heteronormative, cisgender culture bent on eradicating any challenge to that normativity.

A Note About Language

Language is always important but especially in this class. It's also often difficult. As we will explore 70+ years of American history, we will see that the way that people talk about themselves has changed as has societal norms. You will learn that I have a certain degree of dislike towards the acronym, as I call it. LGBT developed in the 1990s and 2000s as a laudable expression of broad group solidarity but it represented an aspiration of unity more than the reality at times. It also tends to reinforce binaries and limit the spectrum of identities, leading to the continuous debates about how best to expand the acronym to reflect the diversity of sexual and gender minorities. For a variety of reasons, personal and professional, I tend to use queer as a broad catchall term, as representative of the queer identity spectrum that LGBTQ+ illustrates. However, I also realize that some are not comfortable with this term due, in part, to its use as a slur. At times, I will sometimes use gay as a shorthand instead, especially in talking about times and debates in which gay men and lesbians dominated. Ultimately you should use the terminology that you feel most comfortable with and always feel free to raise questions or concerns about language as we go.

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to demonstrate mastery of the Public and Constitutional Law subfield.

This course emphasizes the ability of students to demonstrate critical thinking skills or formulate and defend a thesis in a written or oral format.

Course Readings

All readings for this course are available on Canvas in the files section and are hyperlinked from the Canvas syllabus.

Course Requirements

1. Participation (15%)

Participation is an important aspect of this course. Participation is not only reading the materials and showing up regularly but also means active engagement with the material through discussion and analysis.

- At the end of the semester, I will require you to submit a self-evaluation of your participation with an honest assessment of your participation and a suggested grade if you were judging your performance. I will take this self-evaluation into account when assigning your grade.

2. Short Paper (15%)

You will write a short paper exploring the primary sources from the first two weeks of class.

3. Midterm (20%)

You will have a midterm examining the nature of LGBTQ activism broadly.

4. Education Paper (30%)

You will be required to identify and explore an idea that you think would make school a better place for LGBTQ people. This could be a lesson plan, training, policy, or something else.

5. Final Paper (20%)

This will be a reflective paper on how media representation of LGBTQ lives or experiences are depicted in some media of your choice.

Grade Scale

A = 93% or above	A- = 90 – 92 %	B+ = 87 – 89%	B = 83 – 86%
B- = 80 – 82 %	C+ = 77 – 79%	C = 73 – 76%	C- = 70 – 72 %
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63 – 66%	D- = 60 – 62%	E = 0 – 59%

Course Schedule

The following is an approximate schedule that I reserve the right to alter, with notice, at any time.

Tuesday Aug. 30, Introduction. What does LGBTQ politics even mean? Is there one unified politics for sexual and gender minorities?

Thursday Sept. 1, Queer History. I'm a firm believer that history is key to understanding politics. So we are going to take a few days for a broad overview of experience from about 1945-1980.

- Littauer, Amanda H. 2018. "Sexual Minorities at the Apex of Heteronormativity (1940s-1965)." In *The Routledge History of Queer America*, Ed. Don Romesburg, 67-81.
- Frank Kameny "Does Research into Homosexuality Matter?"
- Florance Conrad [Jaffy], "Research is Here to Stay"

Tuesday Sept. 6 and Thursday Sept. 8, More Queer History. This week includes a selection of gay liberation debates about the future of queer politics.

- Strub, Whitney. 2018. "Gay Liberation (1963-1980)." In *The Routledge History of Queer America*, Ed. Don Romesburg, 82-94.
- NACHO "Homosexual Bill of Rights"
- J.P. Marat, "The Views of Vanguard"
- NACHO "A Radical Manifesto: The Homophile Movement Must be Radicalized!"
- GAA Constitution
- Carl Wittman "Refugees from Amerika: A Gay Manifesto"
- Radicallesbians "The Woman-Identified Woman"
- "Transvestite and Transexual Liberation"
- Silvia Lee Rivera "Transvestites: Your Half Sisters and Half Brothers of the Revolution"
- Marcia P. Johnson "Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary"
- Elandria Henderson "Black and Lavender: The Black Lesbian"

Tuesday Sept. 13, Rights talk. Americans talk about rights a lot and scholars debate the extent to which rights talk is useful or not. Gay rights activists had to decide both whether to deploy rights rhetoric and how to develop such claims.

- D'Emilio, John. 1992. "Making and Unmaking Minorities: The Tensions Between Gay History and Politics." In *Making Trouble*, pgs. 181-190.
- Vaid, Urvashi. 1995. *Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay & Lesbian Liberation*, pgs. 1-34.
- Adam, Erin M. 2017. "'Community Voices' and 'Speaking Out': Rights Talk and the LGBTQ Community in the 1980s." *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society* 73: 21-46.

Thursday Sept. 15, Health care as control. Health care has long been used to control LGBTQ people. Few have experienced this more than trans people where medical providers act as gatekeepers for affirming care. For gay people, health care long focused on coercive "curing" them of their affliction. We look today at these dual stories and the activism of the 1960s and '70s seeking to modify these systems of control.

- Velocci, Beans. 2021. "Standards of Care: Uncertainty and Risk in Harry Benjamin's Transsexual Classifications." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 8(4): 462-480.
- Faderman, Lillian. 2015. *The Gay Revolution*, pgs. 279-297

Tuesday Sept. 20, The plague hits. HIV/AIDS decimated an entire generation of gay men, in particular. Now the community had to not only figure out how to navigate a plague but also the renewed assault from homophobes utilizing the disease against them politically. Health care, or the lack of it, continued to be used as an agent of social and governmental control.

- Schulman, Sarah. 2021. *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993*, pgs. 137-165, 227-269, 457-469.
- Video: *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP* (94 min. 2012) (out of class)

Thursday Sept. 22, The struggle of gay fathers and lesbian mothers. The discussion about rights talk assumes that invoking rights is optional. For lesbian mothers and gay fathers the challenges

to their parental rights necessitated a response. Parents often discovered a hostile court system that preferred to place children with the straight ex-spouse. Consider the role of stereotypes in affecting parenting decisions.

- Rivers, Daniel Winunwe. 2013. *Radical Relations: Lesbian Mothers, Gay Fathers, & Their Children in the United States since World War II*. Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 53-79.
- *Schuster v. Schuster* (Wash. 1978)
- *S.N.E. v. R.L.B.* (Alaska 1985)
- Video: *Mom's Apple Pie* (60 min. 2006) (out of class)

Tuesday Sept. 27, The rise of gay families. In the 1970s, the primary issue was whether divorced parents who later came out retained their parental rights to custody and/or visitation. Now we turn to the rise of gay families through adoption, foster care, surrogacy, and artificial insemination. Consider how these new gay families strained the arguments for excluding queer people from equal treatment.

- Rivers, Daniel Winunwe. 2013. *Radical Relations: Lesbian Mothers, Gay Fathers, & Their Children in the United States since World War II*. Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 173-206.
- *In re Adoptions of B.L.V.B. and E.L.V.B.* (Vt. 1993)
- *Lofton v. Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services* (11th Cir. 2004)

Thursday Sept. 29, Criminalizing Space and Life. Few elements of state repression are as pervasive as the criminal law. Using regulations of dress, sex, and space, police abuse of LGBTQ folks was broad and pervasive.

- Hanhardt, Christina B. 2013. *Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence*, pgs. 81-116
- *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1986)

Tuesday Oct. 4, Counter-Mobilization. The 1990s saw deployment of anti-gay ballot measures aimed at a wide variety of gay rights areas. As you watch the film consider the degree to which you agree with Justice Antonin Scalia's statement that such ballot measures are the action of "seemingly tolerant" people "to preserve traditional sexual mores against the efforts of a politically powerful minority." Also, at this time there was extended debate about how to be more inclusive within the leading gay and lesbian organizations.

- Schultz, William. 2021. "The Rise and Fall of 'No Special Rights.'" *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 122(1): 6-37.
- Murib, Zein. 2017. "Rethinking GLBT as a Descriptive and Analytic Category in Political Science." In *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, 14-33.
- *Romer v. Evans* (1996)
- Video: *Ballot Measure 9* (72 min. 1995) (out of class)

Thursday Oct. 6, *Lawrence v. Texas*. In only 17 years, gay rights litigators convinced the Supreme Court that *Bowers* was wrong. What changed in such a relatively short time? Why does Franke describe this as "domesticated"?

- Franke, Katherine. 2004. "The Domesticated Liberty of *Lawrence v. Texas*." *Columbia Law Review* 104: 1399-1426.

- *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003)

Tuesday Oct. 11, Why marriage? The 1990s saw a significant shift in movement focus towards the issue of same-sex marriage. One major question that lingered constantly was whether it was a worthwhile fight. Today that sounds silly but why did activists disagree with the attempt to seek marriage recognition?

- Daum, Courtney W. 2017. "Marriage Equality: Assimilationist Victory or Pluralist Defeat." In *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, eds. Marla Brettschneider, Susan Burgess, Christine Keating. New York: New York University Press, 353-373 (Canvas).

Thursday Oct. 13, Marriage equality: the end of gay rights? *Obergefell* represented the constitutional high watermark for lesbians and gay men. Marriage equality, an idea unthinkable 25 years earlier, had been achieved. What explains this victory?

- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).
- Engel, Stephen M. and Timothy S. Lyle. 2021. *Disrupting Dignity: Rethinking Power and Progress in LGTBQ Lives*, pgs. 223-231, 248-261.

Tuesday Oct. 18, Trans activism in the new millennium. Trans activism evolved dramatically in the 1990s and emerged publicly in the first decades of the new millennium in a new way. In some ways, trans people were on the cusp of major victory in 2016 and lost everything in the election of Donald Trump.

- Stryker, Susan. 2017. *Transgender History*, 2nd Ed. New York: Seal Press, 195-236
- Schilt, Kristen and Laurel Westbrook. 2015. "Bathroom Battlegrounds and Penis Panics." *Contexts* <https://contexts.org/articles/bathroom-battlegrounds-and-penis-panics/>

Thursday Oct. 20, No Class, paper day.

Tuesday Oct. 25, The Straight School. The 20th Century American education system was designed, in part, to create good future citizens. An implicit assumption of "good" citizenship was that it would be straight. One of the key early battles over this was in targeting teachers.

- Graves, Karen L. 2009. *And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida's Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers*, pgs. 20-49.
- Rafferty, Max. 1977. "Should Gays Teach School?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 59(2): 91-92.
- Connell, Catherine. 2015. *School's Out: Gay and Lesbian Teachers in the Classroom*, pgs. 58-93.

Thursday Oct. 27, Organizing college students. The first challenge to the straight school came in universities and colleges. Gay and lesbian student groups emerged to facilitate both social and political activities (if those are different things).

- Dilley, Patrick. 2002. "20th Century Postsecondary Practices and Politics to Control Gay Students." *The Review of Higher Education* 25(4): 409-431.
- Beemyn, Brett. 2003. "The Silence is Broken: A History of the First Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual College Student Groups." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12(2): 205-223.
- "Report on Homophobia at West Virginia University." 6 December 1989. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force records, #7301. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Box 74, Folder 39.

- *Gay Lib v. University of Missouri* (8th Cir. 1977 & SCOTUS dissent 1978).

Tuesday Nov. 1, The struggle to protect students' safety. Being out in school, whether voluntarily or not, often posed unusual dangers. At best, in the 1990s at least, the hope was for relatively minimal harassment. At worst we have cases like Jamie Nabozny. What should the responsibility of schools be in this situation?

- Ball, Carlos. 2010. *From the Closet to the Courtroom*, pgs. 67-98.

Thursday Nov. 3, The right to be seen at school. Nabozny's experience might have been extreme but it also resonated with the experiences of queer kids across the country. One answer was to seek space within school, through the creation of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA). Another was to express yourself directly. Schools often sought to repress queer student speech utilizing a variety of rationales.

- Lane, Stephen. 2019. *No Sanctuary: Teachers and the School Reform that Brought Gay Rights to the Masses*. Lebanon, N.H.: ForeEdge, 91-138.
- Price, Richard S. "Constructing the Dangerous Queer Child." Draft Paper.

Tuesday Nov. 8, The perils of queer literature. Representations of the queer identity spectrum in children's and young adult literature has exploded in recent decades. With the wider availability of queer themes has come a backlash seeking to remove such books from schools and libraries.

- Banks, William P. 2009. "Literacy, Sexuality, and the Value(s) of Queer Young Adult Literatures." *English Journal* 98(4): 33-36.
- *Case v. Unified School District* (1995)
- Price, Richard S. "Silencing Trans Voices." Draft Paper.

Thursday Nov. 10, No Class, Paper Day

Tuesday Nov. 15, Trans kids fight for their place. Trans kids have always existed but they took on new prominence in early in the 21st Century as some, like Jazz Jennings, sought to transition at young ages. Trans children challenge the very notion of the gender binary that underlies much of modern conservative thought. Trans kids have thus had to fight for their place in society.

- Travers, Ann. 2018. *The Trans Generation: How Trans Kids (and Their Parents) are Creating a Gender Revolution*. New York: New York University Press, 46-115
- Murib, Zein. 2022. "Laws targeting transgender youths lean on myths about White childhood innocence." *Monkey Cage* (*Washington Post*).
https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/23/anti-transgender-laws-race/?utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=wp_monkeycage&utm_medium=social

Thursday Nov. 17, The rainbow scare. Unsurprisingly, school curriculum has always been about presenting a heteronormative, ciscentric, understanding of life. One challenge from queer education reformers has been to push for more inclusion in schools and curriculum. In recent years, this has been met with a new rainbow scare as conservative Republicans push a narrative that even acknowledging the existence of LGBTQ lives is an assault on parental rights and that kids must be protected from the rainbow.

- Rosky, Clifford. 2017. "Anti-Gay Curriculum Laws." 117 *Columbia Law Review* 1461, 1461-1503.

- Steed, Carl G., Seth Anderson, Chris Babits, and Michael A. Ferguson. 2019. “Changing Medical Practice, Not Patients – Putting an End to Conversion Therapy.” *New England Journal of Medicine* 381(6): 500-502.
- Other Readings TBD

Tuesday Nov. 22, No Class, Paper Day

Thursday Nov. 24, No Class, Holiday

Tuesday Nov. 29, What does it mean to say that we want LGBTQ representation in media? Queer people and themes have a long place in various media but in recent decades activists have demanded better and more authentic portrayals of queer folk. What makes a “good” representation?

- Miller, Jennifer, Maddison Lauren Simmons, Robert Bittner, Mycroft M. Rosky, Cathy Corder, and Olivia Wood. 2022. “Screening LGBTQ+.” In *Introduction to LGBTQ+ Studies: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach*, pgs. 335-376.

Thursday Dec. 1, Today we are going to watch *Love, Simon* (2018).

Tuesday Dec. 6, Evaluating what makes “good” representation. What did we think of *Love, Simon*? What do you make of Engel and Lyle’s critique, especially in comparison with the source novel?

- Engel, Stephen M. and Timothy S. Lyle. 2021. *Disrupting Dignity: Rethinking Power and Progress in LGBTQ Lives*, pgs. 119-149, 158-170.

Thursday Dec. 9, Catch-up day.

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is an important element to any class but especially this one. The readings and lectures will be complementary but not coextensive and you will be held responsible for all of the information from both lectures and assigned readings. While attendance alone is not sufficient for the participation element of your final grade, it is necessary.

Grading Policy: Barring unforeseen crises, I will return graded assignments within two weeks of the due date. If you are unsatisfied with a grade assigned you may appeal that grade to me and I will reevaluate the assignment from scratch. This means that you could receive a higher, lower, or the same grade as initially given. To appeal you must send me a short statement explaining why you believe the grade is incorrect along with the original graded copy of the assignment.

Late Assignments: Assignments are due at the time and date listed on the syllabus. Any late papers will be deducted a letter grade for every 8 hours late (e.g. A to A-, A- to B+, B+ to B, and so on). Requests for extensions must be made to me before the assignment is due and will not be granted retroactively.

Academic Integrity: As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure for the specific assignment, at a minimum, or failure for the whole course at the professor’s discretion. Students will also be reported to the Dean of Students.

NOTE: It is also a violation of this policy to submit work previously submitted in another course. You should speak to me if you have any concerns about where the line is for this policy.

Reasonable Accommodation: Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Disability Services Office at (801) 626-6413 or dsc@weber.edu. See more info at <https://www.weber.edu/disabilityservices>

Core Beliefs: According to PPM 6--22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

Recording Class: Video or audio recording of any portion of lectures is only permitted in this class upon authorization of the faculty member. If you would like to request authorization to record, please contact me. Unauthorized recording is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, for which a student may be subjected to disciplinary action under PPM 6-22, Student Code. Students who seek to record for purposes of accommodating a disability should contact the Disability Services Office at (801) 626-6413 or dsc@weber.edu. See more info at <https://www.weber.edu/disabilityservices>

Emergency Closure: If the University is forced to close for any reason during the semester, please check the course Canvas page and your Weber email for updates on how this course will proceed. The University announces closures and other emergencies through its Code Purple emergency alert system. Students are encouraged to sign up for Code Purple:
<http://www.weber.edu/codepurple/>

Office Hours and Communication: My regular office hours are listed above and I encourage you to avail yourself of them if you have any problems, questions, or simply want to discuss ideas. If you cannot make my office hours, I am available by appointment. If you have a quick question, please feel free to email me. Finally, I may regularly use email to contact you (in particular if I have to cancel a class meeting or change an assignment). This means that you will be responsible for regularly checking your WEBER email account and keeping it open to emails. I will not make any extra attempt to contact you if an email gets rejected because yours is full. Nor will I accept as an excuse that you do not use your Weber email account.

- Canvas Announcements: I will sometimes use Canvas to send you announcements. This has a few quirks. One is that while you will be notified via email (if you have notifications properly set up), any attachments will have to be obtained by logging into Canvas and going to the announcements section. Also, please never hit reply to such announcement notifications in your email. It is not sent to me; it is instead posted as a reply to the announcement but Canvas does not notify me of this and I will not see it. If you need to contact me, always email or message me directly.

Note on Email: Please put the name and/or number of this class in the subject of any email message so I can easily sort them. I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours, beginning on the next business day after receipt; please note that weekends are not business days.

A Note on the Canvas Gradebook

All of your grades will be available online in the Canvas gradebook. Please note a quirk of that system is that it only estimates your final grade based on the scores recorded. If you have not yet done an assignment, thus showing "--", Canvas treats it as nonexistent. So it may state that you have an 83% when you have only done 3 of 6 required assignments but that estimate will drop rapidly if you fail to do an assignment and a "0" is entered. Also, Canvas is not perfect and you need to remember the terms of the syllabus when it comes to weighting assignments. If Canvas has an error for some reason and improperly weights assignments you need to remember that the syllabus always controls and any Canvas error will be corrected even if your grade estimate is affected. For this reason I encourage you to let me know if anything in Canvas looks odd.