

Taking LGBTI Rights in International Affairs with Dr. Rainer, I gained perspective on how identity intersects with decision making and medical rights of individuals in various contexts. Particularly impactful for me was the issue of bodily autonomy for trans citizens. In the period where the coverage of gender affirming healthcare was under attack in America, I found it critical to understand how perspectives and regulations might also differ in other countries. In my independent research, I found it disconcerting that, in order for trans individuals in certain countries to have their gender recognized by the government, they had to undergo gender affirmation surgery. While this was covered by these governments and supposedly an advancement in trans rights, local groups pushed back against this stipulation. For both trans men and women, this type of surgery would deprive them of their reproductive freedom after surgery. If trans individuals wished to have biological children, they were faced with the choice of either having their gender recognized by the government to avoid discrimination or else to lose to maintain their reproductive rights. Essentially, the issue boiled down to implicit eugenics on the part of many European countries. To address this issue, I write a proposal to the Swedish ambassador calling for funds to be allocated to trans gender advocacy groups in the Czech Republic working on this issue. The proposal was also framed in the context of Sweden originating this practice before its incorporation into many European countries following the fall of the Soviet Union. The work I did was invigorating and the research stimulating, and this class allowed me to further investigate my understanding of how identity intersects with medical care as well as rights both medical and non medical.