Legally Queer: Adjudicating Gender and Sexuality in U.S. LGBQ Asylum Claims

Stefan Vogler

Date: Monday, October 8th, 2018
Time: 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Location: SBSG, Room 1517

ABSTRACT: Until 1990, the United States barred LGBQ people from entering the country. Yet that same year witnessed a dramatic change. The ban was not only lifted, but LGBQ people became eligible for asylum protection. This talk takes this legal shift as its point of departure, asking how the area of LGBQ asylum law formed and how it has changed since its inception. I argue that this area of law came about and has expanded considerably due in large part to legal activism by a dedicated group of advocates who fashioned themselves into lay experts on issues of gender and sexuality and actively sought to educate adjudicators on these issues. In particular, I show how these advocates were able to move the standards for proving sexuality away from a focus on the body—such as gendered stereotypes and sex acts—and toward narrative accounts of sexual identity development. These advocates have taken advantage of the law’s interpretive flexibility to create legally protected categories for new groups of LGBQ people and continue to push those boundaries today.

BIO: Stefan Vogler, Ph.D. is a Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellow in CLS whose research examines the interrelationships of law and crime, gender and sexuality, and science and technology. His work has appeared in outlets such as *Law & Society Review* and *Theoretical Criminology*.

Light refreshments will be served!

Please RSVP by Thursday, October 4, 2018 at:

https://cls.soceco.uci.edu/webforms/rsvp-stefan-vogler-talk