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Political Science's Burgess Writes New Book on LGBTQ Politics

October 31, 2017

Categories: Research

Tags: center for law justice and culture, LGBT, Political Science news, politics, Susan Burgess, women's and gender and sexuality studies news



Dr. Susan Burgess

[Dr. Susan Burgess](#), Professor of [Political Science](#), recently published her new book *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, a collection of essays from thirty people who study LGBTQ issues in politics.

“How have people gone about that and how has it changed what we assumed we knew in political science?” said Burgess. “How does what we know about political science change the way we study LGBTQ politics?”

In 2016, Burgess also wrote *A Guide to Radical Politics in the United States*, in which she dispels the notion that there is no place for radical politics within the US context by covering ten areas on both the left and the right of the political spectrum.

“A lot of people think politics isn’t something that happens in U.S. politics but that’s really not quite right,” Burgess said. “There are certain times when we see it more than others but radical politics has really shaped mainstream politics in the United States. If you think about things like minimum wage or access to birth control or abolition of slavery or women voting, these were all once radically wild ideas. People thought, ‘Never will that happen in a million years.’”

In addition to her research, Burgess has received several teaching awards, and regards it as a great honor to be recognized in a profession which she enjoys so much.

“I really love to teach, I always have,” said Burgess, who is in her 28th year of teaching. “One of the great things about being a teacher is I get to be with younger people who are just getting exposed to new ideas. It’s so exciting to remember how that was and to be with people as they start to develop their own ways of critical thought.”

Her involvement teaching in both the [Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies](#) program and the [Political Science Department](#) has developed Burgess’ regard for interdisciplinary study, one of the reasons she praises the [Center for Law, Justice & Culture](#).

“It’s great to have an interdisciplinary center for the study of law,” Burgess said. “That really makes a difference for the students, and for the faculty too. It just enriches what we’re doing in the classes that I teach.”

Outside of academia, Burgess worked in conjunction with a group of individuals to create a women’s fund within the [Athens Foundation](#). This fund, which focuses on giving grants to nonprofits in the area that address the needs of women and children, has raised almost \$250,000 since its creation in 2006, and is on its way to becoming endowed.

Burgess started her path into academia as the first of her family to earn a college degree. After attaining a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from [Northern Illinois University](#), she continued her education at the [University of Notre Dame](#), where she earned both a master’s and Ph.D.

Burgess went on to teach at the [University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee](#) for 12 years. During this time, she served not only as a teacher but as director of the Women’s Studies program. Her involvement with the Women’s Studies department allowed Burgess to help develop the revolutionary perspectives that are now incorporated in these departments, now labeled [Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies \(WGSS\)](#).

“Women’s Studies was structured around the idea that gender was constructed but people hadn’t come to the conclusion that sex was constructed,” Burgess said. “People know that now, but it was very exciting to be apart of how people came to know that.”

Burgess left the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to direct the Ohio University Women’s Studies program and create a major. Sixteen years later, the major, and an array of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies courses, are still thriving.