WOMENSST 394R : Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Latin America.

Spring 2016

Professor Cora Fernández Anderson

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Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 to 11:15

Room: Bartlett 109

Office Hours: by appointment

Office: Bartlett 7C

Since the 1990s Latin America has witnessed increasing societal and political debates over sexual and reproductive rights. Issues such as contraceptives, abortion, same sex marriage, transgender rights, sexual education and assisted reproductive technology have risen to the top of some countries’ agendas after decades of silence, taboos, and restrictive or non-existent legislation. The course aims to provide a survey of sexual and reproductive rights in Latin America assessing the state of the region as a whole, while at the same time highlighting the disparities that exist within it. The course analyzes the multiple factors behind the current policies focusing particularly on the role of women and gay rights movements in advancing more liberal legislation. In addition, we will look at the role of the Catholic Church in these debates and their struggles to prevent any legislative change that goes against their doctrine from happening. Among the cases we will explore are Argentina’s same sex marriage and gender identity legislation, Uruguay’s decriminalization of abortion, Costa Rica’s ban on IVF technologies and Peru’s coercive sterilization program of indigenous populations.
Goals:
- Learn key concepts in the field of sexual and reproductive rights.
- Acquire knowledge of the general status of sexual and reproductive rights in Latin America.
- Gain an understanding of the theories that explain the different sexual and reproductive rights policies throughout the region.

Readings
There are no required books. All readings will be available through the class website in moodle.

Requirements

Attendance and Participation:
Your attendance and participation are essential for making this class a success. All students should come to class on time having done the readings and ready to participate in the class discussion and activities. You are allowed no more than 4 absences during the semester (15% of grade).

Country reports (1):
Each student should choose one country of interest to examine throughout the semester. You are required to submit one country report (5 pages) that examine one area of your country’s sexual and reproductive rights based on prompts that I will provide as the semester progresses. There will be four opportunities/topics from which to choose which assignment you would like to complete. This assignment is meant to add concrete examples that will enrich our classroom discussion of the various themes. You will be required to present your findings to the class. (25%).

Response papers (4)
You are required to write four response papers (2-3 pages) three to class readings and the other to a panel of your choice from the CLPP conference, From Abortion Rights to Social Justice: Building the Movement for Reproductive Freedom (April 8-10 at Hampshire College)(20%).

Final take home exam
You will be required to respond to essay questions while having access to all course materials. The prompt will be distributed through email and posted on moodle at the beginning of the reading period (Friday April 29 at 9 AM) and the exam will be due on Monday May 2nd at noon print in my office. (40% of grade).

Class policies:
- You can contact me through email and expect a response within 48 hours.
- You are responsible for citing your sources thoroughly, and all plagiarism will be handled according to college policy.
- All assignments are due print in class on the specified date. All late papers will be marked down unless there is a justified and documented extreme circumstance. Misrepresenting your state of health to the professor to obtain an extension is a violation of the honor code.
- Students who need test or classroom accommodations due to a disability must be registered in advance with Disability Services and have a letter from that office confirming the needed accommodation. Please let me know as soon as possible.

**Tentative class schedule**

(I may introduce changes as the semester progresses which will be announced in class and through email)

**Class 1: January 19**

Introduction to the class. No assigned readings.

**Class 2: January 21**

Sexual and reproductive rights. What are they? Status in Latin America.


**Class 3: January 26**

From population control to reproductive rights.


**Class 4: January 28**

Cairo and Beijing Conferences.

- Cairo and Beijing declarations.
- Selections of Beijing plus 15 Latin America.

**Class 5: February 2**

Sexual rights. Global and regional status.

Recommended/optional:


**Class 6: February 4**

Overview of Latin America’s history and normative traditions.

- Mala Htun. _Sex and the State_. Chapter 2. Four Normative Traditions.

**Class 7: February 9**

The Catholic Church in Latin America. Organizing against sexual and reproductive rights.

- Primary sources: excerpts from Church’s documents on sexual and reproductive rights.
- Bonnie Shepard. 2006. _Running the obstacle course to sexual and reproductive health_. Chapter 1.

Recommended/optional:

- Marysa Navarro and Maria Consuelo Mejia. 2010. “The Latin American Network of Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir” In Elizabeth Maier and Nathalie Lebon, ed, Women's Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean, (New Jersey: Rutgers the State University)
- Evelyn P. Stevens. “Marianismo: The other face of machismo.” In _Confronting change, challenging tradition: women in Latin American history_. Pages 3-17.

**Class 8: February 11**

Social movements. What are they? Whose interests do they represent?


**Tuesday February 16: No class. Monday class schedule will be followed**

**Class 9: February 18**
Women’s and LGBT movements. What are they? Whose interests do they represent?


Class 10: February 23

Latin American feminisms


Recommended/optional


Class 11: February 25

Indigenous peoples and sexual and reproductive rights.


Class 12: March 1

Indigenous peoples and sexual and reproductive rights.

- Angela Ixkic Bastian Duarte. “From the margins of Latin American feminism: indigenous and lesbian feminisms”
- Role play exercise.

Class 13: March 3

Abortion. Regional status and the case of Uruguay.


**Recommended/Optional:**

- World Health Organization. “Unsafe abortion: the preventable pandemic”

**Class 14: March 8**

**Abortion. The case of Nicaragua:**

- Watch the documentary “Rosita” by Barbara Attie and Janet Goldwater

**Recommended:**


**Class 15: March 10**

**Assisted Reproductive Technologies. The Case of Costa Rica.**

- Interamerican Court Ruling on the Costa Rica case.

**Spring Break**

**Class 16: March 22**

**Assisted Reproductive Technologies.**

Class 17: March 24

Class exercise on policy making and state regulations on Assisted Reproductive Technologies. Guidelines to be distributed.

Class 18: March 29

Forced sterilization. The case of Peru.


Optional


Class 19: March 31

Forced sterilization. The case of Peru (II)

- Watch the documentary “A Woman’s Womb” by Mathilde Damoisel

Class 20: April 5

Latin American LGBT movements.


Recommended/optional:


Class 21: April 7

Same sex marriage. The Case of Argentina.

Recommended/optional

Class 22: April 12
Discussion on panels from the CLPP conference.
• Present your reaction paper on a panel you attended

Reaction paper on panel from the CLPP conference due print in class.

Class 23: April 14
Gender Identity. The case of Uruguay and Argentina.
• Collection of newspaper articles on gender identity laws in Argentina and Uruguay.

Class 24: April 19
International Adoption. Regional status.

Class 25: April 21
International Adoption. The case of Guatemala.
Screening of documentary “Goodbye Baby” by film director Pat Goudvis.

Class 26: April 26

Conclusions.