

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
POS 378 LGBTQ Politics

Spring 2018, Wednesdays 6:00 to 9:00 pm, Conklin 346

Professor Jyl Josephson

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Course description: This course explores LGBTQ political movements and related public policies in the United States, and locates these within historical contexts and with reference to theories about gender and sexuality. The importance of intersecting identity categories such as race, class, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity will be explored as they impact political mobilization and public policy strategies and impacts of the movement. We will also look to the specific context of LGBTQ life and politics in Newark, and use the resources of the Queer Newark Oral History Project, including hearing from researchers who have worked with this resource, working with the oral histories, and hopefully hearing from some of those who are part of the oral history project.

Some of the questions that we will discuss might include: What role should the state play in regulating the relation between sexual identity and expression? What is at stake in the debates over same-sex marriage and the claims by sexual minorities for equal rights? How have responses to the LGBTQ movement, including anti-gay political organizing, affected the political landscape and the strategies of the movement? Given the many intersecting aspects of LGBTQ movement activists identities, how and in what ways have the different strands of the LGBTQ movement interacted in making public claims? How and by what means is it possible for sexual minorities to become full participants in democratic citizenship? How is the US context for LGBTQ activism unique, and how is it similar to other national political contexts?

At the ballot box, in Congress and state legislatures, through protests and in the courts, gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex, transgender, and queer people are seeking recognition and asserting claims to rights and protections under law. LGBTQ issues – such as non-discrimination laws, the prevention of hate crimes, access to marriage, access to public facilities on an equal basis – have become prominent in mainstream political debates. Yet progress has also been met by backlash, and the struggle for access to equality in public and private life continues.

Specific Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the history of LGBTQ political mobilization in the U.S. and the background for current claims for changes in public policy.
- Students will examine specific political claims of the LGBTQ movement, and the use of different strategies such as appeal to courts, legislatures, executive agencies, and public opinion in making these claims.
- Students will become familiar with the oral histories and other materials of the Queer Newark Oral History project, and will learn how to analyze materials from the archive.
- Students will understand intersectionality and its centrality to the kinds of claims made by activists in the LGBTQ movement as well as to some of the movement's disagreements over strategies, norms, values, citizenship, and inclusion.

- Students will develop their skills in analyzing oral histories and other materials in the QNOHP archive, and over the course of the semester will prepare research notes, field notes, analysis, and a final paper that will integrate analysis of a specific oral history with the concepts learned in course readings and lectures.

Required Texts

- Readings from *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, edited by Marla Brettschneider, Susan Burgess, and Christine Keating, NYU Press 2017
- Readings from *Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?* Heath Fogg Davis, NYU Press 2017
- Additional readings available in Blackboard
- Queer Newark Oral History Project archive, available online

Required Assignments and Grading

- Reading Comprehension Quizzes: Four (out of six opportunities) 25%
- Research and Field Notes from speakers and films (at least 6) 25%
- Final Paper (Proposal, Research notes, Draft, Presentation, Final) 40%
- Class Attendance and Participation 10%

RESEARCH AND FIELD NOTES: We will be watching a number of films in this class, and will have guest speakers. We will also do one field trip to the Newark Public Library, and will be using the QNOHP oral histories. For all of these, you will take research/field notes. You will be provided with a basic format for doing this, and will hand those in at the end of class for each of these activities.

FINAL PAPER: You will write a research paper for this class, and will do so in stages: you will write a short proposal, indicating which of the oral histories from QNOHP you plan to use and why; you will provide research notes based on your work with the oral history that you have chosen, you will write a draft paper on which I will give you feedback, you will give a brief class presentation on your project, and you will write a final paper.

QUIZZES: At the beginning of class, I will give a short quiz that is intended to assess your basic comprehension of the reading for that class day. There will be at least six quizzes during the semester, and your final grade will include your top four scores on these quizzes. The quizzes are intended to provide you with an incentive to actually read the course materials ahead of class. In general quizzes will consist of 8 to 10 questions of the short answer, multiple choice, or true/false variety though some quizzes may include slightly longer answers (e.g. in one sentence summarize the main point of this article).

Course Policies

Attendance and Class Discussion:

Attendance is strongly encouraged, and attendance will be taken. Participation in class discussion is essential for better understanding and intellectual discourse. The class discussion component of your grade will be based on both the quantity and the quality of your participation. Absences beyond a total of three over the course of the semester will be excused only with advanced notice and for a legitimate reason that can be documented.

Papers:

Late papers will be penalized 5% of the grade per calendar day.

Plagiarism:

The University policy on academic dishonesty will be followed in this course. Please consult the "student code of conduct" for a full discussion of this issue.

Topical Outline

Note: This schedule and particular readings is not final and will be subject to change.

January 17, 2018

Introduction to the course

January 24, 2018

Read:

Zein Murib, "Rethinking GLBT as a Political Category in US Politics"

AND Joseph Nicholas DeFilippis and Ben Anderson-Nathe, "Embodying Margin to Center: Intersectional Activism among Queer Liberation Organizations," both from *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader* (available on Blackboard)

Visit: Newark Public Library, QNOHP exhibit

January 31, 2018

Read: Jeremiah Garretson, "The How, Why and Who of LGBTQ 'Victory'" in *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, chapter 14

Intro to QNOHP materials: Dr. Whit Strub, guest speaker

February 7, 2018

Read: Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *Radical History Review* 2008 (Blackboard)

Film: "Screaming Queens"

February 14, 2018

Read: Heath Fogg Davis, *Beyond Trans* (Introduction, Chapter one) (available on Blackboard)

QNOHP Oral Histories

PROPOSAL FOR FINAL PAPER DUE FEBRUARY 16 (Friday)

February 21, 2018

Read: Kristyn Scorsone, "Invisible Pathways: Entrepreneurship by Queer Women of Color in Newark," (article under review, available on Blackboard)

QNOHP Guest Speaker Kristyn Scorsone

February 28, 2018

Read: Aryana Bates, "Liberation in Truth: African American Lesbians Reflect on Religion, Spirituality, and their Church," in *Gay Religion* (available on Blackboard)

QNOHP Oral Histories/Guest speaker (TBA)

March 7, 2018

Read: Gayle R. Baldwin, "Rainbow Children Over Me: Parabolic Narratives for Sakia Gunn," *Crosscurrents*, Summer 2004 (on Blackboard)

Film: Out in the Night

Research Notes for Final Paper Due March 9 (Friday)

SPRING BREAK

March 21, 2018

Read: Heath Fogg Davis, *Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?* Ch. 2 "Bathroom Bouncers: Sex-Segregated Restrooms"

QNOHP Guest Speaker TBA

March 28, 2018

Read: Ellen Anderson, "The State of Marriage?" from *LGBTQ Politics*

Film: "The Freedom to Marry"

April 4, 2018

Read: Naomi Extra, work in progress (TBA) Note that this date may change

Guest Speaker: Naomi Extra

April 11, 2018

Read: Ravi Perry and X. Loudon Manley, "Case Studies of Black Lesbian and Gay Candidates," in *LGBTQ Politics*, ch. 16

QNOHP Guest Speaker TBA

DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE April 13 (Friday)

April 18, 2018

Read: Cynthia Burack, "Top Down, Bottom Up, or Meeting in the Middle? The U.S. Government in International LGBTQ Human Rights Advocacy," ch. 25 in *LGBTQ Politics*

QNOHP Guest Speaker TBA

April 25, 2018

Read: Kimala Price, "Queering Reproductive Justice," ch. 5 in *LGBTQ Politics*

May 2, 2018

Final Paper Presentations (continued on May 9 as needed)

Last Day of Class:

May 9, 2018 FINAL PAPER DUE May 9 (Wednesday)