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## Introduction

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The LGBTQ movement has had a good deal of success over the past twenty years. Worldwide, the number of countries in which same-sex acts are illegal is decreasing. An increasing number prohibit employment discrimination, punish hate crimes, and recognize same-sex marriage and adoption. LGBT activism has also led to path-breaking scientific discoveries for life-saving treatments for people with AIDS. In the United States, same-sex couples may marry, LGBT people may serve openly in the military, and hate crimes against LGBT people may be prosecuted under federal law. Barriers to LGBT families adopting and fostering children have been lifted in many states. Many states and localities have added sexuality to anti-discrimination laws that protect basic civil rights such as equal housing, public accommodation and employment. However, this history has been neither linear nor necessarily progressive. The killing of 49 people in a gay night club in Orlando, Florida in June 2016 dramatically demonstrated that violence against LGBTQ populations persists despite legal and political gains. Activists have also experienced backlash, interruptions, and intense disagreements regarding issue prioritization.

The study of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) politics<sup>1</sup> has been a part of Political Science in the United States over the same two decade period, attaining a measure of visibility in the mainstream of the discipline. The American Political Science Association includes a Committee that studies the Status of LGBT people in the profession, a Caucus that provides a place for LGBT scholars to organize their interests, and an organized

section on Sexuality and Politics that promotes scholarly research on a variety of topics. This situation is distinctly different from just twenty years ago when research on LGBTQ political issues was scant and formal recognition of LGBTQ professional interests was virtually nonexistent.

In addition to being at a crossroads for the LGBTQ movement, we also appear to be at a critical juncture in progressive political activism more generally. Social media has enlivened movements for social change, with some lauding the ways digital technologies have widened conversations, facilitated organizing, and enabled people to share information across time and place, while others have warned that social media activism runs the risk of becoming a form of arm-chair politics. Environmental crisis and climate change have led activists to organize at the grass roots and press for change through more institutional channels around the globe. Further, building upon the anti-globalization protests in relation to the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, and gaining momentum through the 2000s, the Occupy movement has prompted a rethinking of questions of economic justice in terms of the 1% over and against the rest of us. In the United States, a vibrant #BlackLivesMatter network has drawn international attention for its sustained and vital work against police brutality and other forms of persistent racial inequality.

Given these developments, it is a particularly exciting historical moment to put forth a complex and deep collection of essays together into a reader on LGBTQ politics. This volume analyzes both the successes and obstacles to building LGBTQ movement over the past twenty years, and offers analyses that point to potential directions that the movement might take in the future. Rather than aiming for a seamless narrative, the volume presents a wide range of methodological, ideological, and substantive approaches to LGBTQ politics that exist in Political

Science. Essays that focus on more mainstream institutional and elite politics appear alongside contributions grounded in grass roots movements and critical theory. While some essays are celebratory of the movement's successes and prospects, others express concerns that the democratic basis of the movement has become undermined by a focus on funding power over people power, attempts to fragment the LGBTQ movement from racial, gender and class justice, and a persistent attachment to single-issue politics. Some contributors suggest that mainstream successes have diminished the transformative potential of the LGBTQ movement and corroded its linkages to overlapping and allied progressive movements.

The essays in this volume analyze various aspects of the movement, addressing LGBTQ politics in the context of a variety of issues including activism, law, coalition-building, community, education, erotics, technology, marriage and families, globalism, intersections with other progressive movements, the politics of political science professional associations, teaching issues, public opinion, organizational strategies, right wing resistance, and visions for the future. These themes are approached from a variety of subfields in political science as it is studied in the US, including comparative politics, political theory, American politics, public law, and international relations. As a result, this volume reflects the focus of many of these subfields on US politics. Themes such as marriage and public opinion that have been important to the movement in the US play a central role in this book as well. The study of LGBTQ politics is emerging in the comparative politics and international relations subfields as well, as is reflected in the global politics section.

In preparation for this volume, we organized several roundtables at political science conferences such as the American Political Science Association, Western Political Science Association, and the Midwest Political Science Association meetings. These roundtables brought

together scholars working on LGBTQ politics across various subfields of the discipline in order to deepen our collective understanding of the LGBTQ movement and research on it over the past twenty years or so. During the panels we asked scholars to consider the history of the study of LGBTQ politics, where it is now, and where it might be headed in the future. One theme that emerged in the panels was the pressure that scholars often felt to de-radicalize or “tone down” their work in the discipline of Political Science, a pressure that interestingly parallels the way that LGBTQ activists often feel compelled to work within the politics of respectability. We encouraged authors to consider moving against that pressure in their contributions to the volume here.

One common theme that emerges across many of the essays is that a focus on LGBTQ politics can help us to understand the complexities of politics more generally. For example, mainstream public opinion frameworks cannot adequately account for the rapid acceptance of marriage equality in recent years in the United States. Thus, the use of survey research allows us to better understand the complex development of public support for marriage equality over time in the United States. It also reveals the way that even the study of mainstream LGBTQ political issues with the traditional tools of political science has challenged longstanding assumptions, allowing us to see the limitations of US politics and political science more clearly, and providing a basis from which to anticipate new forms of politics and imagine new ways to study them. In addition, this volume includes several chapters that directly challenge the way that politics has been defined and studied from within the mainstream, using analytic tools drawn from critical frameworks such as queer theory, feminist theory, critical race theory, and global justice to destabilize and reimagine the boundaries of politics and political science.

Another central argument that runs through the essays in the volume is that a political

science approach can usefully inform LGBTQ politics. For example, in LGBTQ political movements, anti-LGBTQ sentiment, sometimes referred to as homophobia, is often taken as a personal belief or attitude. Given its focus on political agendas, institutions, and structures, a political science approach can also highlight the ways that homophobia is mobilized politically, for particular political interests, even if the central political issue being addressed does not directly implicate LGBTQ people or concerns. Such sentiment can be mobilized within various modes of power in different historical and cultural contexts. Further, a political science approach can illuminate the ways that LGBTQ politics is co-created with other important aspects of justice politics such as those of race, gender, sexuality, culture, and class. Indeed, one conclusion of several of the contributors to the volume is that intersectional approaches to the study of politics are vital in order to analyze and understand why progressive movements emerge and how they can be sustained.

A third theme that echoes across the chapters is that the study of LGBTQ politics is best situated within an intersectional framework that takes up oppressions and identities as mutually constitutive, or co-created. This framework, developed over the past two decades primarily by feminists of color, underscores the analytic importance of looking at the ways that systems of power such as race, gender, sexuality, class and others work in conjunction with each other, and the political importance of building movements that address such interconnections.

This reader offers six main sections containing essays focused on the following themes: the politics of social movements and interest groups; LGBTQ politics in the context of the politics of professional associations in political science; U.S. public opinion and politics; marriage equality politics; global politics; and visions for the future. Each section includes a short introduction that highlights key issues and questions raised by the essays offered therein.

Each essay offers an in-depth analysis of an issue important to the LGBTQ movement, while self-consciously overlapping with other essays in the volume, to encourage connections across central analytic and conceptual categories that serve to structure (and often limit) the discipline of political science. The specifics of each of the six sections of the book follow below.

### Part I: Building LGBTQ Movements

The Chicago Society for Human Rights (1924) is credited as the first main homosexual rights organizations in the United States, followed by the Daughters of Bilitis (1955) and the Mattachine Society (1950). Historians and other scholars often date the explosion of a widespread popular LGBTQ movement to the acts of resistance at the Stonewall Inn in New York's Greenwich Village in 1969. That series of rebellions was multiracial and participants emerged from a variety of diverse LGBTQ positionalities.

The contributions to this section update the exploration of movements and groups to more recent years with an interesting array of focal points for analysis and on-the-ground social justice work. Zein Murib examines social movements and interest group advocacy related to LGBTQ people during the period of 1968-2003. Looking at disputes regarding political objectives and coalition building, Murib demonstrates important divisions among organizations based on race, class, and gender. Using a critical discourse analysis Murib articulates how movements for LGBTQ marriage and military issues came to obscure other significant agenda items in LGBTQ political movements. Charles Anthony Smith, Shawn Schulenberg, and Eric Baldwin discuss critically how political science often overlooks the bisexual members of the LGBTQ community. Countering a common presumption in political studies of bi-, multi-, and pan-sexuals, the authors demonstrate that the community is significantly politically engaged.

Kimala Price offers her expertise on queer reproductive justice politics by women of color activists beginning in the 1990s, exploring the direction of coalitions and agenda setting between LGBTQ and reproductive justice movements when many LGBTQ activists were claiming that reproductive issues were not pertinent to their movement. Moving through the divides, Price offers a rich analysis of difficulties and possibilities associated with such coalitions for activists and theorists. J. Ricky Price, in examining the links between race, gender, and sexuality contemporary HIV activism and prevention, explores these same issues from a feminist science and criminal justice standpoint. Lee Aultman and Paisley Currah develop the concept of epistemic justice to critique the erasure of lives and experiences of trans politics which remain largely illegible in more mainstream political science scholarship on LGBTQ equality movements. Providing an overview of trans political movements in the US, the authors present a significant background in the field as well as a cogent argument on the needs of trans politics today.

Sean Cahill works with LGBTQ and questioning incarcerated adults and with youth examining issues that emerge from the frame of LGBTQ experience in the criminal justice system. While much scholarship identifies and relies on binary understandings of sexuality, Joseph DeFillipis complicates this typology, analyzing models of redistributive agendas of class based LGBTQ movements and recognition based frameworks of organizations led by queer people of color. We see in these contributions the crucial roles movement and activist politics play in interacting with action in more formal and legal arenas on LGBTQ political issues.

## Part II: LGBTQ Politics in the Discipline of Political Science

The essays in this section focus on LGBTQ politics and movement issues in professional

political science associations and academic institutions. Here we ground the examination of the role of the LGBTQ politics in the discipline of political science, focusing on the American Political Science Association, the central professional organization for the study of politics in the United States. Martha Acklesberg and Angelia Wilson critically survey the development of the LGBT Caucus and the Sexuality and Politics Section in the American Political Science Association, integrating interviews from key participants who have led the development of this field over the last twenty-five years. Susan Burgess and Anna Sampaio offer an intersectional reflection on the controversy over whether to hold the 2012 APSA meeting in Louisiana which presented a variety of conflicting interests that threatened to undermine fragile alliances between groups representing LGBTQ, racial, gender and class interests, in part due to persistent attachments to single-issue politics.

Barry Tadlock and Jami Taylor survey trends in publishing articles on LGBTQ topics in the top fifty journals in political science and the top twenty journals in public administration and international relations, as well as books published by the top ten university presses in political science. Jyl Josephson then examines the relationship between LGBTQ politics and its study in Political Science and the development of the field of feminist political theory, arguing that mainstream LGBTQ politics and political science has shaped feminist political theory more significantly than queer theory. In this section, readers will note familiar themes in LGBTQ studies and see how knowledge production in the academy forms and contributes to the contours of political activism and examination in the broader civic and governmental arenas. From here we can critically take up the most active area of LGBTQ research in the discipline of political science which includes public opinion research given that sub-field's centrality to the discipline.

### Part III: LGBTQ Politics and Public Opinion in the United States

This section contains essays that explore public opinion regarding LGBTQ politics and its relation to mainstream politics in the United States. It is now legal for gays and lesbians to marry, serve in the military, and express their sexuality privately without fear of criminal prosecution, leading some activists and scholars to suggest that the LGBTQ movement has reached a victorious conclusion, an end to marginalization. Yet, as many critical scholars have noted LGBTQ people who do not or will not conform to mainstream sex, gender, race and class norms continue to be politically marginalized, as many critical scholars have noted. The chapters in this section use the tools of mainstream political science to assess recent developments in LGBTQ politics, providing evidence that sometimes supports and at other times challenges the discipline's understanding of American politics. Taken together, these essays suggest that integrating the study of LGBTQ politics into the standard subfields of political science (such as public opinion, public policy, the presidency, campaigns and elections, and Congress) can both confirm and disrupt what the discipline thinks it knows about how politics works in the United States.

Jeremiah Garretson begins by offering a critical analysis of various explanations that Political Science has offered to explain growing support for LGBTQ rights in the United States, focusing on unexplained variance amongst subgroups such as African-Americans, conservatives. Donald Haider-Markel and Patrick Miller suggest that survey data reveals a longstanding division between individual policy preferences for marriage equality and broader movement priorities. They argue that such divisions undermine mobilization towards more transformative political goals, such as alternative gender and family structures, calling for a broader approach to public opinion. Through interviews, a discussion of Victory Fund support, and an analysis of

various campaign materials, Ravi K. Perry and X. Loudon Manley argue that President Obama's decision to support marriage equality in 2012 was a crucial factor not only in changing Black public opinion on marriage equality, but also in promoting a number of electoral victories for LGBT African-American candidates from 2012-14. Mandi Bailey and Steven Nawara offer a survey-based experiment that suggests that gay and lesbian candidates, particularly lesbians, are disadvantaged by campaign advertising that activates gender and sexuality stereotypes. In the final chapter of the section, Paul Snell explores the establishment of the LGBT Equality Caucus as a means of addressing the underrepresentation of such interests in Congress. He suggests that the institutionalization of the Caucus contributes to a transformation of LGBTQ politics from morality to interest group politics.

#### Part IV: Marriage Equality Politics

This section addresses the thorny issue of marriage equality, easily the most visible issue in LGBTQ politics in the United States in the last several years. While marriage has long been a contentious issue amongst LGBTQ people, opposition to it has diminished (but not disappeared) within the movement in recent years, paralleling its greater acceptance within mainstream politics in the United States. Mainstream support culminated in the 2015 case of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, arguably the single most important case to address LGBTQ rights issued by the U.S. Supreme Court. The chapters in this section critically assess the cases prior to *Obergefell* and their import in shaping the gay and lesbian community, the meaning of *Obergefell* itself, and the effect that marriage equality may have in defining the parameters of the LGBTQ movement going forward.

Noting tensions between what are often referred to in the political science literature as

liberal LGBTQ and radical queer activists, Courtney Daum assesses the viability of their sometimes competing policy goals and their import for the future development of LGBTQ politics in the United States. She argues that the Obergefell ruling protects those in the LGBTQ community who are more socioeconomically privileged, concluding that this may well subvert the ability of the LGBTQ movement to radically challenge, disrupt, and transform traditional institutions and identities, as well as the mainstream sex and gender norms upon which they are built. Ellen Ann Anderson explores various sociolegal factors that led couples to choose to become married in state and local venues offering same-sex marriage before the Obergefell ruling, noting the central role that political and legal contexts played in shaping more personal influences.

Addressing LGBTQ liberty and equality through a queer theoretical lens, Jerry Thomas argues that same-sex marriage privileges heteronormativity at the expense of queer sensibilities. His essay performs an enraged and profane “fagchild” identity that centralizes the concerns of the “here and now” queer citizen, who both challenges, and yet remains subject to, mainstream norms. Connecting the same-sex marriage debates with a different area of grass roots LGBTQ politics, Jason Stodolka offers a case study of LGBTQ homeless youth activism in Chicago. Stodolka argues that this at-risk population has been able to utilize mainstream LGBTQ marriage rights advocacy to increase recognition of their own grass-roots concerns. Nonetheless, he also finds evidence that suggests that normative debates about same-sex marriage have tended to reify local political structures that perpetuate the very conditions of LGBTQ youth homelessness.

## Part V: LGBTQ Politics in Global Context

The essays in this section focus on LGBTQ politics in the Global South as well as on

transnational LGBTQ politics. Julie Moreau provides an overview and a critical analysis of central trends in the study of LGBTQ movements in the global South. Miriam Smith explores competing approaches to the comparative study of LGBTQ politics. The first approach foregrounds the advances and setbacks to the legal and political incorporation of LGBTQ issues in different national contexts, while the second approach focuses on homonationalism, that is that way that states seek to create a more positive image of their government by promoting LGBT rights; Smith argues that each approach could benefit from incorporating insights from the other. Cynthia Burack provides an overview of US government-funded international LGBTQ human rights programming and analyzes the relationship between the US government and local LGBTQ groups. Burack's argues that despite a conception that the US government imposes a particular agenda upon these groups, the programs themselves are actually developed through close negotiation with local groups. Finally, Christina Kiel and Megan E. Osterbur look at Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) in relationship to LGBTQ politics, and use hyperlink data to generate a map of global LGBTQ networks. They argue that while much research seeks to understand the role of TANs in issue-framing in different national contexts, it is also important to understand the networks themselves, paying particular attention to connections across regions and levels of development.

## Part VI: Queer Futures

The essays in this section present and analyze alternative futures for LGBTQ politics. Gary Mucciaroni's essay analyzes and assesses alternative futures for the LGBTQ movement, looking at the possibilities of building a movement that aims for broad-based social transformation. Judy Rohrer's essay explores the import of contemporary controversies about sexuality and gender

identity in the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and what they reveal about generational anxieties regarding the future in the United States. Drawing on the emphasis on fun in scouting practice and philosophy, she argues for an approach to gay futurity that goes beyond inclusion. Melissa Meade and Rye Young consider what it means to invest in feminist and queer futures and argue for the development of alternative models of philanthropy and funding.

Finally, Heath Fogg Davis critically analyzes the benefits and limitations of women's colleges and the single-sex college admissions policies based on race-sex identity.

This volume does not aim to be exhaustive. Rather, it includes creative, cutting edge essays from scholars reflecting on the development of the field, writing about contemporary LGBTQ issues in political and historical context. Our intention has been to bring together the best contemporary work on LGBTQ politics from a range of emerging and established scholars in mainstream and critical political science. Taken together, we hope that the essays in this volume will further the long trajectory of creative and transformative work being done in the field of LGBTQ politics, provoking continued critical discussion of the parameters of LGBTQ politics and the import of its study for the discipline of political science as a whole.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> In this volume, we use the term the LGBTQ politics (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) to refer to struggles to end discrimination, persecution, and marginalization based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The question of naming is a hotly debated political question. In general, there has been a trend towards inclusivity in nomenclature, with the acronym expanding to incorporate minority sexual and gender identities as they gain political

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traction as well as more open-ended identities such as “queer” or “questioning.” One important critique of the acronym itself is that it is based on English-language terms for minority sexual and gender identity and thus serves to erase cultural and linguistic variation of both identity and practice as well as reinforce western cultural and linguistic dominance. In order to avoid this problem, the human rights community in particular has turned to the acronym “SOGI” (sexual orientation and gender identity) instead of LGBTQ in order to focus attention on sexual and gender diversity in general. At the time of the writing of this book, however, this naming practice has not become widespread. Because the question of naming is an important and ongoing political question, we do not impose conformity on nomenclature in this volume and leave the choice of how to refer to the movement up to each contributor.