

STEVEN EPSTEIN

3 Gay and Lesbian Movements in the United States

Dilemmas of Identity, Diversity, and Political Strategy

FROM ITS modest and clandestine early forms in the 1950s, gay and lesbian activism has evolved into one of the most dynamic, controversial, and internally differentiated sets of social movements in the United States. My goal is to present an analytical history¹ that shows how the general characteristics and tendencies, and the successes and failures, of these movements can be understood in terms of both external and internal factors—aspects of U.S. politics and society, on one hand, and ideological and strategic tensions inside and among these movements, on the other.²

My starting point is the assumption that the characteristically modern social identities known as “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender,” “queer,” and so on carry with them no single or obvious political agenda. Political strategies and visions have to be developed and argued for, and they exist emphatically in the plural. Although this is no doubt true of gay and lesbian politics everywhere, it is perhaps especially evident in the United States, both because of the extent of the development of lesbian and gay communities and because of the highly diverse and multicultural character of the society as a whole. Even at a single moment in time—say, for instance, at one of the annual Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day parades held in cities across the United States, where contingents of sober-looking gay Mormons, young queer radicals, and leather-clad practitioners of sadomasochism may triumphantly march down the same route—the notion of a shared and fully articulated politics is a convenient fiction. This chapter argues that one of the most noteworthy aspects of gay and lesbian movements in the United States is the *proliferation* of political beliefs, practices, and organizations that often *compete* with one another to be perceived as legitimate and preferred.

In fact, there is no such thing as “the U.S. gay and lesbian movement,” except insofar as more particular movements claim to speak for it. While much of what I call mainstream lesbian and gay politics roots itself in the

assertion that it *is* “the movement,” upon inspection, each term in the phrase “the gay and lesbian movement” either dissolves into a fog of ambiguity or congeals into sharp contradictions. The word “the” suggests unity and coherence, when in fact there have been multiple movements over time—“homophile,” “gay liberationist,” “lesbian feminist,” “gay rights,” and “queer,” to name only a few—with widely different self-understandings and political strategies.³ The term “gay and lesbian” is also problematic, for part of what is at stake in the contest that I describe is the very question of the movement’s collective identity: who is the “we” on behalf of whom activists speak?⁴ Do gay men share with lesbians a cohesive identity that can generate a single political vision? If so, does it encompass the demands of bisexuals and transgendered people or of self-styled “queers” who reject the terms “gay and lesbian”? And if so many in the United States feel the tug of multiple and overlapping claims on their identities, forming organizations as black gay men, or Jewish lesbians, or south Asian queers, and rejecting the notion that these compound identities can be broken down into their constituent parts, then in what sense can we speak of a “gay and lesbian” movement? Finally, the word “movement” should not go unexamined. Though it typically refers to recognizably political projects that have as their end such tangible goals as gay rights legislation, it can also denote activities directed toward the redefinition of culture and selfhood—movements for “sexual freedom,” for new family forms, for “gay spirituality.”⁵

With the goal of highlighting diversification, this chapter charts the evolution of a complicated patchwork of overlapping movements that have interacted and contended for primacy in different parts of the United States at different times in recent decades. Of course, these movements do not develop in a vacuum. And so, I sketch the broad social, political, and cultural factors that have facilitated or impeded the emergence of these movements—what analysts refer to as a movement’s “opportunity structure” (Kitschelt 1986). I identify the institutions that these movements have centrally engaged—including the state, the market, organized religion, the mass media, and science and medicine—and point out the various audiences that the movements have addressed and been influenced by, including allies, adversaries, elite decision makers, and countermovements. I also try to trace the consequences of these movements for U.S. society—not just the explicit successes claimed by activists but also the more subtle, cultural ripple effects of movement agitation. In situating these movements firmly in their broader context, I pay attention to how they are shaped by features of the society and polity that distinguish the United States from other countries around the world—such well-known characteristics as the two-party system, the decentralized form of political

administration that gives power to state and local governments, the tendency toward political mobilization along ethnic (and not class) lines, the bitter history of racial divides, the emphasis on civil liberties and civil rights as guaranteed by legislation or judicial precedent, the strength of religion and religious fundamentalism, and the widespread emphasis on self-actualization and the belief in the perfectibility of the self.

These features of U.S. society are important to the story I tell, not only because they establish the terrain on which struggles are waged but also because they help to explain a fundamental tension in gay and lesbian movement politics. On one hand, particularities of the United States have tended to favor the development of, and grant visibility and legitimacy to, one kind of lesbian and gay politics in the very midst of diversity: the formation of durable organizations and community groups that promote a liberal agenda of equal rights and inclusion, premised on a conception of gay men and lesbians as a clearly demarcated social group with a fixed, ethniclike identity. This is the particular form of gay and lesbian politics that often presents itself as "the movement"—and has won many victories. On the other hand, however, the limitations of this approach in achieving social change and in speaking for the multiplicity of lesbian and gay voices results in periodic eruptions of a different kind of politics: radical groups that contest these premises by calling attention to internal difference, questioning whether political and sexual identities are as stable or coherent as they are sometimes portrayed, or challenging the logic of relying on these identities as the ground on which to organize. Typically, this radical, utopian, "nonidentitarian" politics of difference has been short-lived, just because it is so hard to sustain and institutionalize, but the tension between it and a more mainstream "identity politics" has remained.⁶

To analyze this tension as it has revealed itself over time and, more generally, to explore differences among various manifestations of lesbian and gay politics, I find it helpful to disentangle the strands of the opposing arguments. *Three overlapping sets of debates* crop up again and again within this constellation of movements. These debates, each of which has been more or less salient at different moments in time, are at the heart of the struggle to define what sort of politics gay people should promote in the United States. They are implicated in the movements' signifying practices as activists seek to frame reality, mobilize adherents, and influence target audiences, and they affect whether the explanatory frames put forward by social movement actors ring true to members of the movements and others in the society.⁷

1. *Debates of identity and difference.* Is sexual identity perceived as something stable and given (an "orientation") or as something mutable or even chosen (a "preference"), and how does this affect political strate-

gies?⁸ Is sexual desire for members of one's own sex believed to be something that everyone in the society might potentially experience at some moment, or is it the unique and defining attribute of a distinct minority?⁹ Are lesbians and gay men fundamentally the same as heterosexuals, or do they constitute a group apart, with their own cultural forms? Are gays and lesbians in any sense a homogeneous group with a distinct identity, or are the internal differences stronger than any meaningful similarities? Is it possible to put forward a vision of a collective identity without simultaneously silencing those within the movement who perceive themselves to differ from it, whether because of their class, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, specific sexual practices or erotic roles, political affiliations, religion, or other salient aspects of personal identity?

2. *Debates of desire.* How should society organize the expression of sexuality (Rubin 1993: 3–44)? What visions of the good society are implicit in ideas about how people should "be sexual" (Weeks 1985; Seidman 1992)? Are sexual relationships also relations of power—as, for example, lesbian feminists have argued? Should questions of sex be central to gay politics—as they were in the debate over the closure of gay bathhouses in San Francisco in the 1980s? Or should sexual differences be treated as socially insignificant and politically irrelevant—as they have been in arguments supporting the right of gay men or lesbians to marry or adopt children?

3. *Public/private debates.*¹⁰ To what degree should the personal be made political? Are gay politics reducible to a "right to privacy" and the demand for government to stay out of the bedroom, as civil libertarians contend? Or does gay politics require the redrawing of the boundaries between public and private (Gross 1993), as in the demand that gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people come out of the closet en masse and as in defenses of the political strategy of outing? What role ought the state to play in securing or mandating gay rights? What kinds of demands should be placed upon the state?

We can understand the strategies and tactics of specific groups, organizations, and movements by analyzing how activists debate these questions of identity and difference, sexuality, and the public/private divide and by analyzing how they frame distinctive answers in response to the institutions and actors they confront and the accidents of history. But seen over time, the answers often fall into the two broad patterns that I have described: mainstream, liberal, identity politics; and radical, nonidentitarian politics of difference. Therefore, the larger trajectory of gay and lesbian movements in the United States and the achievements and limitations of these movements reflect the peculiar oscillation between these two patterns of politics in the context of unique features of U.S. society.

PROLOGUE: HOMOPHILE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE 1950S AND 1960S

Unlike the European countries that saw the first glimmerings of homosexual rights organizing in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, the United States did not witness its first social movement organizations concerned with the status of homosexuals until the 1950s.¹¹ Although a decade committed to the vigorous pursuit of normalcy was an improbable time for the emergence of such an effort, this development was predicated on a prior series of social transformations and upheavals, including urbanization and war.¹² Growing cities offered new havens for young men and women who experienced erotic desires for members of the same sex, permitting them to find one another in public spaces and to congregate in bars and other social institutions (D'Emilio 1983: 10–13).¹³ The social disruption occasioned by the Second World War encouraged sexual experimentation, brought many homosexuals into contact with one another, loosened the ties of individuals to their communities of origin, and inspired them to settle down in liberal cities such as San Francisco after the war (D'Emilio 1983: 23–31; Bérubé 1990).

Increasingly, then, individuals who experienced same-sex erotic desires were able to make sense of those sentiments by situating themselves within emergent subcultures of others who seemed to be “like them.” At the same time, the diffusion of psychoanalytic models of sexuality and identity encouraged the belief that the world was divided into two types of beings, heterosexuals and homosexuals, whose different “object choices” marked them as distinct categories of people.¹⁴ The notion of homosexuality as a fixed condition or disorder largely confined to a minority of the population was part of the “cultural opportunity structure” (J. Gamson 1996) for the emergence of a homosexual politics—even as it conflicted with the findings of sex researcher Alfred Kinsey (Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin 1948; Kinsey 1953) that homosexual sexual behavior was a component of the sexuality of large portions of the “heterosexual” population.¹⁵

Indeed, Kinsey's findings were deemed shocking by a postwar society that dedicated itself to eradicating the “homosexual menace” and preventing its infectious spread through the body politic. In the conspiratorial world view of the McCarthy era, at the dawn of the Cold War, hidden homosexuals effeminized U.S. society and made the nation “soft,” thereby facilitating a Communist takeover. In 1952, Congress passed an immigration bill banning foreign “sex deviants” from entering the country, and the following year President Dwight Eisenhower signed an executive order making “sexual perversion” grounds for exclusion from fed-

eral employment. This attention at the level of the federal government mirrored escalating persecution of homosexuals in many domains of personal life, including police harassment, employment discrimination, and forcible confinement in psychiatric hospitals and subjection to invasive “curative” techniques, such as electroshock therapy and aversion therapy (Adam 1987; Kennedy and Davis 1993).

Significantly, the first example of gay political organizing that would make a mark on U.S. society was promoted by a man who was doubly marginalized by the postwar hysteria over subversion and already inclined toward political militancy: Harry Hay, a homosexual who was a member of the Communist Party (Hay 1996). In 1951, Hay and several fellow Communists founded the Mattachine Society, which took its obscure name from a group of jesters who performed political satire in medieval Europe (Blasius and Phelan 1997: 283). In an interesting use of the Marxist concept of “false consciousness,” Mattachine hoped to foment among homosexuals a critical awareness of their oppression, as a group, at the hands of the majority society (D'Emilio 1983: 58, 64–65).

However, as Mattachine grew and became more internally diverse, it quickly made a dramatic shift in political orientation and in the conception of its identity and goals. By 1953, Communists, perceived as a dangerous liability, were forced out of the organization, which now took as its end the integration of the homosexual into mainstream U.S. society. Then in 1955 this new, politically moderate, assimilationist politics was adopted by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, the two principal founders of the San Francisco Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), which was named for a book of poetry about love between women in Sappho's school (Blasius and Phelan 1997: 327). Mattachine and DOB, along with *One* magazine, founded in Los Angeles in 1953, formed the center of what came to be known as “homophile” politics—the organizational form that lesbian and gay organizing took throughout the 1950s and 1960s, until the advent of gay liberation.

In seeking to recruit members and influence elites, homophile activists from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s presented a more-or-less consistent set of answers to the questions recurring in lesbian and gay social movements in the United States—questions concerning sexuality, identity and difference, and the public/private divide. In terms of identity, homophiles conceived of homosexuality as a fixed or innate condition, beyond the individual's control or responsibility, and a stable aspect of the self (Weitz 1984: 233–48)—a position that made sense as a response to claims by medical authorities that homosexuals could be “cured.” While homophiles tended to emphasize the extent to which homosexuals might readily be integrated into the mainstream culture, they also took early steps

toward what would later become a dominant direction in lesbian and gay politics: framing homosexuals not as a deviant subculture but as a distinct minority group, akin to other recognized minorities in U.S. society.¹⁶

On the question of sexuality and its place in society, homophiles offered little real analysis, preferring to play down the importance of differences in the organization or expression of sexual desire and substantially adopting the dominant view of homosexuality as a condition or variation with psychological causes. Finally, homophiles conceived of sexuality as a quintessentially private domain, but to support this private right, they argued, public education was necessary. To this end, DOB and *Mattachine* sought out sympathetic experts—lawyers, doctors, and ministers, among others—who might be swayed to their perspective and then speak out on behalf of beleaguered homosexuals.

The strategic and tactical implication of these frames was a reformist and cautious politics that was nonetheless remarkable in a climate of fierce repression. Against the popular conception of homosexuality as freakish, activists stressed the common humanity of homosexual men and women. Because they could be harassed by the police or fired from their jobs if they made themselves too publicly visible, homophile leaders kept a low profile. Movement publications brought homophile perspectives to a limited group of readers—circulation figures were reported to be twenty-two hundred for *Mattachine Review*, five hundred for DOB's *The Ladder*, and over five thousand for *One* (D'Emilio 1983: 110)—and membership remained quite small, even as chapters were established in New York, Chicago, Detroit, Denver, and Boston. Perhaps the movement's greatest victory in the 1950s came from the struggle waged by *One* to disseminate its views through the U.S. mail, which culminated in a legal case that eventually landed before the United States Supreme Court and was decided in favor of the magazine (D'Emilio 1983: 115). Homophiles also challenged police entrapment of gay men and won legal battles against state liquor authorities in the fight to allow alcohol to be served at gay bars (Bernstein 1997a: 30). But little was accomplished in the 1950s in terms of changing public attitudes about homosexuality, let alone improving the position of homosexuals in society. Indeed, as of 1960, with sodomy laws on the books in all fifty states, homosexual sexual practices themselves were strictly illegal throughout the entire United States.

The politics of the homophile movement underwent an important change in the middle of the 1960s with the rise of a more militant faction. An activist named Frank Kameny, who formed a chapter of *Mattachine* in Washington, D.C., in 1961, criticized what he called the "genteel, debating society approach" that had characterized the homophile move-

ment (quoted in D'Emilio 1983: 153). As the Negro civil rights movement came to serve as the "master frame" (Snow and Benford 1992: 133–55; McAdam 1994: 42) available to all movements in the United States pursuing their rights, activists like Kameny turned to that movement for examples of how—and how not—to proceed.¹⁷ They organized a national confederation, the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations (NACHO), and, at their 1968 conference in Chicago, formally adopted Kameny's slogan that encapsulated the new movement orientation: "Gay is good" (D'Emilio 1983: 199). Just as "Black is beautiful" signaled a defiant reversal of dominant stereotypes and a rejection of a label ("Negro") associated with passivity and subservience, so "Gay is good" repudiated, once and for all, the connotations of illness and inferiority that seemed to accompany the medical term "homosexual."

The new philosophies were reflected in new styles of protest that emerged in the middle and later years of the decade. In 1965 a small group of neatly dressed men and women from Washington *Mattachine* appeared on national television, walking patiently in a circle in front of the White House, holding signs supporting equal rights for gay people. With actions of this kind, the homophile movement—despite its failure in constructing a significant mass base—helped lay the groundwork for the liberation movement that would succeed it and supersede it (D'Emilio 1983: 219, 249).

OUT OF THE CLOSETS AND INTO THE STREETS

By the end of the 1960s, as social attitudes about sexual expressiveness became more liberal, the idea of a radical challenge to the oppression of gay men and lesbians began to be more conceivable. At the same time, the tactics even of the more militant homophile activists, modeled after the nonviolent tradition of the Negro civil rights movement, seemed increasingly timid in contrast to the disruptive protests ever more visible on the streets of U.S. cities and on the evening news broadcasts—the confrontational tactics of the anti-Vietnam war protesters, the Black Power movement, and others dedicated to radical change or revolutionary upheaval in the United States (D'Emilio 1983: 223). Increasingly, conditions seemed right for a new politics of sexuality, but what was lacking was a transformation of consciousness, or "cognitive liberation" (McAdam 1982): gay men and lesbians needed not only to perceive the existing sexual and social order as unjust but to acquire "a new sense of efficacy," whereby those "who ordinarily consider themselves helpless come to believe that they have some capacity to alter their lot" (Piven and Cloward 1979).

Though the development of such efficacy is inevitably a gradual process, in historical retrospect it may appear as a shift of startling abruptness. Such is the story of the patrons of a gay bar called the Stonewall Inn, located in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City, shortly after 1:00 A.M. on 28 July 1969. When police raided the bar, as they were in the habit of doing periodically, and began hauling the customers into paddy wagons for transport to jail, some of the bar's patrons, including black and Puerto Rican drag queens and lesbians, decided they had had enough. A melee erupted as the crowd began throwing coins, bottles, cans, and bricks, yelling, "Gay power," and shouting epithets at the police (Duberman 1993: 196–201). Disturbances continued in the streets outside the Stonewall for several nights running. To be sure, the Stonewall rebellion was not as unique or consequential an event at the time as it came to be portrayed later (Murray 1996: 59–65). "But if the Stonewall riots did not *begin* the gay revolution," acknowledges Martin Duberman, the historian who has chronicled the events in greatest detail, "it remains true that those riots became a symbolic event of international importance," one that "occupies a central place in the iconography of lesbian and gay awareness" (Duberman 1993: 224, xv).

Members of the New York Mattachine Society, who viewed these turbulent developments with alarm, put a sign outside the Stonewall Inn: "We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the streets of the Village" (Duberman 1993: 207). But within weeks, young gay men and women had formed a new group, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), which would become the prototypical organization of the gay liberation movement (Marotta 1981). In a telling example of how the frames and tactics of one social movement will very often spill over to influence other, contemporary or subsequent, movements (Meyer and Whittier 1994), gay liberation activists borrowed heavily from the movements that they, as individuals, were already active in: the antiwar movement lent a suspicion of the government; the New Left lent an "apocalyptic rhetoric and sense of impending revolution" (D'Emilio 1983: 233–34); the women's liberation movement lent a critique of sexism and the idea that "the personal"—even "the sexual"—is "political"; Third World liberation movements lent the prideful affirmation of a stigmatized identity and the notion of resistance to an imperial state; and the hippie movement and counterculture lent an injunction to "do your own thing," a distrust of authority and dismissal of the older generation (here including older, "closeted" gay men and lesbians), and a belief that protest tactics could be playful and celebratory while still being subversive (Altman 1971: 234; D'Emilio 1983: 224; Adam 1987: 76; Cruikshank 1992: 61, 76; Duberman 1993: 220).

Gay liberation-style activism quickly spread around the country—in particular, the "action technology" (Oliver and Marwell 1992: 251–72) known as the "zap," which called for the graphic and confrontational disruption of the day-to-day routines of opponents. In October 1969 a "suicide squadron" of GLF members in New York interrupted a meeting of mayoral candidates after waiting two hours for candidates to reply to questions submitted to them. That same month gay students at Berkeley staged guerrilla theater and gay power demonstrations during orientation week. The following May, members of GLF, chanting "Suck cock; beat the draft" and "Bring our boys home," participated in a Washington, D.C., antiwar protest and held a "nude-in" in the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool (Thompson 1994: 22–35). On the first anniversary of the Stonewall riot, two thousand men and women held a commemorative march through the streets of New York, while hundreds of others marched in other U.S. cities. By the following year the Stonewall anniversary celebration had spread to Paris and London and become an official, international gay event (Duberman 1993: 279).

Liberationists challenged corporations over their hiring practices, continued the fight against police entrapment, and organized large dances in cities around the country where, in the past, men and women had been arrested for dancing with partners of the same sex. One noteworthy struggle—which was over the very definition and character of gayness, as well as the personal safety of lesbians and gay men seeking to live their lives free of fear of confinement and stigmatization—was the campaign waged against the "war criminals" of the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from the list of mental illnesses and halt the attempts to "cure" homosexuals. This battle was won in 1973, after many disruptive "zaps" both outside and inside the association's conventions (Bayer 1981; Marcus 1992).

Earlier, homophile activists had begun to consolidate a "minority group" identity that emphasized the stability of sexual identity and called for homosexuals to take their place in U.S. society. Radical gay liberationists repudiated this agenda and put forward claims about sexuality, identity and difference, and the public and private that differed in nearly every particular from those of homophile activists. Where homophiles had had little to say about sexuality as such, liberationists saw sexuality as a subversive and revolutionary force. Adopting philosopher Herbert Marcuse's (1966) hybrid "Freudo-Marxism," they called for the liberation of the "polymorphous-perverse" forms of sexuality believed to lie latent within every individual. Lesbians and gay men, in this conception, were the vanguard in a vast struggle to redefine the family, gender roles, and our erotic and relational capacities as human beings. As writer and

activist Dennis Altman noted, "Liberation . . . would involve a breakdown of the barriers between male and female homosexuals, and between gays and straights. Masculinity and femininity would cease to be sharply differentiated categories." (1971: 106). The appeal to a universal bisexual potential was widespread in early movement rhetoric.¹⁸ By implication, the collective subject of the new movement was necessarily transitory: paradoxically, the victory of the movement would result in the withering away of both "the homosexual" and "the heterosexual," with each replaced by "a new human for whom such distinctions no longer are necessary for the establishment of identity" (Altman 1971: 237).

Where homophile activists had endorsed a strong separation between public and private realms, liberationists, arguing that "the personal is political," placed at the center of their politics the act of coming out—the public and defiant affirmation of identity. As D'Emilio notes, in the years before gay liberation, "coming out" meant revealing one's homosexuality to other homosexuals; after gay liberation the public avowal of one's sexual desires and identity became a strategy for movement building and heightening the commitment of recruits. Liberationists connected the collective action frame of visible confrontation—epitomized by the slogan, "Out of the closets and into the streets!"—to the "Gay is good" frame by arguing that a healthy, liberated gay person simply had nothing to hide (D'Emilio 1983: 235–36).¹⁹ Liberationists "engaged in public displays of affection, violated gender conventions, and gloried in the discomfort they deliberately provoked in others" (D'Emilio 1992: 243).

These distinctive ways of framing sexuality, identity, and the relation between public and private resonated with young gay men and lesbians around the country and pulled them into activism. These frames also implied particular strategies and tactics for the gay liberation movement. Because homosexuality was too transgressive ever to be integrated into the existing society, and because radical gays and lesbians were committed to the broader social struggle against capitalism, imperialism, racism, and sexism, it followed that gay liberation was a revolutionary movement with the goal of social and cultural transformation. Perhaps more so in rhetoric than in reality, gay liberation emphasized the importance of forming coalitions with other oppressed groups. Thus at the 1970 NA-CHO meeting in San Francisco, radicals fought against old-line homophiles to pass resolutions supporting women's liberation and the Black Panthers and calling for the removal of U.S. forces from Vietnam (Adam 1987: 79).

Yet, for all its flash and dazzle, gay liberation, as an organized movement, was short-lived, and the utopian notion of challenging fixed categories of identity proved particularly difficult to sustain or institutional-

ize. Almost immediately, tensions arose concerning the comprehensive political vision of radical gay liberation. In November 1969 several New York activists who found GLF too anarchic, impractical, and preoccupied with rhetoric split off to found a new, more focused organization called the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) (Adam 1987: 80). Though it engaged in actions similar to those of GLF and used many of the same tactics, GAA conceived of itself as "exclusively devoted to issues involving gay rights" (Evans 1973) and was less committed to overthrowing the categories of gender and sexuality.

Gay liberation impelled a rapid proliferation of gay organizations: at the time of Stonewall, there were only about fifty lesbian or gay groups in the entire United States; by the end of 1973, there were more than a thousand, ranging from gay newspapers to crisis hotlines to social clubs (D'Emilio 1992: 244). But the groups with a radical and comprehensive political agenda soon faded from the scene. By 1971, New York's GLF had splintered into factions, and within a few years GLF and GAA chapters had disbanded around the country. As the political climate became conservative, "the belief that a revolution was imminent and that gays should get on board, was losing whatever momentary plausibility it had" (D'Emilio 1992: 245). Furthermore, the liberation movement proved unable to unite its various members. It did not speak fully to the experiences of gays and lesbians of color, who created such organizations as Third World Gay Revolution; and it alienated many working-class drag queens, who formed groups such as Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries because they felt marginalized by middle-class GLF members who saw drag culture as unfortunate mimicry of outdated gender roles (M. Johnson 1972: 114).

Even more tellingly, gay liberation was unable to cope effectively with the politics of gender. Activists such as Jill Johnson declared that "lesbians are feminists, not homosexuals" (quoted in Adam 1987: 94), as lesbians influenced by the women's liberation movement increasingly came to feel alienated by the political, sexual, and personal styles of gay men. "What is a lesbian"? asked "The Woman-Identified Woman," the famous manifesto of a women's collective called the Radicalesbians: "A lesbian is the rage of all women condensed to the point of explosion" (Radicalesbians 1972: 172). If male opponents of "women's libbers" typically derided them as "man-hating lesbians," radical lesbians turned the argument on its head by positioning lesbianism as the quintessential act of female political resistance (Faderman 1991: 205–6). Although radical gay men and lesbians typically were united in condemnations of sexism and patriarchy, this new conception of lesbian identity as a form of political solidarity among women sat uneasily alongside the liberationist ethic of freeing the bisexual potential of all.

LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS IN THE 1970S

The irony of radical gay liberation is that its most profound effect was to promote the development of forms of identity, community, and politics that were antithetical to the liberationist vision. Radical activists who foresaw the "end of the homosexual" and the transcendence of constraining categories of gender and sexuality discovered instead, that they were helping to build communities organized around the notion that gays and lesbians were a distinct class of people with unique political interests. Liberationists who had connected the freedom of gay men and lesbians to a socialist agenda found, to their chagrin, that the new gay male culture was organized substantially around profit-making businesses, such as bars and bathhouses, and that homosexuality, far from posing a revolutionary challenge to U.S. society through its radical incompatibility with it, in fact seemed to do fine—perhaps even to thrive—under capitalism. Those who had promoted an androgynous style of personal dress and expression in the hopes of challenging gender roles greeted with some ambivalence the rise, among gay men, of the pervasive, so-called "Castro clone" style of exaggerated masculinity: short hair, mustaches, denim, plaid shirts, leather, and boots (Altman 1982a: 20, 85, 104; Fitzgerald 1986: 54, 58; Adam 1987: 100).

The developing gay neighborhoods, such as San Francisco's Castro District, became "a kind of laboratory for experimentation with alternate ways to live. [They were] also a carnival where social conventions were turned upside down just for the pleasure of seeing what they looked like the wrong way up" (Fitzgerald 1986: 12). As Frances Fitzgerald has noted, the pioneering of these new communities reflected the "extraordinary" and "quintessentially American" notion that people could "start all over again from scratch"—that they could make "new lives, new families, even new societies" by, in effect, reinventing themselves (Fitzgerald 1986: 23). Indeed, the 1970s was the era of the consolidation of a new, quasi-ethnic form of gay identity, community, and politics (Murray 1979, 1996; Altman 1982a; S. Epstein 1987).²⁰ Within more-or-less defined territorial enclaves (Castells 1983; Davis 1995: 284–303), gay men and, to a lesser degree, lesbians established gay restaurants, gay choruses, gay newspapers, gay churches and synagogues, and (by the 1980s) gay savings and loan associations. The distinctive rainbow flag, designed in San Francisco in 1978 (Thompson 1994: 23) and soon flying outside residences and businesses in the gay ghettos, would come to mark the territory and welcome the "immigrants" who poured in from smaller, less hospitable towns and rural areas around the country. Hundreds of thousands of people would turn out each year for the Lesbian and Gay Free-

dom Day parades held in commemoration of Stonewall in cities around the United States—simultaneously an official holiday and a political and cultural event for the lesbian and gay population. Although the parade crowds were extraordinarily diverse, the gay enclaves themselves were narrower in their social composition—largely white and, with the increasing gentrification of property within them, largely middle class.

As Dennis Altman has noted, the widespread acceptance, by both straights and gays, of the notion that gay men and lesbians constituted a sort of ethnic group, roughly analogous to Jewish Americans or Italian Americans, represented not only an extraordinary change from twenty years earlier (when homosexuality was widely understood as a form of deviance or pathology, like alcoholism) but also a very American response: the ethnic model made sense in a country where people tend to identify themselves by ethnicity rather by class and where interest-group politics typically reflects the jockeying among ethnic groups for their "piece of the pie" (Altman 1982a: viii–ix, 224). The combined reliance on a quasi-ethnic, essentialist identity and the political model of the civil rights movement would distinguish this new, more mainstream "lesbian and gay rights movement" from gay political formations elsewhere around the world—and from alternatives within the United States.²¹

The communal and middle-class character of the new gay enclaves made it easier for the lesbian and gay rights movement to mobilize resources.²² People who are well integrated into community institutions and organizations are more readily drawn into social movements (McAdam 1982; Lo 1992: 224–47), and many within the gay, quasi-ethnic communities were prepared to make substantial commitments of time and money. In this sense the formation of quasi-ethnic communities proved central to the rise of the lesbian and gay rights movement. Increasingly, the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement, despite its white, middle-class base and its particular conception of the political agenda, would seek to present itself in hegemonic fashion as "the movement"—as what all gay politics boiled down to in the end.

Questions of sexuality, identity and difference, and the relation between public and private were framed by the lesbian and gay rights movement in ways that fostered the goal of defining and defending the interests of a gay quasi-ethnicity. Consistent with the quasi-ethnic model, the lesbian and gay rights movement expressed the view that being gay was a fixed or immutable condition, and gay men and lesbians (sometimes together, more often separately) were portrayed as belonging to communities that had distinctive cultural forms.²³ Internal differences within the culture, such as racial or class differences, were overlooked in the dominant rhetoric. Often the lineage of this culture was traced in ways that

paid little attention to the particularities of the organization of desire in other societies, as in the attempt to lay claim to Plato, Sappho, or Michelangelo as "famous homosexuals in history." For similar reasons, activists tended to trumpet scientific arguments suggesting that homosexuality was biologically based, since such claims seemed to undercut the position that homosexuality was a chosen, sinful lifestyle and seemed to support the view that lesbians and gay men deserved protection as a legitimate minority. Indeed, the political corollary of this essentialist conception was that the state should be pressured to ensure the formal legal equality of lesbians and gay men as a people, much as had been done for African Americans and for women.

This movement did not present a coherent or sustained analysis of the place of sexuality in modern society. It did, however, disseminate a widely influential conception of "homophobia," which reframed the "social problem" of homosexuality by arguing that the real problem was the irrational fear of homosexuality on the part of many ill-informed straight people.²⁴ This conception was distinctly Freudian—ironically so, since Freud and his followers were themselves often denounced as homophobes by members of the movement. It assumed that homophobic attitudes and behaviors often were defense mechanisms for warding off recognition of one's own repressed homoerotic impulses (what Freud would call a "reaction-formation" [Weinberg 1972: 12])—hence the folk wisdom that the most violent homophobes and gay bashers were themselves "closet cases."

Finally, in terms of the public/private distinction, the lesbian and gay rights movement retained the liberationist rhetoric of gay pride while also endorsing the notion of a right to privacy in the expression of sexuality. The right to privacy was seen as a cornerstone of the struggle to "get government out of the bedroom" by abolishing laws against sodomy. These conceptions of sexuality, identity, and privacy came together in the form of a single-issue politics, modeled loosely on the civil rights movement and put forward by organizations that had much more formal bureaucratic and leadership structures than those of the gay liberation era (D'Emilio 1992: 246). Indeed, where liberationist, nonidentitarian politics seemed by their nature to be evanescent and resistant to institutionalization, gay ethnicity lent itself easily to the construction of organizations (Armstrong 1998).

The lesbian and gay rights movement sought to bring about social change through a variety of approaches. First, over the course of the 1970s, the movement built national organizations, such as the National Gay Task Force (later renamed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, or NGLTF), an advocacy group founded in 1973, which by the end of the decade claimed ten thousand mostly white, male, and middle-class mem-

bers (Altman 1982a: 123). Three years later the Gay Rights National Lobby (GRNL) was founded as a lobbying group to bring pressure to bear on the U.S. Congress, and in 1980 the Human Rights Campaign Fund (later shortened to Human Rights Campaign, or HRC) was created as a fund-raising tool to support candidates perceived to be "gay friendly." Compared with the size of the emergent gay and lesbian communities, these organizations were small, and compared with the diversity of lesbians and gay men in terms of race and class, their social composition was fairly monolithic. The first national organization formed by gay men and lesbians of color, the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, opened its doors in 1978 and held its first national convention in 1982 (Ridinger 1996: 188–89).

Second, in line with a familiarly American tendency to turn to the courts to ensure legal protection for minorities, activists created legal support organizations, such as the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund (LLDEF) founded in New York in 1972, and the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) founded in Boston in 1978. These organizations took on the legal cases of lesbians and gay men fighting discrimination and also filed many "friend of the court" briefs in the hope of influencing judicial decisions.

Third, activists sought to overturn sodomy laws and pass antidiscrimination laws. In California an activist lobbying effort proved successful in overturning the state's sodomy law, and in many other states—twenty-one of them by the end of 1978—sodomy statutes were removed as part of a general process of penal code reform (Bernstein 1997a: 44). The first federal civil rights bill for gay men and lesbians was introduced into Congress in 1974 by Bella Abzug and Ed Koch, both Democrats from New York. But the fierce opposition to legislation at the federal level meant that lesbians and gay men, in the interim, faced the time-consuming challenge of proceeding state by state or city by city in pursuit of antidiscrimination statutes within the decentralized governance structure of the United States.

Fourth, the movement sought to make inroads into the Democratic Party, which—given the absence of powerful leftist parties in the American two-party system—was perceived by many activists as the only game in town. At the local level, lesbians and gay men formed groups such as San Francisco's Alice B. Toklas Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club, expressing support for liberal candidates who were willing to call for equal rights for gays and lesbians (Faderman 1991: 199). At the national level, activists sought to convince the party to adopt a gay rights plank in its platform; this effort failed in 1976 after Democratic presidential nominee Jimmy Carter retracted his support (Thompson 1994: 132).

Fifth, the lesbian and gay rights movement sought to elect openly gay men and women to local office. In 1974, activist and former college teacher Elaine Nobel was elected by a six-hundred-vote margin to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, becoming the first openly gay legislator in the United States (Ridinger 1996: 212). In 1977, after several unsuccessful tries, Harvey Milk, owner of a camera shop in San Francisco's Castro District, was elected to the city's Board of Supervisors.²⁵ When Milk, along with San Francisco Mayor George Moscone, was shot dead by a conservative member of the Board of Supervisors in 1978, the new mayor quickly named another gay leader, Harry Britt, to take Milk's place on the board. The power of the gay community within the city was further demonstrated in the White Night riots, which broke out when Dan White, Milk's killer, was convicted of manslaughter rather than murder: thousands of protesters marched on City Hall and set fire to police cars to protest the verdict.

In addition to legislative, judicial, and electoral activism, the lesbian and gay rights movement of the 1970s pursued change on many other fronts. It pressured businesses to adopt nondiscrimination policies, achieving victories with companies such as AT&T, with more than one million employees nationwide. Activists sought acceptance within church congregations and also formed their own gay congregations. The Metropolitan Community Church, for example, founded in 1968 by a Los Angeles activist, the Reverend Troy Perry, soon spread around the country. Activists created new organizations to document and respond to antigay violence (Jenness and Broad 1994; Jenness 1995). They also used the arts to educate the public about the goals of the movement; one noteworthy example is the 1978 documentary *Word Is Out: Stories of Some of Our Lives*, by filmmakers Nancy Adair and Casey Adair, which was based on lengthy interviews with twenty-six gay men and lesbians.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, the terrain of political contention for the lesbian and gay rights movement was radically altered by the rise of an organized opponent, the New Right, a social movement concerned in large part with the defense of "traditional" family, gender, and sexual forms.²⁶ This is a clear case in which the particularities of the United States affected the trajectory of lesbian and gay movements: because the centrality of religion in general and fundamentalism in particular made such an opponent possible in the United States, gay men and lesbians here faced a set of challenges that their counterparts in most other countries escaped.

In June 1977, voters in Dade County, Florida, galvanized by former beauty pageant winner Anita Bryant and her Save Our Children organization, repealed a recently passed ordinance that would have protected

gays and lesbians against discrimination. The news, which hit gay and lesbian communities like a bombshell, proved to be only the first in a series of repeal efforts that spread across the country. The emergent threat provided leaders of gay and lesbian movements with a new agenda and a clear rhetorical target; increasingly, activists pointed to the dangers posed by the New Right as the reason that gays and lesbians needed to get involved in political work. In this way, movement organizers painted a picture of the antagonist (see Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994: 185–208) as means of recruitment and mobilization.

The response was a considerable upswing in attendance at lesbian and gay demonstrations and Gay Pride Day events, including a turnout of 250,000 for a highly politicized Gay Pride Day in San Francisco in 1978 (Adam 1987: 105). In California more than thirty organizations sprang up, as activists fought a successful grassroots organizing campaign against an antigay referendum sponsored by state senator John Briggs, which called for the dismissal of all gay and lesbian teachers from California public schools. Following the repeal of a lesbian and gay rights ordinance in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1978, support began building for a national show of strength against the rising tide of conservatism. The first national March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights, held in Washington, D.C., on 14 October 1979, drew a sizable crowd; estimates ranged from 25,000, according to the U.S. Park Police, to 125,000, according to conference organizers.

A conference of Third World lesbians and gays was held just before the march, in part in an effort to increase participation by lesbians and gay men of color in the event and in gay and lesbian politics more generally (Ridinger 1996: 192–97). But in the aftermath of the march, it was hard to discern many long-term consequences of the mobilization. If the energy did not dissipate entirely, it was redirected to local organizing that emphasized building durable community institutions and organizations but lacked a comprehensive or radical agenda for social change.

Less evident to the broader public was the fact that more radical gay men and lesbians sought, throughout the 1970s, to keep alive the political impulses of the gay liberation movement. For many of these activists, the political Left continued to be the natural home of lesbian and gay politics, even if the Left was often indifferent or even hostile to gay concerns (Altman 1971: 217–26). *Gay Community News*, a national newsweekly founded in 1973 and based in Boston, was an important voice for a gay Left perspective in the United States that sought to "make connections" between the issues confronting gays and lesbians and those affecting other oppressed people. Meanwhile, gay men influenced less by the New Left than by the 1960s counterculture constructed alternative communities at

some remove from the mainstream culture of the urban gay ghettos but equally or more essentialist in their conceptions of gay men as a people. For example, in 1979, Harry Hay, onetime Communist and Mattachine founder, helped create the Radical Fairies, which held gatherings in the woods to promote a mystical conception of a uniquely gay male spirituality and sensuality (Hay 1996).

FROM LESBIAN NATION TO THE "DECENTERING" OF LESBIAN FEMINISM

By far the most significant alternative to the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement of the 1970s, however, was lesbian feminist politics and culture. In the 1970s, as lesbian feminists framed sexuality, identity, and the boundary between public and private in ways that led to the establishment of a distinct, politically sensitized community, they preserved many of the radical insights of the liberationists. But they also began to consolidate the sort of essentialist conceptions of gender and sexual identities that liberationists had disavowed.

Lesbian feminists' attitudes about sexuality and identity were neither simple nor uniform, eventually resulting, as Arlene Stein (1997) has argued, in stark internal tensions in the 1980s. On one side, many "cultural feminists" asserted the view that all women who opposed patriarchy, regardless of their specific sexual practices, existed at some point along a "lesbian continuum" (Rich 1983: 177–206). Feminists were encouraged to identify as lesbians, whether that meant experimenting with the expression of sexual desire for other women or becoming "political lesbians" whose affinity for women was not consummated sexually. In this sense, lesbianism was portrayed as a "choice," indeed a political commitment, although one in which "same-sex *desire* became secondary to same-sex *identification*," with sexuality "collapsed" into gender (A. Stein 1997: 38, 121). As a result, as Lillian Faderman (1991: 207) has observed, "there were probably more lesbians in America during the 1970s than at any other time in history."

But if cultural feminism blurred the boundary between lesbians and other women by playing down the significance of sexuality, the parallel current of "lesbian separatism" sought to create strong boundaries around the "Lesbian Nation" by emphasizing essential differences between lesbians and heterosexuals, whether male or female (A. Stein 1997: 120). Furthermore, both cultural feminists and lesbian separatists (groups that in practice often overlapped) assumed the existence of essential differences between women and men, including their ways of being sexual (A. Stein 1997: 120). As one lesbian writer expressed it in 1975, "If we

are to learn our own sexual natures we have to get rid of the male-model of penetration and orgasm as the culmination of love-making" (Barbara Lipschutz, quoted in Faderman 1991: 231).

Lesbian feminists dedicated themselves to building an alternative culture, or what Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (1992: 104–29) identify as a "social movement community": they formed collective households and cooperatively run small businesses, and they opened women's bookstores and coffeehouses (A. Stein 1997: 109). They played consequential roles in related social movements, including the women's health movement (Radicalesbians Health Collective 1972: 122–41) and the reproductive rights movement, while often holding leadership positions in other movements for peace and social justice. As recent analysts (Taylor and Whittier 1992: 104–29; Taylor and Rupp 1993) have argued, the building of lesbian feminist communities should be understood not as a "retreat" from the activist politics of the 1960s, but as a distinct "cycle of feminist activism" that made sense in a more conservative time, one organized around the elaboration of a culture that socialized women into a "collective oppositional consciousness."

However, to heighten the boundaries protecting the Lesbian Nation, lesbian feminists attempted in the most thoroughgoing terms to put into practice the maxim that feminism had pioneered: the personal is political (Taylor and Whittier 1992: 104–29; A. Stein 1997: 92). Minute details of private life, including choices of food, clothing, and language, were asserted to be public, politically consequential statements. This construal of the relation between public and private reflected a desire for a "totalizing" identity within an organic community (A. Stein 1997: 119–20). But the emphasis on uniformity and "political correctness" (Faderman 1991: 230) meant that differences had to be subsumed; this led to particular difficulties for a movement that had attracted a heterogeneous group of women, some of whom felt and acted upon a strong erotic attraction for other women and some of whom did not (A. Stein 1997: 119–20, 181–82). Thus, whereas the more mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement provided lesbians with inadequate space to articulate a feminist critique of gender inequality and the traditional family, lesbian feminism put such politics at the center but made it hard to analyze the place of sexuality itself within sexual politics (Whisman 1996: 116–23).

Over the course of the late 1970s and the 1980s, the unifying model of lesbian feminism gradually became less stable, as lesbian feminist communities were racked with disputes over racial and sexual diversity. If lesbian feminism was a quintessential example of identity politics, its trajectory also demonstrated that any "politics of identity" is simultaneously a "politics of difference" (Escoffier 1985: 148–49). Increasingly, the "organic

community" seemed unable to accommodate the proliferation of identities, sexualities, and politics among lesbians, many of whom reacted against what they perceived to be a constraining insistence on uniformity and political correctness (A. Stein 1993, 1997).

In the 1970s, lesbians of color began to form political groups, such as the National Black Feminist Organization, founded in 1974 (Faderman 1991: 242), and in 1980 the first Black Lesbian Conference was held in San Francisco. The Combahee River Collective, a black feminist group that included many lesbians, argued that feminist theory was inadequate for conceptualizing the sources of women's oppression, which for many women included their oppression as people of color or as members of the working class. Increasingly, the broader lesbian feminist community was criticized for promoting a "false universalism" (A. Stein 1997: 15), and lesbians of color began to form autonomous organizations (Ramos 1987). As Gloria Anzaldúa described it, if the woman of color was typically made "invisible" in U.S. society, then "the *lesbian* of color is not only invisible, she doesn't even exist. Our speech, too, is inaudible. We speak in tongues like the outcast and the insane" (Anzaldúa 1981: 165; see also Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Smith 1983; Anzaldúa 1987). Some proposed additive models of oppression, in which those who were doubly, triply, or quadruply oppressed laid claim to unique political identities arising from the authenticity of lived experience; others insisted that different systems of oppression, such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, were not fully comparable and that they intersected in complicated ways that additive models did not capture. In either case the notion of lesbian feminists as a unitary collective subject became harder and harder to maintain.

The boundary-making project of lesbian feminism, which had preserved the political community by drawing sharp lines around a lesbian feminist identity, resulted in "border skirmishes" (A. Stein 1997: 119): should bisexuals, or pre- and postoperative transsexuals, be considered part of the women's community? To lesbian separatists who endorsed strongly essentialist conceptions of femaleness and lesbianism, male-to-female transsexuals were not "real women," and bisexuals were "traitors" who continued to enjoy "heterosexual privilege." Perhaps the most divisive debates, however, were those that came to be known collectively as the "sex wars." What range of sexual expression was permissible within, or appropriate to, lesbianism? On a broader and more important scale, what were the contingent or intrinsic relations between sexuality and power, and what forms of sex were compatible with a liberatory political vision that challenged social oppression (Vance 1984; Duggan and Hunter 1995)?

Early lesbian feminists, convinced that every personal choice carried political consequences, had criticized the butch/fem role playing of a previous generation of lesbians as a residue of patriarchal gender relations, and they had endorsed a vision of egalitarian sensuality that did not valorize a "male" model of penetration and the hegemony of the orgasm. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a range of discontented lesbians criticized this as a limited, "vanilla" sexuality. Many insisted on the personal salience of erotic roles such as butch and fem; others who came out of the closet as sadomasochists insisted that the expression of dominance within a stylized erotic encounter was not to be equated with, or seen as reflecting or furthering, systems of oppression within the broader society—relations of power in sex were not, in any simple sense, continuous with relations of power in society (Rubin 1993: 3–44; Califia 1994). Similar debates erupted over the particularly explosive issue of pornography (Duggan and Hunter 1995). On one side, "antiporn" feminists organized groups such as Women against Violence against Women—which argued that pornography encouraged violence against women and violated their civil rights—and they pressed for antipornography legislation. On the other side, "pro-sex" feminists founded organizations such as the Feminist Anti-censorship Taskforce. These activists maintained that women, as producers and consumers of pornography, had a right to unfettered sexual pleasure. They also argued against the notion that "representation" could be equated with "reality"—that the objectification of women in sexual imagery had a direct causative effect on male violence toward women (Vance 1993: 29–49).

By the late 1980s, as the unitary identity of lesbian feminism was challenged in these multiple ways, there was no longer a working consensus on how to frame debates about identity, sexuality, and the relation between public and private. Lesbian identity, community, and politics had become "decentered" (A. Stein 1992, 1997: 152). "A multiplicity of lesbian groupings emerged, each representing a smaller subculture and special interest" (A. Stein 1997: 185). But at the same time, over the course of the 1980s, the radical impulses of lesbian feminism spread outward to infuse a variety of other social movements, partly by example and partly by the direct participation of lesbians in those movements. A feminist consciousness and a commitment to nonhierarchical forms of social movement organization became noteworthy features of radical AIDS activism, the antinuclear movement, the ecology movement, and the movements against U.S. intervention in Central America (B. Epstein 1991), and many pro-sex feminists became active in AIDS-prevention work. As Barbara Epstein (1988: 27) has noted, the particular role of lesbians in leadership positions in direct-action movements raises interesting questions about

"whether a minority subculture can provide the spark for political mobilization that transcends its own boundaries." In this sense, the decentering of lesbian feminism may signify the exchange of a well-defined political identity for a more diffuse political influence.

THE AIDS CRISIS AND THE AIDS MOVEMENT

The rightward shift in U.S. politics that marked the ascendance of the New Right was confirmed by the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980. His eight years in office, followed by the single-term presidency of his vice-president, George Bush, marked a drastically constrained political opportunity structure for gay and lesbian and other progressive social movements in the United States. Particularly under Reagan, as the power and influence of the New Right expanded, gays and lesbians proved to be one of its most useful targets. But even as the gay and lesbian struggle against the New Right continued in full swing, an entirely unforeseen challenge materialized out of nowhere in 1981: a deadly epidemic disease, sexually transmitted, and linked epidemiologically and in the popular imagination to gay men. In the United States, as elsewhere, the AIDS epidemic demonstrated how the contingent occurrences of history can decisively shift the trajectories of social movements.²⁷

Although, from the outset, AIDS affected heterosexuals as well as gay men, in the United States, AIDS quickly became understood in the mass media as a "gay disease," often viewed loosely as a product of gay "promiscuity" or "the gay lifestyle." Members of New Right groups such as Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority moved rapidly to claim AIDS as evidence that the practice of homosexuality was contrary to nature, and they argued that the devastating illness was God's revenge for immorality. Pat Buchanan, former speechwriter for Richard Nixon and future Republican presidential candidate, gave these views broad currency in the pages of the *New York Post*, in a column entitled "AIDS Disease: It's Nature Striking Back" (Altman 1986: 59).

Especially in the early years of the epidemic when its cause remained mysterious, though even after the means of transmission became known, the stigmatization of gay men as an AIDS threat to the so-called general population was widespread. Public opinion surveys indicated that many Americans were not only shunning people with AIDS but also seeking to limit contact with anyone they suspected might be gay (Blake and Arkin 1988). In this environment, gay communities faced a nearly overwhelming set of political challenges. They had to respond when people with AIDS, or those infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), were subjected to discriminatory treatment—evicted from their apart-

ments, dismissed from their jobs, or ignored by hospital personnel. They had to make sure that those with the disease received adequate care, support, and social services. They had to push government to take the epidemic seriously and devote sufficient funds to medical and social services. And they had to educate their communities about how to reduce the risk of infection with HIV.

Unlike many other countries that confronted AIDS in the 1980s, the United States already had extensive large and highly mobilized gay communities, which gave AIDS organizing a solid base on which to begin—community organizations that could take on new tasks, wealthy donors whose contributions could bankroll new organizations, activists already committed to the defense of gay rights, newspapers that could keep people up to date on political and medical developments, and neighborhoods in which people could see, before their eyes, the ravages of the epidemic and recognize the urgency of action. In the early 1980s, gay and lesbian activists created two grassroots organizations that proved to be pivotal in confronting the epidemic: the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) in New York City and, across the country, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. In one of the most sustained grassroots organizing efforts in recent decades, hundreds of additional organizations were soon established across the United States to confront the multiple threats of the disease by creating hot lines, food banks, speakers' bureaus, and disease-prevention campaigns. As Dennis Altman has noted, although local, volunteer responses to illness and other crises have a long history in the United States, the necessity for such organizing reflected, as well, the absence of a coordinated governmental response to a public health emergency by an indifferent Republican administration (1986: 90, 181).

Many lesbians became involved in the AIDS movement, thereby tightening, at least temporarily, the political and personal connections between lesbians and gay men (Schwartz 1993: 230–44). Dubious explanations have been proposed for the participation of lesbians, including notions of an essential female tendency toward care giving and a belief that women had to fill in for the many men who had died (for critiques see Vaid 1995: 293; Rofes 1996: 258). Better explanations have emphasized as determinants of lesbian mobilization "shared values, sympathy for political goals, and existing organizational membership" not only in gay and lesbian politics but also in the women's health movement (Stoller 1995: 270). While AIDS did indeed cause the deaths of many prominent gay male activists, raising fears of a "leadership vacuum," the epidemic also propelled many previously nonpolitical gay men into activism. For a generation of relatively privileged, middle-class gay men, government had been something to restrict, to keep out of their "private" lives. As the

boundary between private illness and public health exploded, these same men sought active governmental involvement to fund AIDS research and care, and they threw their energies into building the grassroots organizations and transforming them into stable organizational forms (Altman 1988: 301–15; S. Epstein 1996: 187).

As the large AIDS service organizations established cooperative funding arrangements with local governments and federal agencies, raised millions of dollars from individuals and big corporations, and grew to employ hundreds of people, gay communities achieved “legitimation through disaster” (Altman 1988: 301–15)—but at the cost of a turn from grassroots organizing to professional bureaucratic management (Altman 1988: 301–15; Patton 1990). Once again, the trend in gay politics seemed to be the establishment of stable, quasi-ethnic organizations that surrendered radical political goals for immediate practical effectiveness. Though these organizations were heavily dependent on volunteer labor, complaints would grow that decision making within them was top-down rather than bottom-up. In a revealing episode, a bitter unionization drive at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation demonstrated the substantial gap in perceptions between “workers” and “management” at the agency. Often the large organizations competed for public funds with the smaller groups, in racial-minority communities, which were dedicated to fighting AIDS among African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, or Native Americans (Vaid 1995: 278). Such struggles furthered the tendency for the official identity of the gay community to be taken as white and for the work of lesbians and gay men of color to be ignored (C. Cohen 1993, forthcoming).

The challenge of AIDS also had complicated and contradictory effects on debates about the place of sexuality in gay politics. Many feared that gay male identity had been “derailed” by the epidemic: if the identity, at root, was tied to sexual behaviors, and if specific sexual behaviors could no longer safely be performed, then was it still possible to “be gay”? (Rofes 1996: 65–66) In the early years of the epidemic (and again more recently), some activists advanced the view that the rampant sexual experimentation of the 1970s had indeed been a mistake (Callen and Berkowitz 1982: 23). Many in the mass media and the gay press put forward the view that AIDS was, or ought to be, ushering in a new era of monogamy and fidelity among gay men—a “maturation,” after the “adolescent” wildness of the 1970s (Seidman 1988). However, by 1985, with the near-universal acceptance of the evidence that AIDS was caused not by “the gay lifestyle” but by a virus, most activists had come to endorse a “sex-positive” conception of “safer-sex education,” which affirmed the inherent value of sexuality as part of the liberatory ethic of gay politics and re-

fused to yield ground to the advocates of sexual conventionalism. Activists battled with conservatives in the U.S. Congress, such as the homophobic Senator Jesse Helms, for the right to produce federally funded HIV-prevention materials that described in plain and effective language sexual acts and the associated risks of viral transmission.

Still, the question of how much to defend gay male sexuality remained unsettled throughout the 1980s, as the divisive controversy over the closure of San Francisco’s bathhouses in 1984 amply demonstrated (Murray 1996: 110–25). Over the course of the previous decade, gay men and lesbians had achieved a measure of social acceptance in the United States, in part through a strategic decoupling of sexuality from identity in public discourse. They had come to be accepted as a people with civil rights, even in a society that officially condemned their sexual practices: hence the paradox that “for years the mayor of New York could proclaim an official Gay Pride Week while the very people being honored remained criminals under state law” (Altman 1982a: 9). Because AIDS seemed to restigmatize gay identity by linking it firmly to a “diseased” sexuality, many political moderates were uncomfortable with the revival of a liberationist rhetoric that seemed to valorize sexual abandon.

ACTING UP

Around 1987, with the growing fear that most or perhaps all of those infected with HIV—estimated to be about half the gay men in the most densely concentrated gay neighborhoods—would eventually progress to symptomatic illness, disquiet about the pace and politics of biomedical research swelled into mass unrest. As in the early 1980s, this upswing of grassroots AIDS activism originated in gay and lesbian communities and spread from there. In New York, activist and playwright Larry Kramer, cofounder of GMHC, helped create a radical activist organization, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power—better known by its acronym, ACT UP. Soon there were ACT UP chapters in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Seattle, and other cities as ACT UP became, briefly, the most visible social movement organization in the United States.

A magnet for radical young gay men and lesbians, ACT UP practiced an in-your-face politics of “no business as usual.” Adopting styles of political and cultural practice derived from the gay liberation movement of the early 1970s, the peace movement, and the punk subculture, ACT UP became famous for its imaginative street theater, its skill at attracting the news cameras, and its well-communicated sense of urgency. ACT UP chapters typically had no formal leaders; in many cities, meetings operated by

the consensus process. As Joshua Gamson describes in a participant/observer study of the San Francisco chapter, ACT UP shared the basic characteristics of "new social movements"—"a (broadly) middle-class membership and a mix of instrumental, expressive, and identity-oriented activities" (1989: 354; Elbaz 1992).

On the national scene, the New York City chapter dominated—with upward of 150 members at regular weekly meetings and a \$300,000 budget by the end of 1988—through chapters in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Boston were also prominent in the movement. Ostensibly, since AIDS was not a "gay disease," ACT UP was not a "gay organization," but members in fact tended to be gay or lesbian, and many of the group's activities—and the pink-triangle background of its distinctive "Silence = Death" logo—suggested the centrality of gayness to its organizational identity (J. Gamson 1989). The history of gay challenges to medical authorities, as in the early-1970s campaign against the psychiatric profession, informed ACT UP's undeferential approach to scientists and medical experts.

The impetus for individuals to become involved varied considerably depending upon social identity. Men who were HIV-positive often had pragmatic goals, such as access to potentially life-prolonging medications. Many lesbians, and some heterosexual women, became active in ACT UP, in part to promote better research on the development of HIV infection in women and on the risk of infection in lesbian sex (ACT UP/New York Women and AIDS Book Group 1990; Corea 1992; Schneider and Stoller 1995). In some cities, African Americans and Latinos formed caucuses within ACT UP as well. Often gay men and lesbians of color, serving as bridges between predominantly gay and white groups such as ACT UP and predominantly heterosexual, community-based organizations in communities of color, helped build coalitions to work on such issues as clean-needle exchange and AIDS prevention in prisons (C. Cohen 1993, forthcoming).

During the late 1980s, ACT UP activists engaged in manifold projects directed at a variety of social institutions, including the state, the church, the mass media, and the health care sector (Crimp and Rolston 1990)—though at times, like the queer activist groups that sprang up in their wake, they seemed less concerned with achieving institutional change than with posing general challenges to cultural norms (J. Gamson 1989). Although some within gay communities were openly disgruntled with ACT UP's confrontational tactics and its tone of abrasive self-righteousness, others noted the creative ways in which the activists marshalled their moral outrage, retained an emphasis on sexual freedom as part of a political agenda, and challenged the conventional division between public and private. The deaths of prominent activists were often marked by loud and angry "political funerals" winding through city streets; in this way,

traditionally private moments of death were transformed into public displays of defiance against an indifferent or hostile society and government.

ACT UP and other groups based in gay and lesbian communities were also central to the project of remaking biomedicine in the United States. Activists challenged the authority of experts and, by immersing themselves in technical details of virology and immunology, constituted themselves as grassroots experts who could debate scientists on research directions and priorities. They waged a successful campaign against the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for faster approval of experimental AIDS therapies. Subsequently, activists turned their attention to the National Institutes of Health, successfully demanding changes in the methods of testing AIDS drugs in order to speed up the process, get more patients into clinical trials, and ensure that trials were ethically conducted (S. Epstein 1995, 1996, 1997).

Once again in the trajectory of gay and lesbian activism, the radical grassroots challenge proved short-lived, but it provided the spark for more enduring, if more mainstream, organizational forms. By the early 1990s, activism focused on AIDS treatments had become more professionalized, and the more confrontational and controversial street activism of ACT UP had subsided. Many individual ACT UP chapters had been riven by ideological cleavages between single-issue pragmatic politics and multi-issue radical politics, leading to splits reminiscent of the split between the Gay Activists Alliance and the Gay Liberation Front in 1969. These strategic tensions were intensified by the clash of identities, as political divisions developed between men and women, between white people and people of color, and between HIV-positive and HIV-negative people within ACT UP (S. Epstein 1996: 288–94).

Such difficulties notwithstanding, the movement seemed likely to have an enduring influence, as the frames and tactical repertoires of AIDS activists were quickly adopted by participants in other health-related movements, such as breast cancer activists. In addition, ACT UP and the internal movement culture that it fostered provided the spark for a new, queer identity and politics that have important implications for gay and lesbian movements in the 1990s. Just as radical AIDS activism borrowed from the strengths of gay liberation, part of its legacy was a set of new cultural forms and tactical repertoires employed by subsequent queer activists.

LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS IN THE 1980S

Although it often seemed that gay and lesbian politics in the 1980s were preoccupied with AIDS, the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement maintained a diverse political agenda throughout the decade. The quasi-ethnic/

territorial model of organizing remained central, concretely symbolized by a 1984 vote for the incorporation of West Hollywood, which promptly elected a majority of openly gay or lesbian city council members. In San Francisco the institutionalization of the lesbian and gay rights movement was mirrored in an explosion of local civic and political organizations: only 93 lesbian and gay organizations existed between 1975 and 1979, but that number jumped to 255 between 1980 and 1983 and the numbers stayed roughly at that level through the mid-1990s (Armstrong 1998: chap. 1).

The emphasis on civil rights legislation and protection from discrimination also continued, though the 1980s saw a proliferation of new, nationwide organizations with different emphases—including Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), which brought relatives of gay men and lesbians into the movement, and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), which focused public attention on representations of gay men and lesbians in the mass media and the entertainment industry. The decade was also marked by new cultural and political movements, such as the lesbian “baby boom,” the grassroots development of lesbian and gay history projects, the rise of gay and lesbian studies in universities (Escoffier 1990), and the birth of many lesbian and gay professional groups (Taylor and Raeburn 1995). Two members of Congress, Gerry Studds and Barney Frank, both from Massachusetts, came out of the closet; and gays and lesbians both expressed support for and sought to pressure the Democratic Party in a large demonstration outside the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco in 1984. In Oregon, however, voters repealed a ban on job discrimination in 1988, as skirmishes continued between lesbian and gay activists and the New Right.

In 1982, when Georgia police officers entered the home of a man named Michael Hardwick to serve a warrant for traffic violations, they found him having sex with another man. Hardwick was arrested and convicted under Georgia’s sodomy law, and the verdict in *Bowers v. Hardwick* was appealed all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Rejecting the argument that gay sex was protected by a “right to privacy,” the Court upheld the constitutionality of Georgia’s sodomy law in a split (five-four) vote in 1986,²⁸ sparking angry demonstrations outside federal buildings across the United States. The NGLTF formed a Privacy Project, directed by Sue Hyde, designed to assist activists around the country in contesting state sodomy laws; but only one sodomy statute, in Washington, D.C., was overturned partly as a result of these efforts (Bernstein 1997a: 69).

Frustration with the court’s ruling, along with mounting concern

about AIDS, was a primary force behind a mass mobilization the following year: the second National March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights, held on 15 October 1987. More than two hundred thousand people from around the United States poured into Washington for the five-hour demonstration, which called for legal recognition of gay relationships, passage of the federal gay rights bill, and a ban on discrimination based on HIV status, among other issues. Two days before the march, more than six hundred demonstrators were arrested in a large act of civil disobedience at the U.S. Supreme Court building in protest of the *Hardwick* decision. The week’s events also included a display of 1,920 panels of the Names Project’s AIDS Quilt and a public “commitment ceremony” attended by two thousand lesbian and gay male couples (Ridinger 1996: 198–201). Roughly coinciding with the advent of ACT UP, this national mobilization reflected a rare moment in which the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement seemed to move in sync with more radical, grassroots activism. But it was indeed a moment, not an enduring political formation.

Outside the mainstream, radical gay and lesbian activists in the 1980s participated in Jesse Jackson’s presidential campaigns and in the Rainbow Coalition, formed alliances with labor unions, and created organizations such as San Francisco’s Lesbians and Gays against Intervention (LAGAI). Organizations of gay men and lesbians of color struggled simultaneously to counter racism in lesbian and gay organizations and homophobia in organizations promoting civil rights for racial minorities (C. Cohen 1996: 362–94). In 1983, for example—shortly after march organizer Walter Fauntroy, a member of Congress from Washington, D.C., publicly dismissed gay rights as a trivial concern on a par with “penguin rights” (Boykin 1996; Ridinger 1996: 167, 188–89)—the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays successfully fought for the inclusion of black lesbian feminist poet Audre Lorde as a speaker at the twentieth-anniversary commemoration of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.’s March on Washington.

Sex radicals in the 1980s defended “public sex,” argued that sex remained the “front line” of gay politics, and insisted that a “right to privacy” made sense only in the context of freedom in a public world (Altman 1982b). Marginalized groups such as the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), which promoted an end to age-of-consent laws, found themselves shunned by the broader movement and excluded from events such as Gay Pride Day parades (J. Gamson 1997). Cultural radicalism continued to thrive in cities like San Francisco, sometimes taking overtly political forms: for example, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, wearing their trademark nuns’ habits and heavy facial makeup,

held such events as an "exorcism" of Jerry Falwell. Much as liberationists had made homophile activists uneasy at an earlier time, mainstream gay men and lesbians sometimes took the political and cultural radicals to task for giving the community a "bad name." Indeed, as lesbian and gay elites moved farther into the mainstream, they were increasingly inclined to police the public image of the community.²⁹ But in practice the practitioners of radical and liberal interest-group politics often mingled freely at the same demonstrations and political and cultural events.

QUEER NATIONS AND ANTINATIONS

The early 1990s saw the birth of a new queer style and social identity; a short-lived blossoming of chapters of a social movement organization named Queer Nation in cities around the United States; a queer sensibility within other activist groups such as the Lesbian Avengers, the Women's Action Coalition, and the Women's Health Action Mobilization; and the flourishing of queer theory in university settings. Queer politics was an important phase in the historical oscillation between mainstream identity politics and utopian nonidentitarian politics. On one hand, queer politics arose in opposition to the forms and styles of identity politics that constituted the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement and in response to the mainstream movement's inability to confront difference within gay and lesbian communities (Duggan 1992; Seidman 1993: 105–42, 1994, 1997). On the other hand, like the liberationists who had challenged fixed categories of identity two decades earlier, queer activists found it hard to sustain a nonidentitarian project—in fact, queer politics carried within it a tension between rejecting fixed identities and organizing around a new, "queer national" identity (Bérubé and Escoffier 1991).

Queer Nation was founded in 1990 in New York City, where it organized large demonstrations against recent gay bashings. At the 1990 New York Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade, members of Queer Nation circulated fifteen thousand copies of an anonymous flyer entitled "I Hate Straights": "I hate trying to convince straight people that lesbians and gays live in a war zone, that we're surrounded by bomb blasts only we seem to hear, that our bodies are heaped high, dead from fright or bashed or raped, dying of grief or disease, stripped of our personhood" (quoted in Gross 1993: 81). As Larry Gross notes, "This essay served as a spark on a pile of kindling," much as the Stonewall riot had done twenty-one years earlier, "and within days it seemed that groups calling themselves Queer Nation were springing up around the country" (Gross 1993: 82). Many present and former members of ACT UP, who had been mobilized by AIDS

but wanted to work on other issues affecting their communities, flocked to Queer Nation meetings.

Despite the self-consciousness with which the term "queer" was employed, its usages were inconsistent, and a precise definition is nearly impossible. "Queer" was put forward by activists as a replacement for labels such as "gay" and "lesbian" and, indeed, for the modes of community and self-expression associated with them (Duggan 1992; Seidman 1993: 105–42, 1994, 1997). In part, the turn to "queer" was an act of linguistic reclamation, in which a pejorative term was reappropriated to negate its power to wound. More important, queerness connoted a provocative politics of difference—an assertion that those who embraced the identity did not "fit in" to the dominant culture or the mainstream gay and lesbian culture and had no interest in doing so (Williams 1994). Queerness therefore appealed to a range of people who felt shut out by the mainstream movement and its relative successes toward social integration, including young people, people of color, bisexuals and transgendered people, and sex radicals.

Queer activists framed issues of sexuality, identity and difference, and the public/private divide in ways that resembled radical gay liberation circa 1970, but with some important points of divergence. Queer conceptions of sexuality recalled the ideal of liberating the polymorphous-perverse forms of pleasure; but in the queer rendering of this notion, the emphasis was on the valorization of any and all sexuality that broke with the "heteronormative" and challenged conventional norms and schemas of classification. Therefore, at least some of the time, queer politics was an anti-identity politics (J. Gamson 1995). Queerness repudiated the notion that one's identity or sexuality should be fixed, stable, or nameable, and it embraced "a liminal position within the contingent sexual and gender frontiers of contemporary capitalist societies" (Phelan 1994: 154). Like the liberationists, queers wanted to smash the categories, but where liberationists located the "end of the homosexual" within the utopian project of creating a "new human," queers seemed motivated more by a suspicion of labels and a desire not to be pigeonholed—the difference, in short, between a Freudo-Marxian politics and a Foucauldian one.³⁰

Bisexual and transgender politics fitted nicely into the queer agenda for just this reason: they seemed to challenge the binary divisions between gay and straight and between male and female (Seidman 1997: 230–31). For years, bisexuals and transgendered people had fought for a space within gay and lesbian politics, with mixed success—often overlooked or pushed aside by gay men and denounced as threats by lesbian feminists. But in many respects gay and lesbian politics had helped to make bisexual and transgender politics conceivable, since the very idea that one might form collective political identities around the sexual identities of individuals is

one that, once advanced, has a self-perpetuating, perhaps endless, character (Weeks 1985: 244; Halberstam 1994). As bisexuals and transgendered people moved from forming support groups to organizing politically, they found that gay and lesbian politics provided the model; and they sought their place within gay and lesbian movements, even as they challenged the binary divide between gay/lesbian and straight that these earlier movements had reinforced (Hutchins and Kaahumanu 1991; Weise 1992; Bornstein 1995; Rust 1995). In the 1990s they seemed to find in queer politics not only acceptance but also valorization of their sexualities as "transgressive."³¹

Ironically, but perhaps predictably, the goal of challenging fixed categories of identity coexisted with the tendency to establish a new, self-consciously queer identity that could serve as a basis of political mobilization. Queerness was sometimes put forward as a new, unifying identity—a global replacement term that could substitute for the growing list of sexual minorities. As an editor of the New York City queer magazine *Outweek* put it, "When you're trying to describe the community, and you have to list gays, lesbians, bisexuals, drag queens, transsexuals (post-op and pre), it gets unwieldy. Queer says it all" (quoted in Duggan 1992: 21). More often, "queer" ended up describing the particular identity of subcultures of urban young people who felt estranged from their gay and lesbian elders. In fact, the mainstream lesbian and gay community served the same symbolic role for these young queers that timid, closeted homosexuals had served for an earlier generation of gay liberationists (Murray 1996: 207). Social movements often develop their own cultures and become "worlds unto themselves" (McAdam 1994: 45), so it is not surprising that, as activist and writer Urvashi Vaid notes, queers "quickly established a new and fairly orthodox tribal language. [Queer Nation] had a dress code (leather, shaved heads, Doc Martens, and T-shirts with big lettering), an anti-establishment stand . . . , and an attitude that spoke to the nineties (postmodern, in their faces, militant)" (1995: 296). In these moments, queer politics was just the latest incarnation of identity politics, indeed one that seemed to conceive of political subjectivity in rather fixed and nationalist terms—as the name Queer Nation suggested.

The latent tension in queer activism "between nationalism and its most thoroughgoing deconstruction" (Phelan 1994: 154) sometimes made for self-contradictory politics and in the end may have contributed to the short life of Queer Nation. But both senses of queer—the identity-stabilizing and the identity-destabilizing—suggested the same approach to the question of the public/private divide. More thoroughly than radical gay liberationists, queers sought to obliterate this boundary. Members of Queer Nation "saw themselves as militantly visible—wearing T-shirts

and stickers with blatant slogans in unavoidable Day-Glo colors: PROMOTE HOMOSEXUALITY, GENERIC QUEER, FAGGOT, MILITANT DYKE" (Gross 1993: 83). In events such as Queer Nights Out, where queers would invade heterosexual singles' bars and begin kissing; or Queer Shopping, where young urban queers would flock to suburban shopping malls; or Be-Ins held at popular tourist destinations such as San Francisco's Pier 39, members of Queer Nation claimed the public sphere as its own and constructed a "counterpublic" out of "the traditional national icons, the official and useful spaces of everyday life, [and] the ritual places of typical pleasure" (Berlant and Freeman 1993: 214). Against the gay and lesbian mainstream that had developed a territorially based, "ghetto" politics, queers promoted a movement of de-territorialization (Davis 1995: 284–303). "Whose fucking streets? Our fucking streets!" proclaimed queer activists, as they altered demonstration routes at whim, to the consternation of the police. Yet even as they spilled over the boundaries of the heterosexual society, they defiantly proclaimed their marginalization within it and insisted they could never be part of it.

A corollary of militant visibility was the assumption that it was legitimate and valuable to "out," or publicly disclose, the homosexuality of prominent closeted men and women in the worlds of politics, business, the media, and entertainment (Signorile 1993). Sometimes outing was a tactic reserved for those who led closeted gay lives while harming lesbians and gay men in their public lives, such as politicians who frequented gay bars but voted against gay rights legislation. At other times, advocates of outing claimed that even public figures or celebrities who did not hurt the community should be outed so they could serve as role models in the community—whether they wanted to or not. Highly controversial in gay and lesbian communities in the early 1990s, outing rested on the more essentialist conception of queer nationalism—it stressed "a rhetoric of allegiance and accountability to the One Community" and punished the "traitors" whose identity and politics diverged from a "party line" (Gross 1993: 108–32; see also Duggan 1992).

Queers envisioned a sort of "cultural politics" directed at "regulative norms" and "disciplinary mechanisms of power" (Blasius 1994: 129). Queer groups adopted the tactic of the gay liberation "zap," pushing the notion of politics as theater even farther. But as Joshua Gamson notes, queer theatrical performance often had limited value in posing challenges to powerful political institutions such as the state: "The overarching strategy of cultural deconstruction, the attack on the idea of the normal, does little to touch the institutions that make embracing normality . . . both sensible and dangerous" (1995: 400). Furthermore, for all their attention to the performative aspects of their collective actions, queers

were sometimes criticized for being indifferent to whether their actions had measurable effects on any identifiable audiences (Murray 1996: 133). As in many forms of identity politics, queer dramaturgy sometimes seemed to be directed more at the affirmation of self than at genuine conversation with the other. As the queer movement's most popular slogan suggested, the goal was less to reason with the straight world than to inform it that its views had become irrelevant in the face of universal queer visibility: "We're here; we're queer! Get used to it!"

As a social movement organization, Queer Nation endured for less than two years. Although the members of Queer Nation chapters were not homogeneous with regard to age, the group was too heavily identified as a youth movement—and too committed to confrontational direct action and antiassimilationism—to mobilize a mass base. Even the very use of the term "queer" continued to provoke bitter disagreement within gay and lesbian communities, as in the debate that erupted in San Francisco in 1993 when the Freedom Day Parade organizers adopted the slogan "Year of the Queer" (J. Gamson 1995). Moreover, queers who struggled to avoid defining themselves in terms of any fixed identity found this hard to implement within an organizational form. And as Queer Nation chapters consolidated queer identities, they were beset with gender and racial disputes that helped to bring about their demise.³²

Queer politics demonstrated both the promise and the limits of a non-identitarian politics in the sharpest fashion since the days of radical gay liberation. If Queer Nation itself was short-lived, a queer sensibility survived and permeated other organizations—including universities, where queer theory³³ thrived, and activist groups like the Lesbian Avengers, which was founded in New York in 1993 and had twenty chapters by 1995 (Schulman 1994). The significant numbers of people who continued to insist that they were "queer" rather than "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," or "transgendered," testified to the enduring significance of the queer movement—as a reminder that, for many, the goal of the politics of sexuality was not assimilation but confrontation and as evidence that the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement, despite or because of its attempt to present itself as "the gay and lesbian movement," was incapable of aggregating the diverse interests of all those on behalf of whom it purported to speak.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR ANTAGONISTS IN THE 1990S

Even apart from the debates around queerness, politics in the 1990s was inflected by the tension between essentialist conceptions of gay identity and culture and challenges to that model. One side of this tension was

manifest in the continued growth and cultural legitimization of the mainstream, quasi-ethnic form of gay identity and community. As many activists seized upon gay scientists' reports of the possible discovery of a "gay brain" or "gay gene" (LeVay 1993; Hamer and Copeland 1994), as direct marketers targeted the "gay consumer," and as pollsters sampled the opinions of the "gay voter," the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement seemed tied to a homogeneous model of collective identity articulated substantially through consumption practices and the display of trinkets—gay-themed credit cards, "freedom rings," and rainbow flags. Quasi-ethnic territorialism also continued in full force. In 1997 the city of Chicago officially designated a stretch of North Halsted Street known familiarly as Boys' Town as one of the city's distinctive neighborhoods, along with Greektown and Chinatown, and constructed ceremonial towers along the street, ringed with the colors of the rainbow flag (D. Johnson 1997).

Yet at the same time, the extraordinary diversification of gay and lesbian movements in the 1990s belied this assumption of a uniform collective interest. This diversification was most clearly expressed in three respects: racial politics, a new debate over sexual expression and sexual mores, and the emergence of an overt Left/Right split within lesbian and gay communities.

A large number of gay, lesbian, or queer political organizations promoting the interests of people of color, including African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos, were born in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization (LLEGO), dedicated to fighting homophobia, sexism, and discrimination, was founded in 1987 at the National March on Washington and brought hundreds of Latinas and Latinos from around the country to its annual meetings. The Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum was established in 1988 with the goals of building alliances with black organizations, launching antiracism campaigns in the gay white community, and arranging conferences on the black church's attitudes toward homosexuality (Boykin 1996). TriKone (from the Sanskrit word for "triangle"), an organization of lesbian, gay, and bisexual south Asians, began marching in the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade in 1986 and since 1993 has participated in India Day parades in the Bay Area. Activists in organizations like these were often inspired by writers, filmmakers, and artists who sought to articulate the particular dilemmas confronting gay men and lesbians of color (Beam 1986; Anzaldúa 1987; Roscoe 1988; Nelson 1993)—such as filmmaker Marlon Rigg's testimony, in his poignant and arresting 1991 film *Tongues Untied*: "In this great gay mecca, I was an invisible man."

Activists of color challenged the goals of the mainstream, pushed for the radicalization of the movement, and emphasized the importance of constructing coalitions between gay and lesbian communities and other constituencies promoting social change (Seidman 1993: 105–42). Some activists, such as those working with the Audre Lorde Project in Brooklyn, sought to construct a multiracial coalition of queers of color. Others noted the specific effects of gay and lesbian immigration to the United States from other countries: in the “queer diaspora,” political strategizing had to recognize that not everyone had the same relationship to the state or to institutions of citizenship (Gopinath 1996: 119–27). Still others analyzed the social and political consequences of racial eroticization and the perpetuation, within gay and lesbian communities, of racially based stereotypes concerning sexual dominance and submissiveness (Fung 1996: 181–98).

Sexuality, another site of internal diversity, once again became an area of political contention in the mid-1990s. In San Francisco, community members who felt that the annual Freedom Day Parade had become “too sexual” and that “outrageous” behavior gave ammunition to political opponents in the New Right established an alternative, “family-oriented” street fair held the preceding day. In New York, bitter fights broke out when a gay group calling itself Gay and Lesbian HIV Prevention Activists called for the city’s health department to crack down on sex clubs, which were portrayed as contributing to the spread of HIV. In highly publicized books and opinion pieces in the mass media, Gabriel Rotello and Michelangelo Signorile, two spokespersons of this movement who had migrated rightward from earlier involvements in queer politics, repudiated what Rotello called the “the orgiastic, Dionysian vision of liberation proclaimed in the immediate aftermath of Stonewall,” and they advocated “the construction of a gay culture that validates sexual moderation and restraint” (Rotello 1997: 290, 243; Signorile 1997). Rotello pointed to lesbians as role models for gay men—ironically so, since by the 1990s the notion of lesbians as monogamous and sexually unadventurous was increasingly being rejected by lesbians themselves. In 1997 a number of activists and academics founded a new organization—Sex Panic!—to challenge these ideas as typical of the sex-negative and sex-phobic tendencies of U.S. society and to assert the centrality of sexual freedom to queer politics. Similar debates erupted in San Francisco, where activists fought calls to close the sex clubs that had sprung up after the closure of the bathhouses.

In part, the controversy over sexual blatancy revived the fights over sexuality that had marked the lesbian “sex wars” and the early years of the AIDS epidemic. But at root, the debate was not about just AIDS or

sexuality but about broader conceptions of the community (Dangerous Bedfellows 1996; Crain 1997; Warner 1997). What were its norms? Who spoke for it? What was its present relation to its own past history? The debate also marked another episode in a familiar story: the split over whether the social legitimization of the lesbian and gay mainstream should be achieved by sacrificing those in the community who were deemed unrespectable (see Murray 1996: 93; J. Gamson 1997; see also C. Cohen forthcoming).

A further marker of the strategic and philosophical divides within the movement was the emergence of a visible gay Right. This included neo-conservatives, who repudiated sexual radicalism and sought to reduce the gay movement’s struggle to the establishment of equal rights in the public realm (Sullivan 1995), as well as traditional conservatives, who denounced the “puerile posturing” and “queerthink” promoted by the “queer establishment” (Bawer 1993, 1996: ix, xii). The Log Cabin Republican Club, a “home for mainstream gay and lesbian Americans who . . . care deeply about equality [and] hold Republican views on crime, fiscal responsibility and foreign policy,” established more than fifty chapters around the country, with a national office in Washington, D.C. Though the organization proved capable of raising more than \$100,000 per election cycle, it found itself in the embarrassing position of not being able to find many Republican candidates willing to accept the group’s donations.

Other national lesbian and gay organizations, such as the Human Rights Campaign (with sixty full-time staff members and a budget of \$2.5 million by 1997), pursued centrist strategies and relied heavily on wealthy, white male donors for their electoral fund-raising. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, by contrast (with twenty-two full-time staff members and a budget of \$2.7 million), moved in a more leftward and populist direction. In 1990 its director, Urvashi Vaid, heckled President George Bush at his first major address on AIDS and denounced the president’s lack of meaningful action on the issue. Vaid emphasized building an organized movement base at the grassroots and insisted that the political agenda move beyond civil rights to encompass a broader vision of a better society (Vaid 1995). In its position papers, NGLTF supported coalition politics and drew links between issues affecting gay men and lesbians and other hot topics of the 1990s, including welfare reform and immigration issues.

In the face of these various forms of political diversification, unity came primarily through organizing to fight the New Right, including mobilizing against its electoral and legislative initiatives. As the clash between lesbian and gay activists and the New Right unfolded, gay rights emerged,

improbably, as one of the defining social issues of the 1990s (Bull and Gallagher 1996: xi). Opposition between the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement and the New Right not only served to consolidate each group's identity but also encouraged each group to pursue the strategy of urging the broader public to "dis-identify" with the other (Patton 1993: 145). Gays and lesbians sought to convince racial and religious minorities that the New Right posed a general threat to freedom, while New Right groups tried to drive a wedge into this alliance by arguing that gay men and lesbians were a wealthy and privileged group that had inappropriately claimed for itself the mantle of the civil rights movement (Boykin 1996).

Unlike gay and lesbian movements in other countries, U.S. activists in the 1990s found themselves in the extraordinary and unenviable position of fighting not only the repeal of gay rights ordinances at the local level (Adam 1995: 133) but also the passage of citywide and statewide referenda that sought to make it legally impossible for gay rights laws ever to be established (Bernstein 1997a: 74). Activists in Oregon fought bitter but successful battles against such initiatives in 1992 and 1993, also dividing among themselves over whether to put forward a least-common-denominator antidiscrimination agenda or a more radical defense of queer sexualities (Bull and Gallagher 1996; Bernstein 1997b: 555). In Colorado 53 percent of voters supported a 1992 referendum that scrapped existing gay rights laws in the more liberal cities of Denver, Boulder, and Aspen and prohibited the establishment of any such laws in the future (Adam 1995: 133). National outrage on the part of lesbians and gay men prompted an organized boycott of travel to the state of Colorado, as well as a court challenge that eventually made its way to the United States Supreme Court. In 1996, in an important six-three decision for gays and lesbians from the Supreme Court, which was not known to favor them, the Court ruled that the state had no compelling interest in preemptively banning gays and lesbians from attempting to pass legislation securing their rights.

The creation of unity amid diversity was also the significant but transient result of two visible national mobilizations in the early 1990s: the third National March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation and New York City's Stonewall 25 which commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Stonewall riot. The National March drew as few as three hundred thousand and as many as one million participants, depending on who did the counting. Planners insisted on racial diversity and gender balance in all local delegations to the national steering committee that helped prepare for the march. And, as the name reflects, the march signaled a more complete inclusion of bisexuals in the political agenda, as well as a stated desire to accommodate both

those who sought equal rights and those who insisted on a more radical politics of liberation. The following year, Stonewall Twenty-five put more than one million marchers, including many international contingents, on the streets of Manhattan, with participants marching past the United Nations building, demanding respect for the human rights of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals around the world. Unlike earlier national marches, these events attracted significant attention in the mass media, but like earlier marches, these national shows of strength seemed to have little lasting impact on movement mobilization either nationally or locally.

The failure to build on these national demonstrations in any significant way was accompanied by another conspicuous lack: there were no widely recognized, charismatic leaders. As commentators had been noting for some time (Jernigan 1988), gay and lesbian movements in the United States seemed to produce remarkably few such leaders. There was no shortage of popular heroes, such as the gay men and lesbians who became public figures through their legal battles against dismissal from the military. And celebrities, such as Chastity Bono (the lesbian daughter of Sonny Bono and Cher) and Candace Gingrich (the sister of right-wing politician Newt Gingrich), had become a familiar presence at marches and parades. But—perhaps because of the proliferation and diversity of movements and organizations—gay and lesbian movements seemed to have difficulty generating or sustaining leaders with the imagination and personal qualities needed to mobilize or redirect collective sentiments in powerful ways, to generate solidarity across the divisions within the movements, or to construct coalitions with movements of other kinds.

As activists waged trench warfare against the New Right in local initiatives around the United States, many held out the hope that larger successes might be won at the national level. Particularly in contrast to the overt, antigay hate mongering that marked the 1992 Republican National Convention, the stated positions of Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton seemed to hold open the prospect of a new political opportunity structure for gay and lesbian movements. Clinton explicitly mentioned gay people in his nomination acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention and included openly gay people in his campaign team and, later, in his administration. However, when his attempt to make good on a campaign promise to end the persecution of gay men and lesbians in the U.S. military met with energetic political opposition, Clinton quickly backed down and proposed a regressive "compromise" that, in practice, continued to lead to the dismissal of gay men and lesbians from the military. This and subsequent actions by Clinton—on issues such as gay marriage—demonstrated that there was no political party of consequence in the U.S. political system with which lesbian and gay activists

could unproblematically ally and that the U.S. two-party system provided restricted opportunities for the advancement of a gay rights agenda.

These two issues—gays in the military and gay marriage—merit additional attention for the extraordinary amount of controversy that they provoked. Given that no other country that has openly considered the issue of military service by lesbians and gay men has greeted the prospect with any great degree of panic or preoccupation, the popular hysteria surrounding the issue in the United States testified to unique aspects of the U.S. political and cultural environment. As Barry Adam notes, an explanation that points to the power of the New Right alone seems insufficient to account for the psychological charge of the debate (Adam 1994: 103–18), which raised the specter of “vulnerable” heterosexual soldiers being eyed by predatory homosexuals in shower rooms and pointed, in rather Freudian terms, to the threat that overt homosexual desire posed to sublimated male bonding and esprit de corps.³⁴ Much like the targeting of homosexuals during the McCarthy era, the debate about gays in the military seemed wrapped up in concerns about the “feminization” of the state, in a country whose whole national identity in the period since the Second World War has centered on its global military might (Adam 1994: 113).

The debate over gay marriage was equally freighted with symbolic power for all concerned. In the 1980s and early 1990s, lesbians and gay men won substantial victories in obtaining domestic partner benefits such as health insurance for the lovers of gay men and lesbians employed by many businesses, city governments, and universities around the United States—no small matter in a country without national health care. A number of cities, such as San Francisco, had formal provisions for couples to register at City Hall as domestic partners. No one seemed quite prepared, however, when the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled in 1993, that a lower court had improperly dismissed a lawsuit challenging the state’s policy of denying marriage licenses to gay or lesbian couples. The court suggested that it would most likely rule in favor of the lawsuit, and a lower court eventually did so in 1997. Meanwhile, conservatives around the country were shocked to realize that if Hawaii permitted gay marriages, then the U.S. Constitution might require every other state to recognize those marriages. Even as gay men and lesbians throughout the United States began imagining wedding-and-honeymoon trips to Hawaii, conservatives in many state legislatures began introducing measures to define marriage strictly as the union of a man and a woman. Such measures had become law in twenty-five states by mid-1997. At the same time, members of the U.S. Congress proposed a national Defense of Marriage Act, which Clinton announced in September 1996 that he would sign, effectively ensuring its passage.

The marriage debate was revealing for what it suggested about the limits of popular endorsement of the equality of gay men and lesbians. While substantial percentages of those surveyed in opinion polls disapproved of discrimination against gays and lesbians in the workplace, far fewer were able to conceive of gay marriage as anything other than an oxymoron.³⁵ More than a referendum on homosexuality, the debate encapsulated American confusion about the very nature of the family and its place in late-twentieth-century society (Pollitt 1996; Stacey 1996). At the same time, the marriage issue sparked passionate arguments among gay men and lesbians themselves. In the wake of the lesbian “baby boom” of the late 1980s and 1990s, the legal fights for custody and adoption of children by gay and lesbian parents, and well-publicized struggles by lesbians and gay men to be the acknowledged legal guardians of their partners in the event of medical incapacitation, many saw “family” issues as the cutting edge of movement politics (Weston 1991; Stacey 1996); for them, gay marriage was the single most important marker of progress. To others, however, the “aping” of heterosexual marital institutions was a betrayal of radical liberationist and feminist critiques of traditional models of gender, sexuality, and the family and reflected an unfortunate desire to assimilate into the mainstream.³⁶

Somewhat similarly, debates within gay and lesbian communities about military service pitted those who saw inclusion in the military as the pivotal step in the march for equality and genuine citizenship against those who questioned gay support for a historically misogynistic, racist, and homophobic institution that acted in the interest of U.S. imperial ambition. Thus, viewed from one angle, the demand for inclusion in these two core institutions of the nation—marriage and the military—was a radical move; indeed it was more radical than queer antiassimilationism, which contented itself with denouncing those institutions from the sidelines. But from another angle, this conventional understanding of gay citizenship, which positioned sexual minorities as being “just like everyone else,” surrendered the idea that lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered people could promote meaningful political alternatives only insofar as they were *different* from the straight majority. In the debates over marriage and the military, “the U.S. lesbian and gay movement” once again was distinguished as much by its internal diversity and disagreement as it was by its ability to bring contentious social issues to center stage.

In November 1997, when President Clinton made his way to the podium at a fund-raising dinner for the Human Rights Campaign, it marked the first time that a U.S. president ever spoke at an event sponsored by a

lesbian and gay civil rights organization. Given how unthinkable this would have been even twenty years earlier, it is clear that an impressive sea of change in public sentiment had occurred in the interim. At the same time, the fragility of gay rights in the United States is so apparent, the cultural climate surrounding sexuality is so repressive, and the strides toward equal citizenship are so limited in comparison to other Western countries that it becomes crucial to reflect both on the peculiarities of the United States and on the internal difficulties of U.S. gay and lesbian movements.

In 1960 no cities or states in the United States guaranteed equal rights to gay men and lesbians. Every state outlawed sodomy, and there were no openly gay elected officials anywhere in the United States. By 1997 thirty states and the District of Columbia had abolished their sodomy laws. Eleven states and dozens of cities and counties had passed laws protecting lesbians and gay men (and sometimes bisexuals and transgendered people) from various forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation, and elsewhere gubernatorial executive orders and mayoral proclamations officially banned discrimination. As a result, by the mid-1990s more than one-fifth of Americans lived in cities or counties providing legal protection (Wald, Button, and Rienzo 1996: 1153). In addition, five states, including New York, now offer domestic partner benefits to gay and lesbian state employees. With the exception of Wisconsin and Minnesota, however, every state that has banned discrimination (including Hawaii) is on the Atlantic or Pacific Coast, leaving the inhabitants of the vast interior without protection (Sherrill 1996: 469). Sodomy laws remain on the books in most of the South, several western states, Michigan, and even liberal Massachusetts. And, although in 1997 the U.S. Senate came surprisingly close to passing a bill banning employment discrimination, relief is not very likely to come soon at the federal level.

At this writing, three members of the U.S. House of Representatives are openly gay—though all were closeted when first elected to that office—as are eleven other men and women in state-level governments. In late 1997, Virginia Apuzzo, a former executive director of the NGLTF, became the highest-ranking openly gay or lesbian person in government in U.S. history when she was appointed assistant to the president for management and administration. Increasingly, large segments of the society appear ready to countenance the presence of lesbians and gay men in roles that were previously unthinkable—gay and lesbian ministers, gay and lesbian athletes, gay and lesbian characters in popular television shows and films. Newspapers that in the recent past covered homosexuality as a crime story or a titillating social problem now routinely present commentary and analysis on lesbian and gay politics, community, and identity. Television talk shows provide a forum, however constrained, for those with

the most marginalized sexualities to tell their stories to a national audience (J. Gamson 1998). Even in the domain of organized religion, there have been significant changes. In 1997, for example, the Interfaith Alliance, a nationwide organization of more than fifty denominations, announced its support for a federal antidiscrimination law protecting lesbians and gay men in the workplace.

In more subtle respects, too, gay and lesbian movements have made their mark on the polity and the broader culture. As Alberto Melucci (1989: 73–76) has noted, social movements often have a “hidden efficacy” that becomes apparent only over time: by challenging cultural codes and conventions, they suggest to the broader society “that alternative frameworks of meaning are possible.”³⁷ Thus, for example, the fight by gay men and lesbians to gain legal permission to adopt children may reflect a deeper challenge to ideas about what families ought to look like, while the struggle to use public funds to support sexually explicit and sex-positive AIDS educational campaigns marks the extent to which beliefs about the relation between sex, pleasure, and sin are currently subject to debate. Even the emergence of heterosexuality as an increasingly salient social identity marks the subtle influences of lesbian and gay movements on the broader culture (Katz 1995).

These indicators of social change are significant, and they speak, at least in part, to the power of political activism and the diffuse effects of the visibility of lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender communities. At the same time, other measures suggest that the gains of U.S. gay and lesbian movements of recent decades coexist with strong antipathy toward gay men and lesbians that has varied little over time. For example, the General Social Survey, the most complete statistical survey of public attitudes on a range of social issues over the years, revealed no meaningful change in beliefs about the acceptability of gay sexuality between 1973 and 1991 (Smith 1994: 63–97). In 1973, 73 percent of those surveyed said that sex between members of the same sex was “always wrong”; in the 1991 survey, that figure was 77 percent. Another survey, the American National Election Study, asks respondents to rank different social groups using a “feeling thermometer.” Responses over time reveal that feelings toward gays and lesbians are “colder” than feelings for many other oppressed groups, including blacks and people on welfare, and “warmer” only than feelings for illegal aliens (Sherrill 1996: 470). Findings such as these are consistent with Urvashi Vaid’s contention that lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered people in the United States have been granted “virtual equality”—“a state of conditional equality based more on the appearance of acceptance by straight America than on genuine civic parity” (Vaid 1995: xvi).

Such attitudes reflect not only the power of religious fundamentalism in the United States but also the deep undercurrents of anxiety about sexuality and the legacy of the "sexual revolution." Numerous episodes—from the public furor in 1989 and 1990 over the exhibition of sexually explicit and sadomasochistic work by acclaimed gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe (Cruikshank 1992: 51) to recent laws in California and other states mandating the "chemical castration" of sex offenders—demonstrate that sexuality remains a fertile domain for staging moral panic. The most comprehensive recent survey of sexual behaviors and attitudes in the United States found that respondents could be clustered into seven distinct subsets based on their responses to questions about the acceptability of homosexuality, premarital sex, extramarital sex, abortion, and pornography. In five of the seven clusters, accounting for three-quarters of the entire population surveyed, "same-gender sex" was rated as "always wrong" by heavy majorities (between 65 percent and 98 percent). In the remaining two clusters, less than 10 percent of respondents agreed that same-gender sex was always wrong (Laumann et al. 1994: 509–40, esp. 514). The results suggest not only that discomfort with lesbian and gay sexuality in U.S. society extends far beyond the New Right but also that there is little middle ground between the attitudinal clusters that are heavily opposed and those that are quite supportive.

These findings also underscore the point that the ways in which gay and lesbian movements frame sexuality and identity matter. A substantial sector of the population is more inclined at present to accept the argument that gays, as a people, deserve protection from discrimination than to feel really comfortable with the idea of sex between men or sex between women (see Yang 1997). So, on one hand, social movements that play down questions of sexuality and emphasize issues of fairness would seem to have a short-term, tactical advantage. But, on the other hand, this approach may well jettison the possibility of long-term, fundamental improvement either in the social standing of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people or in the overall political climate surrounding sexuality.

An analogous framing dispute (Benford 1993) is suggested by findings that people who believe that homosexuals are "born that way" are considerably more likely to support gay rights than those who believe that homosexuals have "chosen" their lifestyle ("Poll Finds Even Split" 1993). Awareness of such views prompts social movement organizations to promulgate a conception of gay people as a fixed, identifiable group in society and to latch onto biological research suggesting genetic causes of homosexuality—and this frame resonates with many gay men and lesbians. The difficulty, however, is that gay men and lesbians are constituted as in-

voluntary victims; the movement is portrayed as internally homogeneous, and it has no language to discuss the fluid ways in which at least some people experience their sexuality; and the systems of sexual categorization in use in the society are simply taken for granted. Moreover, the essentialist model of identity lends itself to a single-issue, zero-sum model of politics that inhibits the formation of meaningful alliances with other constituencies for social change.

It would appear that this quasi-ethnic, rights-based, identity politics is overdetermined in the United States. In the absence of a political party that could promote a lesbian and gay political agenda, and in a society where political claims are so often advanced by mobilized ethnic identities, this strategy has an obvious appeal.³⁸ And the notion of gays as a people deserving equal protection under the law lends itself to judicial struggles in the U.S. legal context (Halley 1993: 82–102), while deflecting much of the hostility of those disquieted by unconventional forms of sexual expression. Furthermore, the strategy promotes the building of stable organizations and institutions. Yet the strategy is also highly problematic, given the proliferation of political forms and identities within gay and lesbian movements in the United States. As the historical record suggests, when the mainstream lesbian and gay rights movement advances these politics, it tends to present itself in hegemonic fashion as "the movement," almost insuring the periodic eruption of dissent from within lesbian and gay communities: hence the oscillation between the dominance of pragmatic, quasi-ethnic identity politics and the powerful surges of utopian alternatives that either insist on the instability of identities; or argue that it is dangerous to make identity the fundamental organizing principle; or assert the centrality of internal differences based on race, gender, or other characteristics that are suppressed by the hegemonic model; or reject the goal of assimilation and integration; or proclaim some combination of these views.

The multiplicity of voices and goals within U.S. gay and lesbian movements, in combination with specific features of U.S. society, therefore structures not only the familiar dilemmas of social movement politics—gradualism versus provocation, assimilationism versus separatism, single-issue groups versus coalitions, centralization versus grassroots localism—but also the less commonly found tension between the politics of stable identity and the politics of instability and difference. In the struggle between different conceptions of politics, various groups have competed to lay claim to "the movement" and say what it "really is," but none has entirely succeeded in doing so. Is there an alternative model—one that will "play" in the U.S. context; that will not suppress or deny difference; and that has the potential to improve the life conditions of lesbians, gay men,

bisexuals, transgendered people, and queer people while also challenging the social organization of gender and sexuality and the culture of sexual repression? This politics would take "identity as a point of departure rather than a final destination" (Kauffman 1990: 79)—organizing less around identity than "sympathy and affinity," both within and between groups (Phelan 1994: 155). The goal would be to forge alliances across gay and other social movements, not on the basis of shared history or the congruence of experience but on the ground of similarities in their relations to the dominant constellations of power in the society (C. Cohen 1997: 458). But to succeed, this politics would need to promote a new vision of citizenship, articulating a model of belonging that neither embraced marginalization for its own sake nor surrendered the goal of social transformation.

NOTES

Acknowledgments: I am deeply indebted to the editors of this volume, as well as to Dennis Altman, Mary Bernstein, Héctor Carrillo, Jeff Escoffier, Josh Gamson, Joe Gusfield, Harry Hirsch, David Kirp, Steve Murray, Steve Seidman, Arlene Stein, Verta Taylor, Chris Waters, and Andy Williams, for providing essential feedback on a first draft of this chapter. Responsibility for the deficiencies that remain—and for my failure to follow the good advice of these friends and colleagues in all particulars—is mine alone.

1. Except insofar as this essay incorporates some of my empirical work on the AIDS movement (S. Epstein 1996)—and reflects, more generally and more loosely, my own experiences as participant/observer in gay communities and movements in the United States—it is not based on my own primary research. Instead, I have strived to synthesize the existing scholarly literature, organize it within a new analytical frame, and highlight it with concepts and tools that have been developed in the sociology of social movements. In completing this project, I drew from the existing, book-length analyses of gay and lesbian movements in the United States, including Altman 1971, 1982a; D'Emilio 1983, 1992; Adam 1987, 1995; Faderman 1991; Cruikshank 1992; Duberman 1993; Murray 1996; and A. Stein 1997. In addition the "historical sourcebook" recently compiled by Blasius and Phelan (1997) is an invaluable collection of documentary sources. Many specific facts presented in this essay but not otherwise referenced were obtained from Thompson 1994; National Museum and Archive 1996; and Ridinger 1996. Some of the information presented about individual movement organizations came from their Internet web pages.

2. Despite their visibility and distinctive characteristics, U.S. gay and lesbian movements have received relatively little notice from scholars who emphasize the sociological literature on social movements (see the critique in Warner 1993: ix–x). Exceptions (nearly all of them from the 1990s) include Adam 1987, 1995; J. Gamson 1989, 1995, 1996, 1997; A. Stein 1992, 1997; Taylor and Whittier

1992: 104–29; Taylor and Rupp 1993; Jenness and Broad 1994; Jenness 1995; Taylor and Raeburn 1995; Bernstein 1997a, 1997b; and Esterberg 1997. Only recently have the mainstream anthologies on social movements begun to include chapters on gay and lesbian movements, and only recently have sociological discussions of contemporary social movements in the United States routinely begun to point to gay and lesbian movements as examples (see, for instance, Johnston, Laraña, and Gusfield 1994): 3–35.

3. My goal here is not to obscure commonalities or reify complexity but to challenge problematic ways in which "the movement" has often been understood. That similarities among groups do nonetheless exist is a point I make throughout this essay.

4. My analysis draws upon recent work in the study of social movements that emphasizes the importance of the formation of collective identities—in particular, work that recognizes that collective identities are rarely stable and that shows how they may be as much the product as the prerequisite of movement activism. See, for example, the essays in Morris and Mueller 1992 and in Laraña, Johnston and Gusfield 1994, as well as Melucci 1989. On struggles to define and deploy collective identities in gay and lesbian movements in the United States—and on the policing of boundaries and the trajectory of internal divisions—see also A. Stein 1992, 1997; Taylor and Whittier 1992: 104–29; Seidman 1993: 105–42, 1994, 1997; J. Gamson 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998; Rust 1995; Whisman 1996; Bernstein 1997b; C. Cohen 1997; and Armstrong 1998. Though the issue of identity seems particularly problematic for gay and lesbian movements, my discussion resembles Cathy Cohen's (1996: 362–94, forthcoming) analysis of how monolithic conceptions of black identity obscure internal divisions and power struggles within African American communities.

5. A related issue concerns the relation and boundaries between "movement," "subculture," and "community" (Duyvendak 1995: 165–80). It is important to note that gay and lesbian movements in the United States are not strictly bounded by or encapsulated within formal movement organizations.

6. The tension I describe is similar to what Mary Bernstein (1997b) notes as the opposition between the "celebration" and "suppression" of differences in lesbian and gay "identity deployment." In her formal model, the tendency of the movement either to celebrate or suppress difference from the mainstream culture depends on specific structural factors in the organizational environment and the polity. Here—without necessarily disagreeing—I emphasize historical contingency, general aspects of U.S. society, and the problem of differences within lesbian and gay communities.

7. Throughout this chapter I rely upon the useful claim by recent analysts that social movements are not simply "carriers" or "transmitters" of ideology but are fundamentally and necessarily engaged in the "framing" of reality. Social movements seek to "frame, or assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (Snow and Benford 1988: 198). However, in order for frames to work, they must "resonate"—they must be empirically credible, consistent with personal experience, and congruent

with larger cultural heritages (Snow and Benford 1988: 207–10). See also Goffman 1974; Gitlin 1980; Snow et al. 1986; W. Gamson 1988; Snow and Benford 1992: 133–55; Benford 1993; and Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994: 185–208.

8. In the field of lesbian and gay studies, the question of how to conceptualize sexual subjectivity in its social and historical specificity became known in the 1980s as the essentialist/constructionist debate (see the essays in E. Stein 1992): can categories of people such as “homosexuals” plausibly be said to exist in all societies throughout history, or are such categories radically contingent, with the possibilities of their existence determined by concrete social and cultural factors? Here I focus attention on the self-understandings of individual political actors and the collective understandings put forward by movement organizations and their interlocutors—in short, the political consequences of beliefs about the stability or mutability of identity. It should be clear that the “orientation versus preference” opposition does not precisely correspond to the opposition between essentialism and constructionism, though they have important points of convergence. (I failed to make this sufficiently clear in S. Epstein 1987, which was reprinted in E. Stein 1992.) On the political implications of beliefs about sexual identities, see also the citations in note 4 above.

9. Here I refer to what Eve Sedgwick (1990) has termed the distinction between “universalizing” and “minoritizing” discourses of sexual categorization.

10. As Jeff Weintraub (1997: 1–2) notes, the widespread employment of the distinction between public and private “often generates as much confusion as illumination, not least because different sets of people who employ these concepts mean very different things by them.” Here I mean to invoke the distinction between a private sphere of eroticism, intimacy, and family and a public sphere of political and state action—the sense of the distinction that seems to be present in lesbian and gay activists’ political philosophies, whether or not they believe that drawing such a dividing line is advisable. As Weintraub points out, such renderings of the public/private distinction cloud the issue of on which side of the divide to locate the market and the workplace.

11. Because this volume focuses on the post-1960s period, my discussion of gay activism in the 1950s and 1960s is cursory. The fullest treatment can be found in D’Emilio 1983.

12. More generally, the growth of manufacturing and the decline of farm labor had diminished the importance of the family as a productive unit, freeing individuals to pursue lives outside the bounds of traditional family forms and encouraging the belief that sex might serve the goals of pleasure and intimacy, rather than just the procreation of offspring whose economic labor was needed by the family (D’Emilio 1992: 6–7; Murray 1996: 52). On the broad “macroprocesses” that can lead to the emergence of social movements, see McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988: 711.

13. Subcultures of both women and men desiring same-sex romantic and sexual contact were well developed in large U.S. cities by the 1920s and 1930s, especially in working-class neighborhoods, in European immigrant communities, and in African American communities (Faderman 1991; Kennedy and Davis 1993; Chauncey 1994; Mumford 1997).

14. On the role of sexologists and doctors in the elaboration of these categories, see Foucault 1980; Chauncey 1982–1983; and Weeks 1985.

15. Kinsey and his collaborators found that 37 percent of men and 13 percent of women in their sample had had at least one homosexual experience leading to orgasm. The representative character of Kinsey’s sample has been much debated; see Laumann et al. 1994.

16. Perhaps the earliest popular work that conceptualized homosexuals as a distinct minority in U.S. society was Cory 1951.

17. “We would be foolish not to recognize what the Negro rights movement has shown us is sadly so,” noted Kameny: “that mere persuasion, information and education are not going to gain for us in actual practice the rights and equality which are ours in principle” (quoted in Blasius and Phelan 1997: 335).

18. “We want to reach the homosexuals entombed in you, to liberate our brothers and sisters, locked in the prisons of your skulls,” argued Martha Shelley, addressing the straight world. “We will never go straight until you go gay.” (1972: 34).

19. Of course, as Gross (1993: 21) notes, young people of the sixties generation who had already located themselves outside the mainstream culture indeed had little to risk by coming out, whereas older gay men and lesbians had keener memories of persecution and police entrapment and much greater reason to fear the consequences of coming out.

20. This understanding of gayness as quasi-ethnic, which many analysts have remarked upon, appears to have been first described in these terms by Stephen Murray (1979).

21. Of course, the prior tendency to understand ethnic groups of any kind in essentialist terms is itself problematic; see S. Epstein 1987: 34–38.

22. On the importance of “resource mobilization” to the sustenance of social movements, see, for example, Oberschall 1973; McCarthy and Zald 1977; and W. Gamson 1990.

23. In S. Epstein 1987 I argued that the ethnic model of gayness, while essentialist, was less rigidly so than biological models of homosexuality, particularly when gay “ethnicity” was understood in a loose or metaphorical way. I still think this is true, but I am less certain now that the difference between these varieties of essentialism matters much in the political domain, especially when it comes to recognizing internal differences within lesbian and gay communities. For an “admittedly nitpicking” critique of my earlier article’s treatment of identity and difference, see E. Cohen 1991: 73–76.

24. Actual use of the term “homophobia” appears to date from Weinberg 1972. (I thank Jeff Escoffier for pointing this out to me.) A psychotherapist, Weinberg defined homophobia as “the dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals—and in the case of homosexuals themselves, self-loathing” (1972: 4). Although it tended to imply the liberal view that homophobia might be cured by a good dose of education, the concept of homophobia had latent affinities with radical feminism when it recognized how deeply rooted antigay sentiment often was: it suggested that the greater inclination of straight men toward homophobic violence reflected their perception that gay men and lesbians posed symbolic threats to the conventional gender order.

25. Local electoral victories reflected the utility of an ethnic/territorial model of political organizing (Davis 1995: 284-303). Milk's election, for example, was made possible by a change in the political opportunity structure that gave power to the city's distinct "ethnic" neighborhoods: the voting laws had been amended so that supervisors were elected by district, rather than at large.

26. Though it is beyond the scope of this essay, the New Right (or Radical Right, or Christian Right) merits analysis as a social movement in its own right. As Didi Herman has argued, the New Right is "a paradigmatic movement for social change, and no more (nor less) a backlash impulse than feminism, gay rights, and others" (1997: 195). See also Adam 1987: 108-17; Diamond 1989.

27. An adequate assessment of the impact of AIDS on gay communities and movements in the United States is well beyond the scope of this chapter. As a start see Patton 1985, 1990; Altman 1986; Shilts 1987; Crimp and Rolston 1990; Schneider and Stoller 1995; Epstein 1996; Murray 1996; Kirp 1997; Levine, Nardi, and Gagnon 1997; and C. Cohen forthcoming. This chapter is also not the place for a full assessment of the AIDS movement, a constellation of groups and organizations whose boundaries extend well beyond gay and lesbian communities.

28. In 1990, after retiring from the Supreme Court, Justice Lewis Powell acknowledged that his vote to uphold Georgia's sodomy law had been a mistake (Cruikshank 1992: 194).

29. This is analogous to Cathy Cohen's (1996: 362-94, forthcoming) discussion of the role of black elites in policing the image of the African American community and marginalizing some of the most vulnerable within that community.

30. As Joshua Gamson (1995: 413) has noted, this deconstructive impulse within queer politics demands attention from scholars of social movements who have become used to studying how movements construct collective identities: for some movements, the goal of activism may be the *destabilization* of collective identity rather than its elaboration.

31. To be sure, while bisexuality and transgender seemed at times to challenge existing categories and binary divides, they are themselves categories, and thus at other moments they seemed to provide opportunities for the consolidation of new, more particular but equally fixed, identities.

32. For a range of views on the inclusion of gender and racial concerns in queer politics, see Maggenti 1991; Walters 1996; and C. Cohen 1997.

33. On queer theory, see Sedgwick 1990; de Lauretis 1991; Butler 1993; and Seidman 1996.

34. In this regard it was noteworthy that the public debate about gays in the military seemed preoccupied with the threat posed by *male* homosexuality. On the debate over gay men and lesbians in the military, see also Shilts 1993; Herek, Jobe, and Carney 1996; and Katzenstein 1996:229-47.

35. In a survey conducted in the spring of 1993 and reported in *U.S. News and World Report*, 65 percent favored ensuring equal rights for gay people, but only 35 percent supported recognizing "legal partnerships" for homosexuals (National Museum and Archive 1996: 104).

36. This divide over marriage was not entirely new; see Nardi 1996.

37. However, Melucci himself is disparaging and dismissive in reference to gay culture. See Melucci 1989: 159, and see the critique in Warner 1993: ix-x.

38. In Weberian terms, "status," rather than "class" or "party," becomes the logical organizing principle in this case (Gerth and Mills 1946: 180-95).

REFERENCES

- ACT UP/New York Women and AIDS Book Group. 1990. *Women, AIDS, and Activism*. Boston: South End.
- Adam, Barry D. 1987. *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*. Boston: Twayne.
- . 1994. "Anatomy of a Panic: State Voyeurism, Gender Politics, and the Cult of Americanism." In *Gays and Lesbians in the Military: Issues, Concerns, and Contrasts*. Ed. Wilbur J. Scott and Sandra Carson Stanley. Hawthorne, N.Y.: Aldine de Gruyter.
- . 1995. *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*. Rev. ed. New York: Twayne.
- Altman, Dennis. 1971. *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation*. New York: Avon.
- . 1982a. *The Homosexualization of America*. Boston: Beacon.
- . 1982b. "Sex: The New Front Line for Gay Politics." *Socialist Review* 12 (5): 76-84.
- . 1986. *AIDS in the Mind of America*. Garden City: Anchor.
- . 1988. "Legitimation through Disaster: AIDS and the Gay Movement." In *AIDS: The Burdens of History*. Ed. Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1981. "Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to Third World Women Writers." In *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. Ed. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone.
- . 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinster.
- Armstrong, Elizabeth. 1998. "Multiplying Identities: Identity Elaboration in San Francisco's Lesbian/Gay Organizations." Ph.D. diss., Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley.
- Bawer, Bruce. 1993. *A Place at the Table: The Gay Individual in American Society*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- . 1996. "Introduction." In *Beyond Queer: Challenging Gay Left Orthodoxy*. Ed. Bruce Bawer. New York: Free Press.
- Bayer, Ronald. 1981. *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis*. New York: Basic.
- Beam, Joseph, ed. 1986. *In the Life: A Black Gay Anthology*. Boston: Alyson.
- Benford, Robert D. 1993. "Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement." *Social Forces* 71:677-701.
- Berlant, Lauren, and Elizabeth Freeman. 1993. "Queer Nationality." In *Fear of a*

- Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bernstein, Mary. 1997a. "Sexual Orientation Policy, Protest, and the State." Ph.D. diss., Department of Sociology, New York University.
- . 1997b. "Celebration and Suppression: The Strategic Uses of Identity by the Lesbian and Gay Movement." *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 3 (November): 531–65.
- Bérubé, Allan. 1990. *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*. New York: Free Press.
- Bérubé, Alan, and Jeffrey Escoffier. 1991. "Queer/Nation." *Out/Look*, no. 11 (Winter): 14–16.
- Blake, Susan, M., and Elaine Bratic Arkin. 1988. *AIDS Information Monitor: A Summary of National Public Opinion Surveys on AIDS: 1983 through 1986*. Washington, D.C.: American Red Cross.
- Blasius, Mark. 1994. *Gay and Lesbian Politics: Sexuality and the Emergence of a New Ethic*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Blasius, Mark, and Shane Phelan, eds. 1997. *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Bornstein, Kate. 1995. *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*. New York: Vintage.
- Boykin, Keith. 1996. *One More River to Cross: Black and Gay in America*. New York: Anchor.
- Bull, Chris, and John Gallagher. 1996. *Perfect Enemies: The Religious Right, the Gay Movement, and the Politics of the 1990s*. New York: Crown.
- Butler, Judith. 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge.
- Califa, Pat. 1994. *Public Sex: The Culture of Radical Sex*. Pittsburgh: Cleis.
- Callen, Michael, and Richard Berkowitz. 1982. "We Know Who We Are: Two Gay Men Declare War on Promiscuity." *New York Native*, 8 November, 23–29.
- Castells, Manuel. 1983. *The City and the Grassroots*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Chauncey, George, Jr. 1982–1983. "From Sexual Inversion to Homosexuality: Medicine and the Changing Conceptualization of Female Deviance." *Salmagundi* 58–59:114–46.
- . 1994. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940*. New York: Basic.
- Cohen, Cathy J. 1993. "Power, Resistance and the Construction of Crisis: Marginalized Communities Respond to AIDS." Ph.D. diss., Department of Political Science, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- . 1996. "Contested Membership: Black Gay Identities and the Politics of AIDS." In *Queer Theory/Sociology*. Ed. Steven Seidman. London: Blackwell.
- . 1997. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ* 3 (4): 437–65.
- . Forthcoming. *The Costs of Community: AIDS, Marginalization and Black Politics in the Twenty-first Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cohen, Ed. 1991. "Who Are 'We'? Gay 'Identity' as Political (E)motion (A Theoretical Rumination)." In *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*. Ed. Diana Fuss. New York: Routledge.
- Corea, Gena. 1992. *The Invisible Epidemic: The Story of Women and AIDS*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Cory, Donald Webster [Edward Sagarin]. 1951. *The Homosexual in America*. New York: Castle.
- Crain, Caleb. 1997. "Pleasure Principles." *Lingua Franca* (October): 26–37.
- Crimp, Douglas, and Adam Rolston. 1990. *AIDS Demographics*. Seattle: Bay.
- Cruikshank, Margaret. 1992. *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement*. New York: Routledge.
- Dangerous Bedfellows, ed. 1996. *Policing Public Sex: Queer Politics and the Future of AIDS Activism*. Boston: South End.
- Davis, Tim. 1995. "The Diversity of Queer Politics and the Redefinition of Sexual Identity and Community in Urban Space." In *Mapping Desire*. Ed. David Bell and Gill Valentine. London: Routledge.
- De Lauretis, Teresa. 1991. "Queer Theory and Lesbian and Gay Sexualities: An Introduction." *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* iii–xviii.
- D'Emilio, John. 1983. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1992. *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University*. New York: Routledge.
- Diamond, Sara. 1989. *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right*. Boston: South End.
- Duberman, Martin. 1993. *Stonewall*. New York: Dutton.
- Duggan, Lisa. "Making It Perfectly Queer." 1992. *Socialist Review* 22, no. 1 (January–March): 11–31.
- Duggan, Lisa, and Nan D. Hunter. 1995. *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Duyvendak, Jan Willem. 1995. "Gay Subcultures between Movement and Market." In *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Ed. Hanspeter Kriesi, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco G. Guigni. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Elbaz, Gilbert. 1992. "The Sociology of AIDS Activism: The Case of ACT UP/New York, 1987–1992." Ph.D. diss., City University of New York.
- Epstein, Barbara. 1988. "Direct Action: Lesbians Lead the Movement." *Out/Look*, no. 2 (Summer): 27–32.
- . 1991. *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Epstein, Steven. 1987. "Gay Politics, Ethnic Identity: The Limits of Social Constructionism." *Socialist Review* 17, no. 3–4 (May–August): 9–54.
- . 1995. "The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in the Reform of Clinical Trials." *Science, Technology and Human Values* 20, no. 4 (Fall): 408–37.

84 GAY AND LESBIAN MOVEMENTS: UNITED STATES

- . 1996. *Impure Science: AIDS, Activism, and the Politics of Knowledge*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- . 1997. "AIDS Activism and the Retreat from the Genocide Frame." *Social Identities* 3, no. 3 (October): 415–38.
- Escoffier, Jeffrey. 1985. "The Politics of Gay Identity." *Socialist Review*, 15, no. 4–5 (July–October): 119–53.
- . 1990. "Inside the Ivory Closet: The Challenges Facing Lesbian and Gay Studies." *Out/Look*, no. 10 (Fall): 40–48.
- Esterberg, Kristin G. 1997. *Lesbian and Bisexual Identities: Constructing Communities, Constructing Selves*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Evans, Arthur. 1973. "How to zap straights." In *The Gay Liberation Book*. Ed. Len Richmond and Gary Noguera. San Francisco: Ramparts Press.
- Faderman, Lillian. 1991. *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: Penguin.
- Fitzgerald, Frances. 1986. *Cities on a Hill: A Journey through Contemporary American Cultures*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage.
- Fung, Richard. 1996. "Looking for My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn." in *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience*. Ed. Russell Leong. New York: Routledge.
- Gamson, Joshua. 1989. "Silence, Death, and the Invisible Enemy: AIDS Activism and Social Movement 'Newness.'" *Social Problems* 36, no. 4 (October): 351–65.
- . 1995. "Must Identity Movements Self-destruct? A Queer Dilemma." *Social Problems* 42, no. 3 (August): 390–407.
- . 1996. "The Organizational Shaping of Collective Identity: The Case of Lesbian and Gay Film Festivals in New York." *Sociological Forum* 11 (2): 231–61.
- . 1997. "Messages of Exclusion: Gender, Movements, and Symbolic Boundaries." *Gender and Society* 11, no. 2 (April): 178–99.
- . 1998. *Freaks Talk Back: Television Talk and Sexual Nonconformity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gamson, William A. 1988. "Political Discourse and Collective Action." *International Social Movements Research* 1:219–44.
- . 1990. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. 2d ed. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth.
- Gerth, H. H., and C. Wright Mills, eds. 1946. *From Max Weber*. New York: Oxford.
- Gitlin, Todd. 1980. *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Gopinath, Gayatri. 1996. "Funny Boys and Girls: Notes on a Queer South Asian Planet." In *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience*. Ed. Russell Leong. New York: Routledge.
- Gross, Larry. 1993. *Contested Closets: The Politics and Ethics of Outing*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Halberstam, Judith. 1994. "F2M: The Making of Female Masculinity." In *The Lesbian Postmodern*. Ed. Laura Doan. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Halley, Janet E. 1993. "The Construction of Heterosexuality." In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hamer, Dean, and Peter Copeland. 1994. *The Science of Desire: The Search for the Gay Gene and the Biology of Behavior*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hay, Harry. 1996. *Radically Gay: Gay Liberation in the Words of Its Founder*. Ed. Will Roscoe. Boston: Beacon.
- Herek, Gregory M., Jared B. Jobe, and Ralph M. Carney, eds. 1996. *Out in Force: Sexual Orientation and the Military*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Herman, Didi. 1997. *The Anti-gay Agenda: Orthodox Vision and the Christian Right*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hunt, Scott A., Robert D. Benford, and David A. Snow. 1994. "Identity Fields: Framing Processes and the Social Construction of Movement Identities." In *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*. Ed. Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Hutchins, Loraine, and Lani Kaahumanu, eds. 1991. *Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out*. Boston: Alyson.
- Jenness, Valerie. 1995. "Social Movement Growth, Domain Expansion, and Framing Processes: The Case of Violence against Gays and Lesbians as a Social Problem." *Social Problems* 42, no. 1 (February): 145–70.
- Jenness, Valerie, and Kendal Broad. 1994. "Antiviolence Activism and the (In)visibility of Gender in the Gay/Lesbian and Women's Movements." *Gender and Society* 8, no. 3 (September): 402–23.
- Jernigan, David. 1988. "Why Gay Leaders Don't Last: The First Ten Years After Stonewall." *Out/Look*, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 33–49.
- Johnson, Dirk. 1997. "Chicago Hails District as Symbol of Gay Life." *New York Times*, 27 August, A-8.
- Johnson, Marcia P. 1972. "Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary: An Interview with Marcia Johnson." In *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. Ed. Karla Jay and Allen Young. New York: Douglas.
- Johnston, Hank, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph R. Gusfield. 1994. "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements." In *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*. Ed. Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Katz, Jonathan Ned. 1995. *The Invention of Heterosexuality*. New York: Dutton.
- Katzenstein, Mary Fainsod. 1996. "The Spectacle of Life and Death: Feminist and Lesbian/Gay Politics in the Military." In *Gay Rights, Military Wrongs: Political Perspectives on Lesbians and Gays in the Military*. Ed. Craig A. Rimmerman. New York: Garland.
- Kauffman, L. A. 1990. "The Anti-politics of Identity." *Socialist Review* 20, no. 1 (January–March): 67–80.

- Kennedy, Elizabeth Lapovsky, and Madeline D. Davis. 1993. *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community*. New York: Routledge.
- Kinsey, Alfred C. 1953. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*. Philadelphia: Saunders.
- Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin. 1948. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia: Saunders.
- Kirp, David L. Forthcoming. "The Politics of Blood: Hemophilia Activism in the AIDS Crisis." In *Blood Feuds: AIDS, Blood, and the Politics of Medical Disasters*. Ed. Ronald Bayer and Eric Feldman. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert P. 1986. "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-nuclear Movements in Four Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (January): 57-85.
- Laraña, Enrique, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield, eds. 1994. *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Laumann, Edward O., John H. Gagnon, Robert T. Michael, and Stuart Michaels. 1994. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- LeVay, Simon. 1993. *The Sexual Brain*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Levine, Martin P., Peter M. Nardi, and John H. Gagnon, eds. 1997. *In Changing Times: Gay Men and Lesbians Encounter HIV/AIDS*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lo, Clarence Y. H. 1992. "Communities of Challengers in Social Movement Theory." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. Ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Maggenti, Maria. 1991. "Women as Queer Nationals." *Out/Look* (Winter): 20-23.
- Marcus, Eric. 1992. *Making History: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Equal Rights, 1945-1990: An Oral History*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Marcuse, Herbert. 1966. *Eros and Civilization*. Boston: Beacon.
- Marotta, Toby. 1981. *The Politics of Homosexuality*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- McAdam, Doug. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1994. "Culture and Social Movements." In *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*. Ed. Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Meyer N. Zald. 1988. "Social Movements." In *Handbook of Sociology*. Ed. Neil Smelser. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage.
- McCarthy, John D., and Meyer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (6): 1212-41.
- Melucci, Alberto. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Meyer, David S., and Nancy Whittier. 1994. "Social Movement Spillover." *Social Problems* 41 (May): 277-98.
- Moraga, Cherrie, and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. 1981. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone.
- Morris, Aldon D., and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds. 1992. *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Mumford, Kevin J. 1997. *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Murray, Stephen O. 1979. "Institutional Elaboration of a Quasi-Ethnic Community." *International Review of Modern Sociology* 9:165-78.
- . *American Gay*. 1996. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Nardi, Peter M. 1996. "Saying 'I Do' to Broadening the Debate." *Los Angeles Times*, 5 February, op-ed, B-5.
- National Museum and Archive of Lesbian and Gay History. 1996. *The Gay Almanac*. New York: Berkley.
- Nelson, Emmanuel S., ed. 1993. *Critical Essays: Gay and Lesbian Writers of Color*. New York: Harrington Park.
- Oberschall, Anthony. 1973. *Social Conflict and Social Movements*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Oliver, Pamela, and Gerald Marwell. 1992. "Mobilizing Technologies for Collective Action." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. Ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Patton, Cindy. 1985. *Sex and Germs: The Politics of AIDS*. Boston: South End.
- . 1990. *Inventing AIDS*. New York: Routledge.
- . 1993. "Tremble, Hetero Swine!" In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Phelan, Shane. 1994. *Getting Specific: Postmodern Lesbian Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Piven, Frances Fox, and Richard A. Cloward. 1979. *Poor People's Movements*. New York: Vintage. Quoted in Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 49-50.
- "Poll Finds Even Split on Homosexuality's Cause." 1993. *New York Times*, 5 March, A-14.
- Pollitt, Katha. 1996. "Gay Marriage? Don't Say I Didn't Warn You," *The Nation*, 29 April, 9.
- Radicalesbians. 1972. "The Woman-Identified Woman." In *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. Ed. Karla Jay and Allen Young. New York: Douglas.
- Radicalesbians Health Collective. 1972. "Lesbians and the Health Care System." In *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. Ed. Karla Jay and Allen Young. New York: Douglas.
- Ramos, Juanita, ed. 1987. *Compañeras: Latina Lesbians (An Anthology)*. New York: Latina Lesbian History Project.
- Rich, Adrienne. 1983. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." In *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*. Ed. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson. New York: Monthly Review.

- Ridinger, Robert B. Marks. 1996. *The Gay and Lesbian Movement: References and Resources*. New York: Hall.
- Rofes, Eric. 1996. *Reviving the Tribe: Regenerating Gay Men's Sexuality and Culture in the Ongoing Epidemic*. New York: Haworth.
- Roscoe, Will, ed. 1988. *Living the Spirit: A Gay American Indian Anthology*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Rotello, Gabriel. 1997. *Sexual Ecology: AIDS and the Destiny of Gay Men*. New York: Dutton.
- Rubin, Gayle S. 1993. "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality." In *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. Ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin. New York: Routledge.
- Rust, Paula C. 1995. *Bisexuality and the Challenge to Lesbian Politics: Sex, Loyalty, and Revolution*. New York: New York University Press.
- Schneider, Beth E., and Nancy E. Stoller, eds. 1995. *Women Resisting AIDS: Feminist Strategies of Empowerment*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Schulman, Sarah. 1994. *My American History: Lesbian and Gay Life during the Reagan/Bush Years*. New York: Routledge.
- Schwartz, Ruth L. 1993. "New Alliances, Strange Bedfellows: Lesbians, Gay Men, and AIDS." In *Sisters, Sexperts, Queers: Beyond the Lesbian Nation*. Ed. Arlene Stein. New York: Plume.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 1990. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Seidman, Steven. 1988. "Transfiguring Sexual Identity: AIDS and the Contemporary Construction of Homosexuality." *Social Text* 19-20 (Fall): 187-205.
- . 1992. *Embattled Eros: Sexual Politics and Ethics in Contemporary America*. New York: Routledge.
- . 1993. "Identity and Politics in 'Postmodern' Gay Culture: Some Historical and Conceptual Notes." In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 1994. "Symposium: Queer Theory/Sociology. A Dialogue." *Sociological Theory* 12 (July): 166-77.
- . 1997. *Difference Troubles: Queering Social Theory and Sexual Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- , ed. 1996. *Queer Theory/Sociology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Shelley, Martha. 1972. "Gay Is Good." In *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. Ed. Karla Jay and Allen Young. New York: Douglas.
- Sherrill, Kenneth. 1996. "The Political Power of Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 29, no. 3 (September): 469-73.
- Shilts, Randy. 1987. *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*. New York: St. Martin's.
- . 1993. *Conduct Unbecoming: Lesbians and Gays in the U.S. Military*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Signorile, Michelangelo. 1993. *Queer in America: Sex, the Media, and the Closets of Power*. New York: Anchor.
- . 1997. *Life Outside: The Signorile Report on Gay Men, Sex, Drugs, Muscles, and the Passages of Life*. New York: HarperCollins.

- Smith, Barbara, ed. 1983. *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*. New York: Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press.
- Smith, Tom W. 1994. "Attitudes toward Sexual Permissiveness: Trends, Correlates, and Behavioral Connections." In *Sexuality across the Life Course*. Ed. Alice S. Rossi. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Snow, David A., and Robert D. Benford. 1988. "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization." *International Social Movement Research* 1:197-217.
- . 1992. "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. Ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Snow, David A., E. Burke Rochford Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford. 1986. "Frame Alignment Processes: Micromobilization and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (August): 464-81.
- Stacey, Judith. 1996. *In the Name of the Family: Rethinking Family Values in the Postmodern Age*. Boston: Beacon.
- Stein, Arlene. 1992. "Sisters and Queers: The Decentering of Lesbian Feminism." *Socialist Review* 22, no. 1 (January-March): 33-55.
- . 1997. *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- , ed. 1993. *Sisters, Sexperts, Queers: Beyond the Lesbian Nation*. New York: Plume.
- Stein, Edward, ed. 1992. *Forms of Desire: Sexual Orientation and the Social Constructionist Controversy*. New York: Routledge.
- Stoller, Nancy. 1995. "Lesbian Involvement in the AIDS Epidemic: Changing Roles and Generational Differences." In *Women Resisting AIDS: Feminist Strategies of Empowerment*. Ed. Beth E. Schneider and Nancy E. Stoller. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Sullivan, Andrew. 1995. *Virtually Normal: An Argument about Homosexuality*. New York: Knopf.
- Taylor, Verta, and Nicole C. Raeburn. 1995. "Identity Politics as High-Risk Activism: Career Consequences for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Sociologists." *Social Problems* 42, no. 2 (May): 252-73.
- Taylor, Verta, and Leila J. Rupp. 1993. "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism: A Reconsideration of Cultural Feminism." *Signs* 19, no. 1 (Fall): 32-61.
- Taylor, Verta, and Nancy E. Whittier. 1992. "Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. Ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Thompson, Mark, ed. 1994. *Long Road to Freedom: The Advocate History of the Gay and Lesbian Movement*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Vaid, Urvashi. 1995. *Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay and Lesbian Liberation*. New York: Anchor.
- Vance, Carole S. 1993. "Negotiating Sex and Gender in the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography." In *Sex Exposed: Sexuality and the Pornography Debate*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

- , ed. 1984. *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Wald, Kenneth D., James W. Button, and Barbara A. Rienzo. 1996. "The Politics of Gay Rights in American Communities: Explaining Antidiscrimination Ordinances and Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 4 (November): 1152–78.
- Walters, Suzanna Danuta. 1996. "From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Lesbian Menace (Or, Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Fag)." *Signs* 21, no. 4 (Summer): 830–69.
- Warner, Michael. 1993. "Introduction." In *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*. Ed. Michael Warner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 1997. "Media Gays: A New Stone Wall." *The Nation*, 14 July, 15–19.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. 1985. *Sexuality and Its Discontents: Meanings, Myths and Modern Sexualities*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Weinberg, George. 1972. *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*. New York: St. Martin's.
- Weintraub, Jeff. 1997. "The Theory and Politics of the Public-Private Distinction." In *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*. Ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Weise, Elizabeth Reba, ed. 1992. *Closer to Home: Bisexuality and Feminism*. Seattle: Seal.
- Weitz, Rose. 1984. "From Accommodation to Rebellion: The Politicization of Lesbianism." In *Women-Identified Women*. Ed. Trudy Darty and Sandee Potter. Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield.
- Weston, Kath. 1991. *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Whisman, Vera. 1996. *Queer by Choice: Lesbians, Gay Men, and the Politics of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Williams, A. M. 1994. "In Your Face and Just Out of Reach: The 'Queer' Social Movement in San Francisco, California's 'Castro.'" Unpublished article. Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven.
- Yang, Alan S. 1997. "Trends: Attitudes toward Homosexuality." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (Fall): 477–507.

JAMES N. GREEN

4 "More Love and More Desire" *The Building of a Brazilian Movement*

THE YEAR 1978 was a magical time in Brazil. After more than a decade of harsh military rule, the generals' demise seemed imminent.¹ Hundreds of thousands of metalworkers, silent for a decade, laid down their tools and struck against the government's regressive wage policies. Students filled the main streets of the states' capitals chanting, "Down with the dictatorship!" Radio stations played previously censored songs, and they hit the top of the charts. Blacks, women, and even homosexuals began organizing, demanding to be heard.

During the long, tropical summer that bridged 1978 and 1979, a dozen or so students, office workers, bank clerks, and intellectuals met weekly in the city of São Paulo, Brazil's largest metropolis. Rotating from apartment to apartment, sitting on the floor for lack of adequate furniture, they plotted the future of the first homosexual rights organization in Brazil. The meetings randomly alternated between consciousness-raising and discussion. The participants, mostly gay men with a few lesbians moving in and out of the group, debated the most recent antigay statements in *Notícias Populares*, a large-circulation, scandal-driven newspaper, and the appropriate responses for their newly founded organization, Núcleo de Ação pelos Direitos dos Homossexuais (Action Nucleus for Homosexuals' Rights). They closely followed every new issue of the recently launched gay monthly publication *Lampião da Esquina*. This tabloid-sized newspaper, produced by a collective of writers and intellectuals from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, declared itself to be a vehicle for the discussion of sexuality, racial discrimination, the arts, ecology, and machismo.

As the summer progressed, the group's name became a heated topic of debate. Did the name Action Nucleus for Homosexuals' Rights discourage new members from joining the group because it too boldly declared a political agenda? Perhaps the tone of activism in the group's name was the reason that only a dozen people at any given time came to the semi-secret meetings. Some wanted to change the name of the group to Somos (We Are) to pay homage to the publication put out by the Argentine Homosexual Liberation Front, South America's first gay rights group, which

The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics

*National Imprints of
a Worldwide Movement*

Edited by

BARRY D ADAM, JAN WILLEM DUYVENDAK,
AND ANDRÉ KROUWEL



TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Philadelphia

1999

QUEER IN COMMON COUNTRY

SINCE we first met, my partner Brady talked about wanting to have top surgery but was worried, for friends had warned him—

You won't be able to do anything for WEEKS—button your shirt, wipe yourself, feed yourself...

AND I promised him that I'd take care of him.

THREE years later he had the surgery and after a few days he didn't need much help at all.



As a joke I drew him a get well card with me as Saint Agatha, her severed breasts on a platter, feeding him grapes and chocolate. She is the patron saint of fire and earthquakes and later, I find out, of breast cancer patients.

BUT THEN eight months after his surgery he finds a lump under his scar so he goes back to his plastic surgeon.



The doctor's socks match his tie. Brady says this attention to detail is what you want in a plastic surgeon.

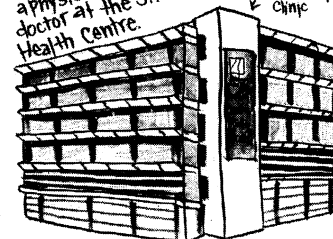
Are you worried about this?

No.

My doctor says it's cancer.

My doctor's conclusion is to remove all my breast tissue.

TWO months later he has a physical with his family doctor at the Sherbourne Health Centre.



Toronto's Queer & Trans Health Clinic

He reluctantly mentions the lump because he is hesitant to bring up, "one more thing."

His doctor takes an ultrasound and it comes back as a fibroadenoma. But she decides to look into it further.



I am going to fine needle biopsy it, just in case.

TWO WEEKS later, he goes back to her office for the results. I don't go because we know it is nothing, how could it be anything, the odds are against it and there is no way that he is not on the favourable side, on the side against the possibility of it being anything.

Many people have this story...

... the moment they are abruptly forced into what we seem to think are "the exceptions," into the no man's land between the kingdom of the well and the kingdom of the ill.*

It came back positive. The nuclei are abnormal. She's referred me to the breast clinic.

But really there is nothing exceptional about this place - there are few guides but there are many residents, and at the time we were just a few of the more privileged of its inhabitants.

Employed with benefits and sick leave

Partnered, no kids, affordable rent, supportive community, young and healthy, public healthcare system, live in a city with cancer cafe.

Self-employed who works from home.

But even though in our late capitalist industrial society we have tried to push back the kingdom of the dead so we no longer accept its rule.

CANCER IS COMMON COUNTRY.

* Susan Sontag, Illness as Metaphor

A WEEK LATER the breast clinic calls but when we go to the appointment two weeks later they tell us that they rebooked it and to come back in another two weeks.

All that spring, I remember, in that time between appointments I would walk to my studio with thoughts, worries, fears, panic, decisions multiplying high above me like cumulonimbus clouds.

What if it's cancer?

What if he dies?

What if he has to have chemo?

Will we be able to move back to the West coast like we planned?

What if he dies?

What about all those who have died from breast cancer... mothers, aunts, grandmothers, Kathy Acker, Audre Lorde, Lhasa...

Maybe it is nothing. It is probably nothing.

We could just create plans possibilities, if we could only be on the otherside of knowing.

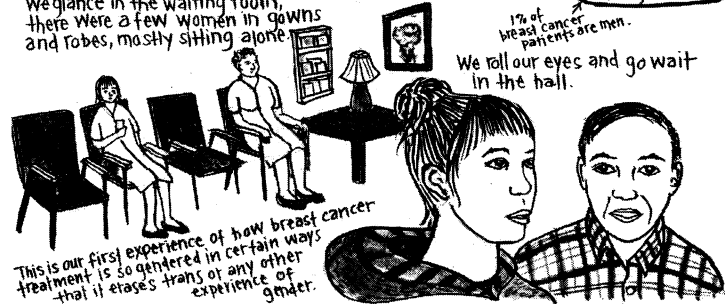
Meanwhile in his body cells are dividing, multiplying.

Later I tell my roommate and her girlfriend, both nurses, that the doctors must not think that Brady's case is that urgent because they have been making us wait so long for appointments. They look at each other and scoff with the knowledge of insiders. "I wouldn't take it to mean that at all," they say.

We arrive at the Breast clinic full of expectations, for today we will have some answers, maybe they will take care of us or at least they will tell us what is going to happen next.



We glance in the waiting room, there were a few women in gowns and robes, mostly sitting alone.



When Brady is called we realize that the doctor he is there to see is a surgeon.

He doesn't say much.



A MONTH later Brady goes in for surgery and two weeks later the surgeon tells us that it is definitely BREAST CANCER but he will need to do another SURGERY to remove the rest of the TUMOUR and see if it has spread to his LYMPH NODES.

This time we only have to wait ten days for the next surgery and we try and have as much fun as possible, but we are living on the edge of something about to happen, certain things are sharper, and others are hazy.

Right after his SECOND SURGERY, the surgeon comes into the waiting room.

I think we got it all. You said you were planning on going on vacation, well it looks good so you should go.



And I think we are DONE. This is it - the CANCER is gone and I think that we have crossed the borders back to the kingdom of the well.

A few days later we go visit our friends in St. John's, Newfoundland.

It happens to be Pride and we go to the annual Pride bonfire on the beach where we meet Dave and Tony, an almost retired couple.

I talk to Dave in the dark and the bonfire light. I tell him about Brady's diagnosis and he tells me that he has been going through treatment for Multiple myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells in bone marrow.

We talk about fear, waiting, cancer, love, and hope.



Later he checks in with Brady through all his treatments. Brady calls him his cancer family - A queer cancer family.



A WEEK after we return, the surgeon gives us the pathology report.



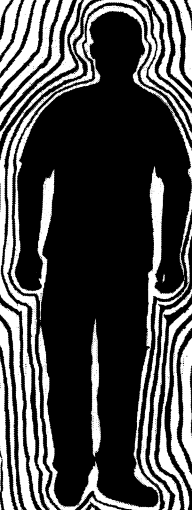
The margins are clear, the lymph nodes are clear so the cancer hasn't spread. It is Stage 1, but it is aggressive, a Grade 3, and it has a positive receptor for Her2 and Estrogen.



I'm going to refer you to the medical oncologist for further treatment.

AT THAT MOMENT we realize that when the SURGEON said it looked good, he meant that it looked GOOD to him—SURGICALLY.

Cancer patients talk about the feeling of being bounded, of being AWARE of the LIMITS of SPACE and TIME, ENCLOSED within a BODY that has been DECLARED DISEASED, and now RULED by the LAWS of an UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY.

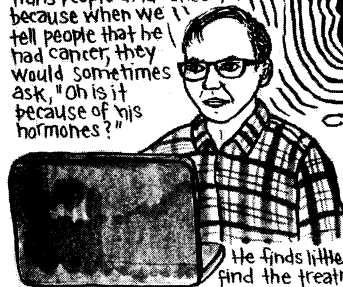


He had DONE HIS JOB, but Brady still had to have TREATMENT for CANCER.

where TIME becomes a PLACE.

I felt like we were at the mercy of the cancer gods and the oncology appointment gods—and the cancer gods seemed more merciful.

As we wait Brady researches trans people and cancer, because when we tell people that he had cancer, they would sometimes ask, "Oh is it because of his hormones?"



They were blaming the ILL, telling him that he DESERVED it, that he got CANCER because he is TRANS.

He finds little research on cancer and trans people but he does find the treatment protocols of his particular type of cancer.

So when we finally meet the oncologist, we are not surprised when she says he will have to have four rounds of chemo, a month of radiation and a year of Herceptin.

Drug given intravenously for HER2+ tumours.



You will start treatment next week.

So when is a good time to ask you about fertility options?



She had assumed that since we were a queer couple that she did not have to worry about us wanting to have kids.



You should have been exploring this six months ago. We're going to start you on chemo like NOW.

We have asked for resources but nobody has talked to us about anything for the last six months.

FINE, I will refer you to the fertility clinic.



Like many queer couples Brady and I talked about how we were going to have kids... who would carry, where would we get sperm, would our kids be genetically related to each of us, to each other, would they be mixed-race or white or Chinese...

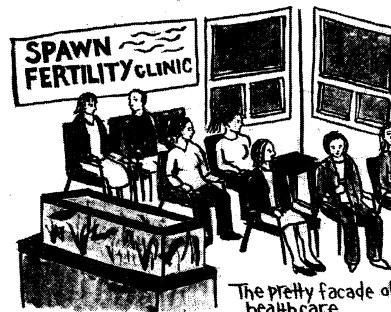
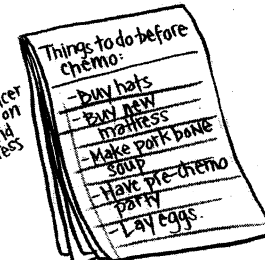
SO MANY QUESTIONS.



We were in our early to mid thirties so we wanted to figure this out soon, but we didn't think we'd have to figure it out within a WEEK.

When we go to the fertility clinic, they offer us a "CANCER DISCOUNT" to freeze Brady's eggs and although it is still really expensive, we decide to do it.

We also get a cancer discount on hair and a mattress.



The waiting room is full of moneyed and desperate people. Every morning before work, they come in pumped full of hormones for daily ultrasounds and blood tests.

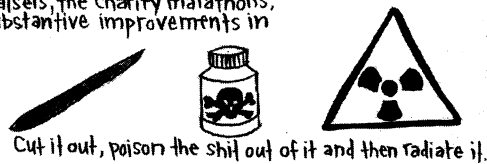
Brandy?

No I'm the patient. Just check the chart.

The pretty facade of privatized healthcare.

Despite the ads, the fundraisers, the charity marathons, there have been no real substantive improvements in treatment.

It is still BARBARIC.

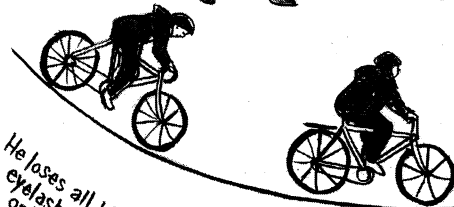


Cut it out, poison the shit out of it and then radiate it.

Chemo literally comes from the fields of WAR and the language of treatment is still steeped in images of BATTLE.



But we do not want to be Good Pink Ribboned Soldiers marching in line, running the races, consuming pink-packaged products, winning or losing the battle.

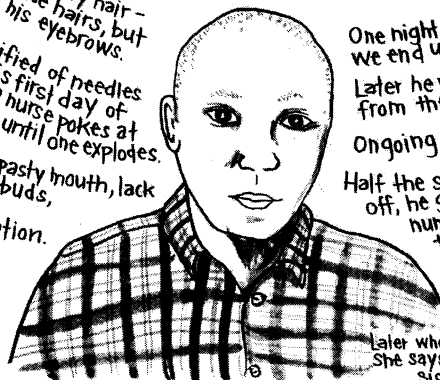


We go to every appointment together. We bike to almost all his treatments. We have dinner parties on the days that he can taste food.

He loses all his body hair - eyelashes, nose hairs, but only half his eyebrows.

He is terrified of needles and on his first day of chemo, a nurse pokes at his veins until one explodes.

Nausea, pasty mouth, lack of taste buds, painful constipation.



One night he has a high fever and we end up in the ER.

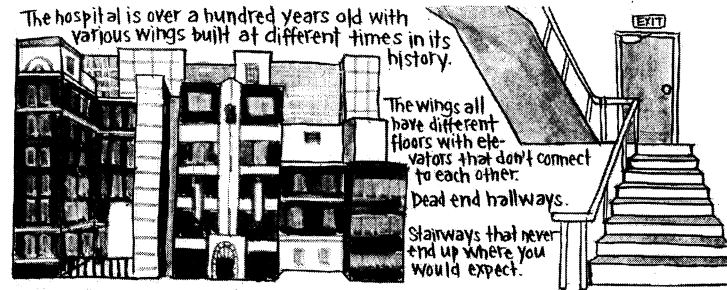
Later he rapidly gains weight from the steroids.

Ongoing fatigue.

Half the skin on his face cracks off, he gets hives and has numerous allergic reactions to the drugs, his doctor threatens to stop his treatment and then stops talking to us when we question her.

Later when she resumes treatment she says, "You are kind of a side effects person."

The hospital is over a hundred years old with various wings built at different times in its history.



The wings all have different floors with elevators that don't connect to each other.

Dead end hallways. Stairways that never end up where you would expect.

And then there are the receptionists forced to act as gatekeepers but with no authority or knowledge.



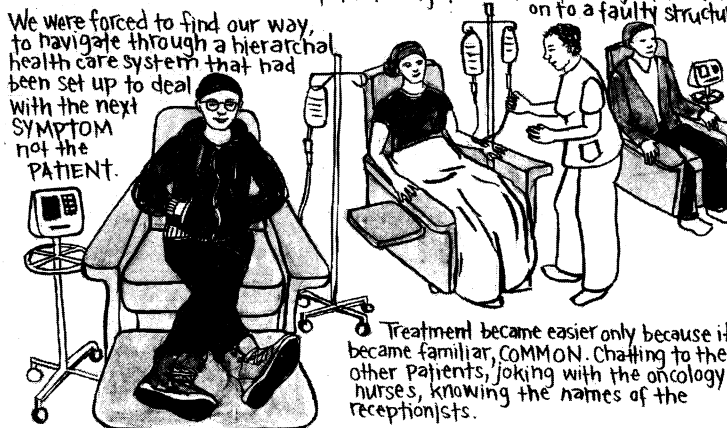
The emergency phone number that no one answers or even calls you back.

Tired nurses trying to keep up the IVs, the drips, the next complaint.



The hospital had tried to make an assemblage of improvements - adding signs, making renovations, hiring a "patient navigator" but they were just tacked on to a faulty structure.

We were forced to find our way, to navigate through a hierarchical health care system that had been set up to deal with the next SYMPTOM not the PATIENT.



Treatment became easier only because it became familiar, COMMON. Chatting to the other patients, joking with the oncology nurses, knowing the names of the receptionists.

Something of a community.

These small communities - not SOLID or ENCLOSED as to be disappointing or exclusive.



Whether I knew it or not, at the time, I was the "other." I consider this to be one of life's ironies, an Indigenous person feeling alien in their own land.

NIRKwUSCIN

Chase Willier

In memory of my adopted father, Glen Douglas, whose voice still echoes.

As someone who is both older and supposedly wiser, I consider myself blessed to have come from a culture where my elders acknowledged the two-spirit aspects of my identity, both as a lesbian and now, years later, as a transman. Like so many aboriginal people in Canada and a child of the Sixties Scoop, when First Nations children were "scooped" from their families and placed in foster homes or adopted, I struggled with a myriad of losses, and had no idea how deeply they had affected me. That's the hangover of colonization, a toxic cocktail of negative emotions, all swirling around with nowhere to go. I could feel a deep sense of frustration inside, but it took a while before I began to have words for it, and even longer to finally express my hurt, anger, and grief. Had it not been for my elders, who traditionally adopted me into the Syilx Nation at a very critical time in my life, my outcome would have been entirely different. At a gathering on Westbank First Nation, Glen Douglas embraced me in a blanket, took me in as his own, and he and his wife Lesley gave me the nurturing, guidance, and teachings I so desperately needed. Those early experiences gave me a compass, helping me sail through many a storm in a journey that has not only been a challenge, but has also held more than a few unexpected surprises.

"Culture is Healing," or at least that's what Round Lake Alcohol and

THE REMEDY

QUEER AND TRANS VOICES
ON HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

Edited by
ZENA SHARMAN



ARSENAL
PULP PRESS
VANCOUVER

THE REMEDY

Copyright © 2016 by the Contributors

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any part by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may use brief excerpts in a review, or in the case of photocopying in Canada, a license from Access Copyright.

ARSENAL PULP PRESS

Suite 202 – 211 East Georgia St.
Vancouver, BC V6A 1Z6
Canada
arsenalpulp.com

The publisher gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the British Columbia Arts Council for its publishing program, and the Government of Canada (through the Canada Book Fund) and the Government of British Columbia (through the Book Publishing Tax Credit Program) for its publishing activities.



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



Canada Council
for the Arts
Conseil des arts
du Canada

Canada

Design and cover illustration by Oliver McPartlin
Edited by Brian Lam with Linda Field
Editorial assistance by Claire Matthews
Illustrations for Innovation Profiles by Sam Bradd

Printed and bound in Canada

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication:

The remedy: queer and trans voices on health and health care / edited by Zena Sharman.

Includes bibliographical references.

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-55152-658-4 (paperback).—ISBN 978-1-55152-659-1

(html)

1. Gays—Medical care. 2. Gays—Health and hygiene.
3. Transgender people—Medical care. 4. Transgender people—
Health and hygiene. I. Sharman, Zena, 1979-, editor

RA564.9.H65R44 2016 362.1086'64 C2016-904412-2
C2016-904413-0

CONTENTS

Introduction: Why Queer and Trans Health Stories Matter

Zena Sharman..... 9

call in sick

Vivek Shraya 23

Name Game: Being Seen in My Entirety

Kyle Taylor-Shaughnessy..... 25

Unlearning: Improving Trans Care by Reorienting Medical and Nursing Discourse

soma navidson 31

Navigating This Life as a Black Intersex Man

Sean Saifa Wall 39

Confessions of a Gender Specialist

Sand C. Chang 45

Read This Before Your Next Clinical Visit: Cheap Advice for Frequent Patients

Francisco Ibáñez-Carrasco 53

Queer and Trans Health Innovation Profile:

The Q Card Project (Seattle, Washington)..... 59

Using Medical Education to Advance Health of LGBT Individuals

Kristen L. Eckstrand 63

Health as a Spiritual Practice: Or, Please Don't Call Me "Lady"

Sinclair Sexsmith 73

Our Caregiving, Ourselves

Kelli Dunham..... 81

Queer in Common Country

Kara Sievwright..... 87