The ‘Sexualities in World Politics: How LGBTQ claims shape International Relations’ is a peculiar work which discusses the impact of LGBTQ politics on the study of International Relations (IR) through LGBTQ experiences to the IR system. This book contains an introduction, eight chapters and a conclusion edited by Manuela Lavinas Picq and Markus Thiel. The eight chapters are based on different themes and written by different authors which helps in collaborating vibrant and insightful ideas about inclusion of the LGBTQ community in mainstream politics. The focus of the book is on the subtitle- ‘How LGBTQ claims shape International Relations’, rather than on the title which talks about Sexualities in World Politics. The editors in the introductory chapter introduce the LGBTQ terminology under the startling acronym LGBTIQQ2SA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, 2-spirited, and allies) along with different elements of LGBTQ perspectives which have an immense impact on the gender studies. The case studies in the book cover a wide range of regions from Europe to the United States and discuss the relations between core, non-core and peripheral countries through different concepts such as war, security, modernity, particularism and universalism. The chapters merely focus on the LGBTQ politics and theories through anthropological and sociological perspective of sexuality and their impact on international politics, rather than the feminist and queer theories.

The first chapter by Anthony J. Langlois elucidates the relationship between human rights, LGBT rights and international theory and questions whether LGBT rights can be queered. The author theorizes four different approaches to human rights that are performativity, positionality, queer liberalism and state critique to critically analyse IR through LGBTQ perspective.

In the second chapter, Michael J. Bosia writes about the role of state as an actor and its capability to absorb concepts like gender, sexuality, etc. The focus of the chapter is on a state’s relationship with sexuality from modernity perspective, as modernity plays an important role in transforming and shaping the state as explained in the case study of Uganda. At the same time, Bosia discusses the role of the state in producing ‘homosexualisation’ because the state has the capacity to generate sexualities or LGBT identities that can be done through legal authorization and prohibition. While discussing the role of state, the question of morality also arises for which the author clearly explains that state is above and before morality. State is considered as a psychopath because it loves or loathes a specific object as per its own interest.

Further, Francine D’Amico in her work LGBT and (Dis) United Nations clearly propounds the concept of LGBTIQ which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer, that emerged at the UN in mid 2000s. She furthermore, elucidates...
the role of the UN and its efforts towards the promotion of the universal human rights to the sexual and gender minorities. The author also discusses the challenges faced by the international human rights law; as of now there is no global judicial court where the issues of LGBTIQ and the question of their rights can be appealed. Keeping in mind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, D’Amico claims that while all human beings are part of this Declaration, several specific problems faced by the LGBTQ community are not addressed and states are still given leeway to discriminate under the blanket of “cultural values”. In other words, LGBTQ concerns are being effaced from both the “human” and the “rights” part of the declaration.

Markus Thiel, one of the organisers of the book in the chapter ‘Transversal and particularistic politics in the European Union’s anti-discrimination policy’, talks about LGBT politics in the European Union (EU) through the neoliberal perspective and follows an institutional approach in order to explain the struggle of the LGBT community. He validates how the Western state modernity capitalizes different sexualities. Thiel encapsulates that EU has anti-discrimination policies for the LGBTQ community and these policies are protected by the court of law - for example in 2000, the EU passed an employment based anti-discrimination law for the inclusion of LGBTQ community. Although the law ensures providing equal employment opportunities to the LGBTQ community, in order to create a capitalist economy but has however failed to provide basic rights to these sexual minorities with basic amenities and facilities such as housing, education and health.

In the fifth chapter, Momin Rahman enunciates about homophobia and homosexualities through an Islamic perspective which emerges in the West and further relates it to Western modernity. According to Rahman, there is a presence of cultural variances between the East and the West and he discusses about the LGBT rights struggle on the basis of literature available for queer based on homonationalism. Rehman explains how Islamophobia can be used as a condition for the internationalization of gay rights.

Through the case study based on Peripheral Pride, Manuela Lavinas Picq, the co-editor of the book looked at the LGBT experiences in the Amazon town in order to narrow down the gap between the local and the global. Through the ethnographic study of the LGBT agitation in the Amazon region and through a sociological perspective, Picq proved that even the most isolated peripheries have modernised concepts when it comes to sexuality and gender studies which can further shape and challenge IR as a discipline. She also clears that sexual identity is not only a product of Western modernity through the example of the Amazon region where there is a coexistence of all forms of sexualities.

In the next chapter, Mehmet Sinan Birdal addresses the LGBT movements in Turkey’s politics through local movements like the Gezi protests and explains the success of the LGBT movement with the help of a world system theory. He also introduces the concepts of universalism and particularism, identity and difference, hegemony and subaltering which lie at the heart of the LGBT community. The author explains how the LGBT community in Turkey advanced their social and political agendas by collaborating with other social movements.
In the last chapter, Sandra McEvoy delves into the LGBT and queer contributions to security studies in Northern Ireland and followed an autobiographical and ethnographical outlook in order to explore the LGBT and queer issues. McEvoy questions the role of the state in constructing homosexuality as a mainstream security issue.

The conclusion of the book is written by Laura Sjoberg who critically analyses the work of the editors and authors and explicitly distinguishes the LGBT perspectives from queer theories. Sjoberg suggests to follow an integrated approach based on ‘LGBT, queer, feminist, critical and postcolonial theories’, to deal with the challenges that are possessed by LGBT community for mainstreaming LGBT issues in world politics. She also showcases the failure of various institutions like the UN and the EU to mainstream LGBT politics. The work is based on the contemporary issues and the authors effortlessly explain how LGBTQ perspectives can impact theory making in IR. The readers will find editors highly critical of queer research and the promoters of LGBT perspectives and they somehow fail to explain the elements of queer theory. As a reader, one would also find it grim to correlate the title with the chapters since the editors have failed to provide sufficient material to justify the title. Moreover, while talking about LGBTQ rights and human rights, the readers may wonder about the difference between the LGBT rights and the existing Universal Human Rights. Notwithstanding this, the handbook is an insightful and educative source for any reader and scholar who is interested in studying the concept of LGBTQ from an IR perspective. And it will allow readers to understand the relationship of state, queer and LGBT politics with the mainstream IR theories and practices. The chapters while discussing about LGBTQ politics clearly indicate the structure and functions of the state in contemporary global politics. Overall, the editors have done tremendous work by embracing the LGBTQ community in the mainstream gender politics.