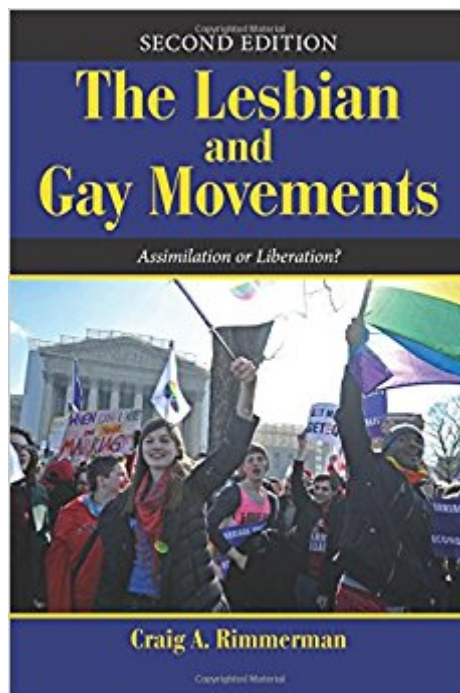




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# The Lesbian And Gay Movements: Assimilation Or Liberation? (Dilemmas In American Politics)



## Synopsis

Throughout their relatively short history, lesbian and gay movements in the United States have endured searing conflicts over whether to embrace assimilationist or liberationist strategies. The *Lesbian and Gay Movements* explores this dilemma in both contemporary and historical contexts, describing the sources of these conflicts, to what extent the conflicts have been resolved, and how they might be resolved in future. Rimmerman also tackles the challenging issue of what constitutes movement 'effectiveness' and how 'effective' the assimilationist and liberationist strategies have been in three contentious policy arenas: the military ban, same-sex marriage, and AIDS. Considerable attention is devoted to how policy elites—presidents, federal and state legislatures, courts—have responded to the movements' grievances. Since the publication of the first edition in 2007, there have been enormous changes in the landscape of lesbian and gay movements and rights. The thoroughly revised second edition includes updated discussion of LGBT movements' undertakings in, as well the Obama administration's response to, AIDS/HIV policy, the fight to legalize same-sex marriage and overturn the Defense of Marriage Act, and the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for the prior edition: "A lively and provocative book! Rimmerman has done an excellent job in demonstrating the limits of both assimilation and liberation as strategies pursued by the GLBTQ movements. The heart of this book is a richly textured analysis of these core strategies as deployed

around the most explosive public policy debates of the last 30 years—AIDS, Gays in the Military and Same Sex Marriage. *The Lesbian and Gay Movements* is a book that is interesting and valuable to several fields—American politics, public policy, law and society, new social movements, gender studies, and gay and lesbian history.”—Gary Lehring, Smith College

How did private decisions on sexuality become such a controversial political issue in American politics? Craig Rimmerman’s book provides a concise introduction to the development of the gay rights movement and to the related issues of HIV/AIDS policy, gays serving in the military, and same-sex marriage. Avoiding a simplification of these issues as part of a “culture war,” Rimmerman provides an explanation that includes the historical development of the issues, a recap of the varying political positions, and an analysis of the political and legal processes that led to today’s policies.”—Barbara Norrander, University of Arizona

Craig Rimmerman has a distinctive gift for clarifying complex events without understating their significance. His ambitious and engaging analysis of the major initiatives of the gay and lesbian movements transcends established boundaries in political science, drawing connections among studies of the presidency, the executive branch bureaucracy, Congress, the courts, gender studies, social movements, federalism, and political mobilization and participation. This is a welcome addition to student reading lists and faculty book collections.”—MaryAnne Borrelli, Connecticut College

Democratic social movements inevitably divide over what stance to take toward establishment power and values. Rimmerman makes an insightful contribution to our understanding of social movements through a detailed analysis of how the internal tension between assimilationists and liberationists within the lesbian and gay movements has molded responses to key policy challenges such as HIV/AIDS, the prohibition against gays in the military, and gay marriage. His suggestion for more attention to coalition building with other sympathetic groups and education to combat prejudice and discrimination offers a practical strategy for unifying the movement.”—William E. Hudson, Providence College

Throughout their relatively short history, lesbian and gay movements in the United States have endured searing conflicts over whether to embrace assimilationist or liberationist strategies. *"The Lesbian and Gay Movements"* explores this dilemma in both contemporary and historical contexts. Rimmerman tackles the challenging issue of what constitutes movement "effectiveness" and how "effective" the assimilationist and liberationist strategies have been in three contentious policy arenas: the military ban, same-sex marriage, and AIDS. Since the first edition in 2007, the landscape of lesbian and gay movements and rights has seen enormous changes. The thoroughly

revised second edition includes updated discussion of LGBT movements undertakings in, as well the Obama administration's response to, HIV/AIDS policy, the fight to legalize same-sex marriage and overturn the Defense of Marriage Act, and the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." "How did private decisions on sexuality become such a controversial political issue in American politics? Craig Rimmerman's book provides a concise introduction to the development of the gay rights movement and to the related issues of HIV/AIDS policy, gays serving in the military, and same-sex marriage. Avoiding a simplification of these issues, Rimmerman provides an explanation that includes the historical development of the issues, a recap of the varying political positions, and an analysis of the political and legal processes that led to today's policies." Barbara Norrander, University of Arizona "Rimmerman's presentation of the evidence provides a compelling case in support of the notion that the lesbian and gay movements are best served by intermixing liberationist and assimilationist strategies. The lessons can be applied beyond the gay and lesbian movement as well, and are especially pertinent to other movements with an identity politics emphasis." "Political Science Quarterly" Craig A. Rimmerman is professor of public policy and political science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. He is the editor of Westview Press's "Dilemmas in American Politics" series. He is also author of "The New Citizenship," "From Identity to Politics," and co-editor of "The Politics of Gay Rights" (with Kenneth A. Wald and Clyde Wilcox)."

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