A Queer Trend in Political Science:
Finding a place for Queer Studies within the discipline

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1. Introduction

It is a common understanding that the discipline of Political Science concerns itself with the study of politics, government, and public policy within nation-states, as well as politics, trade, and relations among nation-states. Approaches to the study of government and politics encompass various perspectives. One such outlook is the normative approach, which delves into philosophical considerations about values by posing the question "What should be?" Another approach is the behavioural approach, aiming to construct testable theories using scientific techniques, by inquiring "How?" and "Why?" (Indiana University of Pennsylvania).

The Behavioural approach saw its heyday in the 1950s and 60s when political analysts such as David Easton strongly supported the adoption of the methodology of natural sciences in Political Science to study the behaviour of political actors using quantitative research (Jha 24). However the emphasis remained on reinventing the method of doing Political Science among those seeking to reform the discipline. This is what formed the major point of criticism adopted by Charles Lindblom in his 1981 Presidential address to the American Political Science Association. Bertell Ollman describes what Lindbloom considers the failings of Political Science in her 2001 article titled, *"What Is Political Science? What Should It Be?"* She writes:

> With its heavy emphasis on the question, *"How to study?"*, on methods and techniques, the question, *"What to study?"*, has been neglected, and usually answered in an off-hand manner in terms of what can be studied given the methods already in place. The result is that many trivial matters receive an inordinate amount of attention and many important ones go untreated (Ollman 68).

Probably, because the question *"What to study?"*, was neglected for so long, it became easier to expand the scope of the discipline by expanding the specification of what the 'political' includes beyond the considerations of how power is exercised within the sphere of the government, and in national and international arena; to considerations of processes of power unfolding in any social space. The scope of political science has indeed broadened following the emergence of critical and postmodernist perspectives (Smith and Lee 49-51).

Although postmodernism has wielded substantial influence in fields like literary analysis and the examination of international affairs, its effect on the realm of political science has been relatively limited. Numerous scholars have disregarded postmodernism as insignificant, even in the face of its significant challenges. Nevertheless, postmodernism as an influence on Political Science is hard to ignore. It has challenged and critiqued positivism. Postmodern thinkers remind us that the claims of objectivity are unhealthy and misguiding. One of the core tenets of postmodernism is its scepticism towards "meta" or "grand"

narratives such as those present in Marxism or Liberalism, or such other attempts to formulate a universal political theory. Instead, postmodernism seeks to bring to the front what is marginalized in traditional political theory (women, ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, etc.) and as such ‘allow the Other to speak’ (Amery).

Marginalized voices are increasingly finding expression in academia; but as Nicola Smith and Donna Lee have posited in "*What’s Queer About Political Science?* (2015)," scholarly work on sexuality, gender, and the body is seldom cited in the articles of leading political science journals. The topics of sexuality and gender find ample attention in Political Science textbooks but sustained attention in 'hard' political science scholarship is absent (Smith and Lee 50).

In order to chart out the journey of Queer Studies within Political Science, the journey of the term '*Queer'* is mapped in the second and the third section. Section (2) discusses how the term *queer* became a political category in itself, rallying around those of non-normative sexualities under its banner. The construction of *"homosexual"* as a deviant entity justifying its exclusion from social spaces; and the notion of *"closet"* as a metaphor for the concealed identity of homosexuals is also discussed in this section. The core argument propounded in this section is that it was the LGBTQ+ activists organizations operating in the aftermath of the Stonewall Uprising and the AIDS crisis, who used *Queer* as a *'sly and ironic weapon,'* to be put to use against the homophobes, that led to the forging of *queer* as a political tool and a political category. Section (3) brings forth the academic discourse that emerged soon after the LGBTQ+ activism seen in the confrontational strategies of ACT UP and Queer Nation; and the coining of 'Queer Theory' by Teresa de Lauretis. An elaboration of Foucault's perception of *sexuality* as a category of truth generated by the institutions becomes crucial to carry forward the discussion about the academic production of Queer texts and theories as a form of 'reverse discourse.'

The histories, processes, and challenges of *making queer* the Political Science discipline are taken up in Section (4). The section draws on feminist scholarship to question the public-private dichotomy that confines the discourse on bodies and sexualities to the realm of the private sphere and renders 'Body Politics' invisible in the academic discourse. Finally, Section (5) provides some reasons for endorsing the queering of Political Science. A suggestion is also made that Davina Cooper's concept of *"everyday utopias,"* could be employed to transform the discipline into one that draws on a variety of, and at times, conflicting queer voices, approaches, and strategies in the process of producing knowledge.

2. *Queer* as a political category

In his paper, "*Queer as a Political Concept (2015)"*, Jacek Kornak argues that *Queer* is a term that is heterogeneously used by scholars and journalists in different contexts to give multifarious implications. Since the end of the 1980s, the term 'Queer' gained popularity as many Lesbian and Gay individuals came to identify themselves with it. Academics working on non-normative sexualities have since then embraced the term in their works (Kornak 1).

The politicization of the term *"Queer"* as a means of resistance is preceded by the societal construction of the excluded, dominated, and defiled *"homosexual."* In the United States of America, since the 1950s, two events changed the way sexual minorities were perceived at large. First, the dominance of a perspective that depicted homosexuality as a deviant minority identity. Secondly, for the first time in history—a nationwide drive was initiated to uphold conventional heterosexuality. This initiative involved engaging the support of governmental bodies and other societal establishments to regulate and govern homosexuality. This collective societal effort, employing tactics of suppression and marginalization, marked the inception of what is commonly known as the "era of the closet" (Seidman 1-2).

The notion of the "closet" functioned as the fundamental framework and method for individuals to acknowledge their identity as homosexuals or part of the LGBTQ+ community. In her work titled *"The Epistemology of the Closet,"* Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick provides various interpretations to elucidate the concept of the "closet." The notion of being "in the closet" denotes the presence of something concealed or held in secrecy from others, perpetually remaining undiscovered. It also signifies a power dynamic or conflict between different sexual orientations, as well as the association of sexuality with knowledge (Thorpe Jr.).

Steven Seidman posits that a power dynamic or a hierarchy between different sexual orientations has been maintained primarily, by repressive practices. These practices create the notion that the heterosexual and the homosexual are antithetical human identities and reinforce the conventional status of heterosexuality by stigmatizing homosexuality (Seidman 1). On the construction of an excluded and defiled "homosexual," Seidman writes:

> Constructing the homosexual as defiled justifies her exclusion from public life. Symbolically degrading the homosexual contributes to creating *dominated gay selves*—that is, individuals for whom shame and guilt are at the core of their sense of self; public invisibility becomes in part self-enforced. The exclusion of homosexual from public life is reinforced by civic disenfranchisement—the denial of civil rights and political representation (Seidman 2).

Police as part of the Ideological State apparatus is employed to keep the homosexual isolated and separated from the heterosexual urban spaces. Quasi-public gay spaces are only permitted so that the segregation and confinement of the homosexual can be maintained. Seidman cites the example of gay bars, which are frequently tolerated but are typically situated on the outskirts of cities, and their acceptance hinges on the understanding that this partially public gathering of LGBTQ+ individuals remains inconspicuous to the socially accepted heterosexual population (Seidman 2).

Ironically, the practice of homosexuality became part of the political discourse after the Stonewall Uprising of 1969. The Stonewall Inn had become the most popular gay bar in New York by June 1969, when it was raided by the police, leading to week long protests by the village residents. The residents had organized activists organizations and demanded the right

to express their sexual orientations openly, without the fear of getting arrested (Library of Congress). The events of June 1969 helped spark the modern LGBTQ+ movements and laid the foundational stone for the practice of Queer politics in the U.S. and everywhere else (Blakemore).

The LGBTQ+ movements or the movements led by sexual minorities to achieve sexual liberation from the state and society would not have been possible without the politicization of *"Queer"* as a category of political organization. Kornak argues that beginning in the 1960s, sexual minorities were searching for the appropriate language to express their political demands. Theories of Marxism and Neo-Marxism which had been traditionally employed to create a discourse around social exclusion, failed to fulfil their demands. Homosexuality could not be theorized as a class because the demography of sexual minorities cut across the class divide, and the exploitation experienced by them was not just economic in nature (Kornak 3).

The birth of *Queer as a political category* can thus be attributed to activist movements. Kornak's study differs from those of earlier scholars such as Turner 2000 or Huffer 2009 where *"Queer"* is analysed as a function of Queer theory or as an extension of a certain philosophical tradition. Instead, Kornak makes the case that the term was first deployed by AIDS activists before making its way to academic texts (Kornak 4).

Beginning in the early 1980s, many reports surfaced in America's urban areas of a syndrome affecting an individual's ability to fight disease. Doctors and health officials initially called it *gay-related immune deficiency* (GRID) or *gay cancer* because it was found to be affecting predominantly homosexual men; only to rename it as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) after reports emerged of it affecting other groups, mostly prostitutes and intravenous drug users. The Reagan administration was reluctant to identify it as a public health concern, largely because of the moral implications, for the transmission was only possible through anal sex and intravenous drug use. Government inaction and reluctancy to fund research for cures and drugs, led to mass protests by gay and lesbian activists who believed that government apathy towards sexual minorities is the result of antigay prejudice as well as the lack of organization in the gay community to collectively voice their grievances (Gibson et al.).

Consequently, in 1987, a direct-action organization named *AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP)* was established by Larry Kramer, Vito Russo, and others. Its purpose was to compel politicians, the medical establishment, pharmaceutical companies, and the general population to recognize the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic. ACT UP leaders asserted that the initial nomenclature of the disease as *gay-related immune deficiency* (GRID) or *gay cancer*, as if a medical condition might have a sexual orientation - was unequivocally a confrontation with homophobia (Specter).

Kornak posited that the Stonewall Uprising and the AIDS crisis were two of the most defining moments in the political history of sexual minorities in the U.S. and caused the

formation of a political identity of those who are sexually repressed and marginalized by the state, centered around the term "queer." In 1990, the establishment of Queer Nation occurred. Initially, it was formed as a subset of ACT UP; however, it soon evolved into an independent organization with a broader focus, extending beyond campaigns solely related to AIDS. A significant slogan they embraced was: "We are everywhere, we want everything." Queer Nation played a pivotal role in popularizing the term "queer," utilizing it to address a wide range of issues that were largely absent from internal LGBT conversations and remained unfamiliar to the general public. This term, "queer," began to encompass discussions of discrimination tied to race, social class, and gender (Kornak 48-52).

Indeed, intersectionality emerged as a central objective of the group during its brief existence. Within the organization, there were sub-groups dedicated to addressing the concerns of people of colour, including "United Colours of Queer Nation", which was established by activist Karl Knapper. This subgroup concentrated on elevating the perspectives of activists of colour within Queer Nation. Additionally, they worked on formulating strategies that safeguarded individuals of colour during protests, which involved strategic placement during sit-ins and preparatory training on interactions with law enforcement (Donohue).

Under the activists of the Queer Nation, the term "queer" became a major political concept and the activists united multiple groups sharing the same non-normative sexual identity, to provide collective resistance against the entrenched homophobia. The Queer Nation manifesto of 1990 titled, *"*QUEERS READ THIS*"* was distributed in the New York Pride Parade of June 1990. What was unique about this manifesto is that it addressed the readers directly as 'queer,' thus establishing the assumption that the readers of this manifesto have a collective, political identity: that of being a "queer" person. The manifesto also provides a clear and comprehensive explanation for the choice of the term "queer." A passage in the manifesto titled, "WHY QUEER," reads:

> Well, yes, "gay " is great. It has its place. But when a lot of lesbians and gay men wake up in the morning we feel
> angry and disgusted, not gay. So we've chosen to call ourselves queer. Using "queer" is a way of reminding us how
> we are perceived by the rest of the world. It's a way of telling ourselves we don't have to be witty and charming
> people who keep our lives discreet and marginalized in the straight world. We use queer as gay men loving lesbians and lesbians loving being queer.
>
> Queer, unlike GAY, doesn't mean MALE.
>
> And when spoken to other gays and lesbians it's a way of suggesting we close ranks, and forget (temporarily) our
> individual differences because we face a more insidious common enemy. Yeah, QUEER can be a rough word but it is also a sly and ironic weapon we can steal from the homophobe's hands and use against him (QUEERS READ THIS).

The very last line of the paragraph makes the intention of the writers crystal clear. The activists and scholars intend to euphemize the term; they wish to take the term of out its

normative context, that is, its use by homophobes of all shades to shame and obliterate gays, lesbians, and transgender; and employ the term to build solidarity amongst the sexual minorities to engage in joint political action against homophobia. The irony of the endeavour is not lost on the authors of the manifesto who call *Queer* a *'sly and ironic weapon,'* and it is indeed ironic how a term of abuse and defamation morphs into a political tool and a political category of significance (Kornak 63-4).

3. Academic discourse around *Queer*

Lesbian and gay studies courses first appeared in the 1970s in the US and were soon followed by academic programs in the 1980s. But it wasn't until the coining of the term *Queer theory* by the film theorist Teresa de Lauretis at a conference about lesbian and gay sexualities held at University of California, Santa Cruz in February 1990; that the term *Queer* made its roads in academia. De Lauretis posited that it was a standard practice to use lesbians *and* gays in the 1980s; however, the conjunction *"and"* served to obscure differences rather than reveal them. Besides, De Lauretis also suggested gay and lesbian sexualities should be studied, not as deviations of heterosexuality, but on their own terms (Amery et al.).

For Lynne Huffer, the publication of Michel Foucault's "*History of Madness* (1961)*"* marked the birth of "queer theory" (Huffer et al.). For Kornak, it was the year 1993 that signified the birth of queer theory with the publication of *"A Fear of Queer Planet"* edited by Michael Warner, *"Tendencies"* by Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick and *"Bodies that Matter"* by Judith Butler. Each of these writers relied on the tradition of activism when incorporating the term "queer," and for each of them, "queer" wasn't just a theoretical concept but also a political term. Furthermore, they contested the boundary that separates academia from political engagement. An example of this can be seen in the contributions of Douglas Crimp, especially his essays crafted during the late 1980s and early 1990s, which were later compiled in the book "*Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics* (2002)". In these essays, Crimp consistently navigates between engagement in political activism and participation in academic discourse (Kornak 73-4).

Before further discussion, it is important to specify the meanings of two terms. Tamsin Spargo provides the following definition of *Queer* and *Queer Theory* in his work titled, *"Foucault and queer theory* (1999)":

> 'Queer' can function as a noun, an adjective, or a verb, but in each case is defined against the 'normal' or normalising. Queer theory is not a singular or systematic conceptual or methodological framework, but a collection of intellectual engagements with the relations between sex, gender, and sexual desire. If queer theory is a school of thought, then it's one with a highly unorthodox view of discipline (Spargo 8-9).

Queer theory does take a "highly unorthodox view of discipline, "that it is applied to. This aspect of queer theory will be discussed in the next section. Foucault's contribution to Queer studies is both crucial and controversial. As Spargo mentions, "Foucault is not the origin of queer theory, nor is queer theory the destination of Foucault's thinking" (Spargo

10). In order to appreciate Foucault's contribution to queer theory, it is necessary to understand what Foucault thought of *'sexuality'*. Sexuality, for Foucault, is not an inherent aspect or objective reality of human existence, but rather an artificially defined realm of human experience shaped by historical, societal, and cultural influences, rather than biological determinants. This doesn't imply that Foucault dismissed the biological dimension, but instead, he emphasized the essential influence of institutions and discourses in shaping sexuality (Spargo 12-4).

This is to be noted that Foucault made no direct comment on what causes same-sex desires. Instead of seeking the elusive "truth" about human sexuality, Foucault aimed to explore how it is generated. His focus was not primarily on defining what "sexuality" is, but on understanding its societal functioning. The conception of sexuality in the West was called *'scientia sexualis'* by Foucault (Spargo 14); because of its fixation on finding the (shameful) truth about sexuality, usually through a *'confessional method'*. Starting with Christian confessions and spanning across medical, legal, educational, and familial customs, all the way to modern psychoanalysis, there exists a historical trajectory of individuals of various genders and ages examining their past and present desires, feelings, and thoughts, and telling someone about them.

Two things are observed about the truth that is revealed through the confessional process: one, it is sexual; and second, it is produced not revealed or found. Truth resides as knowledge embedded in a particular discourse and is intertwined with the concept of power. Similar to Foucault's overall perspective, power is understood as a matter of complex relationships rather than a characteristic inherent to a specific person or group (Spargo 15-6). Foucault argued that the '*category of the homosexual'* emerged in the late 19th century and insisted on it being viewed as "a *constructed* category of knowledge rather than as a *discovered* identity." In the 19th century, the 'homosexual' became the focus of various medical science studies and strategies. These methods of managing sexuality were created to safeguard and promote a "productive and procreative population (or workforce)" that met the demands of a growing capitalist system. The fundamental unit of this societal arrangement was "the bourgeois family within which the future workforce would be produced" (Spargo 17-9).

Alan S. Yang applies John Zaller's concept of an elitist "top-down" model of opinion change, as posited in his book *"The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (1992)*,"* to understand how the public perception of homosexuality changed after the American Psychiatric Association's reversal of its stance toward homosexuality. According to Zaller's perspective, shifts in public opinion on a large scale are influenced by the environment created by those in power who convey information and signals to the general population through mass media. These elites, including both partisan leaders and knowledgeable "experts" possessing supposedly unbiased technical knowledge, serve as suppliers of reliable and accurate information (truth claims) to regular citizens who may not have the resources or interests to stay extensively informed. Consequently, this process shapes how ordinary individuals assess matters related to society and politics (Yang 342-3).

The general "elitist" (top-down) model of opinion change designates distinct responsibilities to the "mass public (who receive, process, and likely accept elite communications) and elites (as legitimate producers of information and frames for interpreting it)." Zaller contends that the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) 1973 decision that homosexuality was not a psychological disorder acted as the driving force behind the shift in the mainstream media's portrayal of homosexuals as ill or deviant to depict them as a minority group advocating for their civil rights. Yang argues that Zaller's model ignores the role played by the homosexuals themselves in creating a more positive perception of their community (Yang 344).

Yang modifies Zaller's model to give space to the role of collective actors, who "target elites in an effort to persuade and educate them to formulate positions favourable to the interests of the group." These collective actors, in this case, the sexual minorities, engage in a "symbolic struggle over meanings and interpretations," and use a plethora of "political interventions ([such as] direct action, press conferences, creation of autonomous community-based institutions, etc.)" to achieve visibility and challenge dominant constructions of social life (e.g., the "truth" about homosexuality) through a process of *"conceptual revision"* (Yang 344-6). This is not very unlike a process that is central to Foucault's analysis: the production of 'reverse discourse.' The reverse discourse is a way of resistance to power; and it is a way through which "those who are produced as deviant subjects, ‘homosexuals’, may find a common cause, a common dissenting voice that turns confession to profession" (Spargo 20-2).

Foucault's ideas had a significant impact on a fresh cohort of historians dedicated to investigating the formation of contemporary concepts of homosexuality (Amery et al.). David Halperin, a scholar specializing in ancient Greek culture, offered extensive historical proof to substantiate Foucault's overarching theoretical assertion. Halperin contends that employing contemporary identity frameworks to comprehend desire expressed in specific cultural and historical contexts lacks scholarly rigor. He analyses historical accounts of sexuality through a queer perspective that avoids assuming the universality of identities and experiences. Another queer historian, John D’Emilio, links the emergence of modern gay identity to the urbanization and industrialization of the 19th century. Similarly, Jonathan Ned Katz, a historian, critically examines heterosexuality through a queer lens, arguing that it's also socially constructed. Katz aims to diminish the normalizing influence of the term by revealing that, like homosexuality, heterosexuality is a recent invention of the modern era (Amery et al.).

Eve Sedgwick, a scholar in literary theory, extends the endeavour to challenge conventional notions of both homosexuality and heterosexuality in her 1990 work *"Epistemology of the Closet."* This book is widely acknowledged as a fundamental text in the realm of queer theory. According to Sedgwick, the history of homosexuality doesn't merely pertain to a minority; instead, it encapsulates the narrative of modern Western culture. She asserts that the definitions of homosexuality and heterosexuality play a pivotal role in shaping

the modern nation-state by influencing contemporary methods of population control (Amery et al.).

The works of the aforementioned scholars, namely Michel Foucault, Michael Warner, Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick, Judith Butler, David Halperin, John D'Emilio, Jonathan Ned Katz, and those of many other scholars of repute whose contributions did not find a mention here; gave birth to what is today known as "Queer Studies." Queer studies have a distinctive place in academia today and provides an academic rigour to the quest for self-expression of marginalized sexual minorities. Nevertheless, within Political science, the area of research about LGBTQ+ is yet to take firm roots.

4. The *Queering* of Political Science

Mark Blasius believes that Political Science has been a latecomer to studies of LGBTQ+ phenomena not only compared to humanities but even in comparison with other social science disciplines (Blasius 4). Between the 1970s and the mid-1980s, there was a scarcity of published research and presentations on lesbian and gay politics in the political science discipline, both in academic publications and professional conferences. Paper presentations were seldom seen at annual gatherings of the American Political Science Association (APSA), where individual papers were subsumed as part of panels focused on subjects like "interest groups," "feminist theory," or "civil rights and liberties." Parallel with the paper presentations, discreet gatherings of lesbian and gay political scholars occurred during these APSA meetings. These meetings primarily served as opportunities for social interaction and a sense of refuge amidst an overall "unwelcoming atmosphere" at the conferences (Blasius 5).

The pressing political significance of the AIDS epidemic and the consequent increased visibility of homophobia, paved the way for a small group at the APSA meeting of 1988 to establish the *Gay and Lesbian Caucus for Political Science*. It was the first "aboveground" meeting and led to the organization of a dedicated panel to the cause of lesbian and gay political studies the following year. Since then, the LGBTQ+ representation has grown to encompass a permanent Committee on the Status of Lesbians and Gays in the Profession within the APSA, established in 1992. There has been proactive incorporation of LGBT-related research into existing sections of the association, discussions concerning issues of bias, the pursuit of equal inclusion in professional spheres, and revisions to curricula discussed during APSA governing council assemblies (Blasius 5-6).

Overall, the introduction of queer studies to political science served to advance the discipline theoretically as sexuality was made an object of analysis. From a liberal perspective, sexuality was relegated to the domain of the private and was perceived to be beyond the purview of state action. Power and its relationality have been the chief object of analysis of Political Science, and Queer studies have shown how sexual relations are one dimension through which power relations operate. This is coincidental with feminist scholars' inclusion of gender as an object of political analysis. Queer studies and Feminism both attempted to bridge the chasm between "public" and "private" (Blasius 7).

Traditional scholarship in Political Science imagines states and bodies as residing in two different realms -the State is a creature of the "public" realm - a realm of government, power, and collectivity; while the Body forms part of the "private" realm - a world of intimacy, selfhood and individuality. Feminist scholarship challenges the division by exposing the gendered nature of the division. The state is commonly portrayed as having masculine attributes, linked to the sphere of public political authority and decision-making, with associations to masculine impact and identity. Conversely, the body is frequently represented as feminine, due to its ties to aspects like nature, emotions, sexuality, vulnerability, reproduction, and family. This approach underscores how feminists have endeavoured to unveil and confront the intricate mechanisms through which 'body politics' are rendered unseen, invalidated, and erased (Smith and Lee 53-4).

Queer theory follows feminist approaches in attempting to grant visibility to body politics. Blasius believes that the politicization of "coming out" is a form of speaking truth to power and can pose a serious challenge to the liberal fundamental values of family and relationships and other socially recognized heterosexual institutions that are supported by public policies. This becomes inevitable, argues Blasius, in the face of majoritarian tyranny reflected in the liberal tradition itself, that constructs "the closet" for homosexuals and bisexuals; throwing the sexual minorities into a life of obliteration. Queer politics with the aid of Feminist theories have conceptualized (nonprocreative) sexuality as a source of personal identity, having wide-ranging implications for individual and even group-based conceptions of "rights"—that inform participation in politics (Blasius 7-8).

Smith and Lee proclaim that it is illusory to think that "to *'do queer'* is pretty normal." Matters pertaining to gender, sexuality, and the human body have solidified their position as fundamental subjects in the domains of social sciences and humanities. They enjoy substantial popularity, evident in book sales (with over 10.5 million books focused solely on 'sexuality' according to Google Books), act as catalysts for workshops and conferences, constitute the core of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and even lead to the establishment of entire institutes and academies centered around these themes. Judith Butler's (1990) book *"Gender Trouble"* holds the highest citation count on Google Scholar, having been referenced in scholarly works 21,986 times. The book is significantly more cited than *The Communist Manifesto*, which gains just 4,625 citations (Smith and Lee 51-3)

Evidently, the issues of gender and sexuality are gaining ground in western academia. But the same is not true for Political Science. In a recent comprehensive analysis of 629 courses in Political Science and International Relations offered by universities in the United Kingdom, Emma Foster and colleagues (2013) discovered that only one percent of these courses were focused explicitly on feminist or gender studies. Importantly, none of these courses were obligatory. Likewise, British political science textbooks (and it's reasonable to infer this applies to foundational undergraduate courses at UK universities) frequently incorporate conversations about feminism and postmodernism to varying extents. However, queer theory is seldom (if at all) addressed in these resources (Smith and Lee 53).

Smith and Lee conclude that even if there are scholars within the Political Science discipline, whose work engages with Queer studies, body, and sexualities, they are "placed on the constitutive outside of the discipline." They write about a notion prevailing within Political Science that queer scholarship concerning body and sexuality does not constitute "real" or "hard" Political Science. Another explanation for the exclusion of queer theory from political science is its aim to unsettle established certainties rather than uncover foundational truths. A quest in which Queer theory parallels Postmodernism (Smith and Lee 51-6). Queer theory is often dismissed as being 'apolitical.' Smith and Lee argue that this criticism isn't a valid one. According to them:

> [Queer theory] encourage(s) reflection on what it means for something to be 'political'. What gets to be constituted as 'political' and what doesn't? What gets to become an object of 'politics' in academic inquiry and, indeed, public deliberation more broadly? What gets to be studied, discussed, contested, written about, cited, lectured on, and what doesn't? In short: what's in and what's out? More than this, queer theory also insists that what gets to be counted as 'political' is itself political—it is a product of the exercise of power, with real material effects. In this sense, queer theory seeks to politicise 'the political' itself (Smith and Lee 56).

However, confusing, contradictory, and unstable the category of *queer* is, its effect on Political Science, that is to widen and diversify the discipline's object of inquiry, is undeniable. It is for the future to reveal how Queer studies metamorphosizes Political science and what newer and previously hidden areas it brings to light. In the words of the Cuban, Queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz, "The future is queerness's domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present" (Amery et al.).

5. A case for supporting the *Queering* of Political Science

From the arguments advanced thus far, a queer trend in Political Science is distinctly evident. However, whether such a trend would enrich the discipline with a broader research area or would further distance us from ever answering the question posed by Charles Lindblom expressing his concerns with the ever-moving boundaries of the discipline: *"What to study?"* provides the context for further debate among the scholars of the field. Nevertheless, I strongly support not just the inclusion of queer studies in political science, which was bound to happen sooner or later, but also bringing into focus, in how we do Political Science, the issues of gender, sexuality, and the body.

Smith and Lee's arguments could be used to support my assertion. Smith and Lee list two main consequences of excluding queer studies from Political Science. First, as compared to other social science disciplines which have been more inclusive of issues of gender and sexuality, the discipline of Political science is rendered impoverished owing to its apprehensions about accepting anything that is beyond the State. Second, the marginalization of scholars who work on these areas within the discipline "is itself, intellectually and professionally, a political act." As we saw earlier, what gets to be constituted as 'political' and

what doesn't is itself 'political.' It is indeed possible that the marginalization of queer theory scholars is supported by the so-called "hardcore" political science academicians who seek to maintain a status quo within the discipline on account of their own toxic masculine traits.

Pemmineti Pujith examining the trail of queer narrative in India enlists three benefits of a queer discourse in education. The reasoning is in the context of education in general but it could be advanced in the particular context of Political Science with little to no amendments. Firstly, queer inclusion in Political Science can establish a normative context for communities that challenge the artificial boundaries of the gender binary and embrace sexualities that don't conform to the mainstream. Secondly, implementing queer education has the potential to foster empathy among non-LGBTQ+ students, enabling them to perceive the world from diverse perspectives and ultimately promoting the creation of safe and inclusive environments. Thirdly, to truly move beyond the 'rainbow tokenism' (a practice involving minimal symbolic efforts to support the interests of the queer community) of many Political Science textbooks, the actual transformation of the curriculum to encompass queer narratives and theories should be done with an aim to foster genuine advancement of marginalized interests (Pujith).

Finally, expanding upon Davina Cooper's concept of *"everyday utopias,"* characterized as "networks and spaces that reimagine routine daily life in a significantly distinct manner," an optimistic endeavour would be to establish an academic setting that encourages the infusion of queerness into the field of study (Cooper). Something that has previously been attempted by Bérénice K. Schramm and others within International Law. Following their practice, *queering the everyday practices* of Political Science researchers and students, "meant imagining a utopian space where the process of knowledge production involves drawing on the differences and multiplicity of queer voices, approaches, and strategies" in Political Science. This would open up a safe space that fosters creativity, learning, and communal shaping of whatever is meant by '*to do* Political Science' (Schramm et al. 17).

6. Conclusion

Political Science as a discipline has seen many changes. The normative approach and the behavioural approach remain some of the major ways of doing political analysis. Postmodernism changes the dominance of these perspectives; as well as on account of its doubt regarding overarching or all-encompassing narratives, commonly found in ideologies like Marxism or Liberalism, it questions all attempts to construct a universal framework for political theory. Other movements that paralleled the formation of queer theory such as Feminism, attempt to uncover and challenge the complex mechanisms by which 'body politics' are made invisible, invalidated, and erased. Foucault's work on sexuality and the relationship between knowledge and power is discussed in this context.

The Western perspective on sexuality, termed *'scientia sexualis'* by Foucault relied on uncovering the shameful truths about sexuality using a 'confessional method' that can be traced to the Christian confessions but is still popular in the form of contemporary psychoanalysis. The method involves an exploration of the past and present desires,

emotions, and thoughts of the subject to reveal the "truth" about the subject. Foucault proved that the truth thus revealed, is situated within a particular discourse and is closely connected to the notion of power. The truth about homosexuality, therefore, is that it was constructed by society. Possibly, to ensure and advance an efficient and reproductive workforce to fulfill the requirements of the emerging capitalist system.

Queer activists and later, queer theory offer tools and techniques to confront these supposed "truths" about those considered to be deviant because of their sexual orientation. Offering resistance to homophobia entrenched in society and the cherished heterosexual institutions, in the form of discourse creation is central to Foucault; and he called it 'reverse discourse.' Alan Yang also believes that *collective actors* (the LGBT community in this case) can challenge the *experts* (who serve as suppliers of reliable and accurate information or 'truth claims' to regular citizens; in this case, the homophobic institutions such as the American Psychiatric Association), by facilitating public interventions in the form of political initiatives (like direct protests, media briefings, establishment of self-governed community institutions, etc.) to become more noticeable and challenge dominant understandings of societal norms and reimagining these concepts through a process of *'conceptual re-evaluation.'*

Frequently, queer theory is disregarded for appearing to be 'apolitical.' Queer theory emphasizes that the definition of what is deemed 'political' is inherently political in nature. It arises from the exertion of power and has tangible consequences. In this regard, queer theory aims to make even 'the political' subject to political scrutiny, thus politicizing the very concept of politics. Queer theory indeed adopts an unconventional perspective on the disciplines to which it is applied. Within Political Science, however, queer studies have to deal with the marginalization of themes central to it such as the body, sexuality, and gender, as well as the marginalization of the scholars engaged with these themes.

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