Warren Johansson

Periods of the Movement

With the Stonewall Uprising on the early morning of June 28, 1969 the gay liberation movement in the United States began its massive upsurge. Twenty-one years have passed since that momentous event, commemorated by gay pride marches in a score of American cities. It was not, it should always be remembered, the absolute beginning of the movement: this had its start in Germany in January 1864, when Karl Heinrich Ulrichs published his first pamphlet under the title Vindex. Nor did it mark the commencement of organized activity for gay rights; this fell on May 14, 1897 when Magnus Hirschfeld and his collaborators formed the Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee (Scientific-Humanitarian Committee), a group that lasted until June 1933, when it was dissolved so that it would not be banned by the National Socialist regime.

Nor was the gay movement a total stranger to the American scene. At the end of 1950 Harry Hay and his circle in Los Angeles had formed the Mattachine Society, a daring assertion of the rights of a minority which until then had endured its oppression in passivity and silence. But in the climate created by McCarthyism and the conservative miasma of the Eisenhower years, the most that the few gay and lesbian organizations of the time could do was to survive and keep the tiny flame of resistance flickering. On the eve of Stonewall there were two score such groups in the entire country, with perhaps 150 activists. The anti-war movement, influenced by Stalinist and Maoist factions with their belief that homosexuality was nothing more than "bourgeois decadence", although it had convoked gigantic rallies and inspired strikes at such prestigious universities as Columbia and Harvard, largely scorned the appeals of the Student Homophile League for support.

The history of the movement that followed the Stonewall Uprising can best be divided into five phases, each with its own characteristic features and problems:

I. 1969-1973

The initial phase lasted from June 28, 1969 to the end of the Vietnam War on January 27, 1973. This was the heroic, the pioneering, the legendary era in which the movement drew strength and inspiration not just from the organized opposition to American intervention in the civil wars in Southeast Asia, but from the whole mood of cultural rebellion of a younger generation represented by the hippies and beatniks who angrily rejected the beliefs and values of the past.

The activists of that day had the task of seizing the initial beachheads that could serve as the points of departure for later advances. They struggled for bare recognition of the right to exist from an establishment that had long denied the homosexual minority - far more than any other - the rights that were now demanded by every ethnic group and religious denomination almost as a matter of course. Some of them had previous experience as organizers of the civil rights or anti-war movements where they opted...
to remain in the closet so as to maximize their effectiveness, and they put the skills they had acquired there to good use, but on the whole they knew exceedingly little of the ideology of the gay movement in the past. Many were totally unaware of the organizations that had lasted for decades in Germany, of the writings of their leaders and theoreticians, and of the issues that had divided these now historic groups. On the other hand, they were inspired by the ideology of 'liberation' that swept the Western world as part of the wave of sympathy with the struggles for national independence in the Third World. The identity of the anarcho-individualistic American left with these authoritarian Communist-led movements was largely a matter of illusion at best, of self-deception at worst, but the belief system was adaptable enough to the needs of the Gay Liberation Front to sustain its drive for recognition as part of the larger movement. The 'established' left such as Castro's regime in Cuba never accorded gay liberation any legitimacy.

For many would-be gay activists, the radicalism of the Gay Liberation Front was unpalatable, and by the winter of 1969-1970 the single-issue Gay Activists Alliance had come into being. On the other hand, the older groups that had survived from the 'homophile' phase of the movement, whose pleas for toleration had gone unheeded by an indifferent society, were now seen as hopelessly timid, closeted, and out of date, and so disintegrated and faded into the past.

II. 1973-1977
The second phase of the movement lasted from the end of the Vietnam War to Anita Bryant's victory in Dade County on June 7, 1977. With the radical mood of the country dissipated, gay liberation had to fight on alone for goals that could be accomplished only in decades, if not in a lifetime; but, while the Student Mobilization Committees and the like vanished forever, the movement survived as the enduring legacy of the 1968-1973 period - an era that contrasted strikingly with the normal conservatism and apolitical ambience of the American campus. Organized opposition to gay rights had not yet emerged, in part because until then all institutions of society had been homophobic in a multitude of ways: there was no need for a specific group. In some instances gay activists were able to win victories just because their opponents were totally unprepared for their claims and arguments.

Such groups as the National Gay Task Force and the Gay Academic Union formed with the conscious goal of increasing the presence and influence of homosexuals within the establishment - which they had no thought of overthrowing. Religious bodies such as Metropolitan Community Church, Dignity, Integrity, and the gay synagogues spread into the hinterland along with mainly social student organizations able to benefit from the more tolerant climate of the campus, even when surrounded by a hostile, fundamentalist Middle America. Local initiative spawned community groups, businesses with a specifically gay clientele, health centers, and clubs with shared interests apart from the gay identity of their members.

III. 1977-1981
The repeal by referendum of the gay rights law in Dade County, Florida was another milestone in movement history. It signaled the rise of an organized, religiously motivated and institutionally supported opposition to gay rights - but not the defeat of the larger movement, for which the challenge was also a stimulus for further initiatives. The political atmosphere of the Carter Administration, with its emphasis on human
rights, conferred on the movement a legitimacy that made it possible to consolidate the gains of the preceding years. A gay press, national and local, now served to keep readers in the most distant corners of America informed and in contact and to shape a collective opinion on matters of common concern. The drive to repeal the survivals of medieval law that penalized homosexual expression scored successes in both legislatures and courts, so that by 1981 half of the 50 states ceased to make criminals out of otherwise law-abiding gay citizens. And in October 1979, the March on Washington demonstrated that from a handful of semi-clandestine organizations hiding in the bohemian quarters of the large cities, the gay movement had grown into a multitude of interlocking groups, caucuses, and organizations that reflected the innumerable facets of the America of which our community is a microcosm.

IV. 1981-1986

No one could have foreseen the phase that began with the report of the first cases of AIDS in March, 1981. The dark side of the sexual revolution - the spread of a mysterious, seemingly incurable disease among gay men - coincided with the conservative if not openly reactionary political climate ushered in by the Reagan Administration. On many fronts the movement was forced to defend itself against mounting attacks by fundamentalist religious groups such as the Moral Majority led by Jerry Falwell with a following of millions in the hinterland. But it persisted in its efforts to repeal the sodomy statutes, and, more important, to assure civil rights that had been denied to gay people on the convenient pretext that they were suffering from a mental illness: privacy, recognition of one's "significant other", inheritance, child custody, freedom of speech for gay activists. In this campaign a signal victory was the ordinance adopted in New York City on March 20, 1986 after 15 years of struggle, in the final decade led by the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights founded just after the fiasco in Dade County.

V. 1986-

Then on June 30, 1986 the movement entered its fifth phase: the Supreme Court of the United States by a 5-4 majority upheld the constitutionality of Georgia's sodomy law, refusing to extend to homosexual behavior the concept of privacy which it had first recognized in the criminal law in 1965 with reference to the use of contraceptives. This defeat was a blow to the legal campaign that had hoped to eliminate the sodomy laws at one stroke, but it also sparked the Second March on Washington in October, 1987, twice as large as the previous one.

This newest phase of movement history also saw a return to the kind of bold and heroic activism that had marked the first one. Even if AIDS was a single issue, such groups as ACT UP [AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power], founded in New York City on March 12, 1987, far outdid the Gay Liberation Front in their imaginative and resourceful tactics for building organizations, staging public protests, and winning the attention of the media.

Fund raising on a grand scale became a crucial need of the movement; the AIDS organizations of 1990 were spending more in a week than the annual budget of most gay liberation fronts in 1971. At the same time the AIDS Memorial Quilt, displayed in cities around the country, reminded all who viewed it of the toll which disease - and official indifference to the magnitude of the peril - had taken in the ranks of the gay community.

But another aspect of the post-1986 phase
was the arrival of a 'second generation' of movement activists, too young to remember the pre-Stonewall era, able to accept and affirm its gay identity proudly and even aggressively, but also faced with its own set of problems. Issues such as gay marriage, adoption, 'life partner' rights, and similar matters that the activists of 1969 could scarcely have envisioned now stood on the agenda of the movement. Gay people - for better or worse - were a fact of American life that no one could ignore. Even the tragedy of the AIDS epidemic, which brought so much sorrow to gay Americans and ended so many careers that might have lasted into the 30s of the next century, still reinforced the solidarity of the gay community in the face of suffering and death.

Overview
The American movement began in the 1950s on the West Coast, in Los Angeles and San Francisco. There the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis were founded; there the first gay periodicals were issued. But since the mid-1960s there has been a division of labor, as it were, between the two coasts. The West Coast has continued to pioneer in the social and cultural domains, has given birth to the gay churches and synagogues, to the veterans' and athletic organizations, and similar groups united by a shared interest or identity apart from sexual orientation. The East Coast has spawned the political groups from the Gay Liberation Front (in July, 1969) to Queer Nation (in March 1990) and the academic ones, beginning with the Student Homophile League (at Columbia in April, 1967) and continuing with the Gay Academic Union (founded at John Jay College in November 1973) and now the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS) at the City University of New York and the Columbia University Seminar on Homosexualities (CUSH). This complementarity reflects the differing roles of the two regions in American life in general.

So as it has happened, in only the first and third phases of its history did the gay rights movement coast with the tide of American politics. In the other three it held its own, consolidated its gains, and grew inwardly by its own strength. It has established the gay community as an interest group that is a stable and abiding part of the American nation and shares its common destiny, one that cuts across all other religious and ethnic divisions and still proudly asserts its own identity - and will not go away despite the rejection and hostility of its enemies. Whatever gay people have accomplished in all of the five periods has been their own doing - in many cases ignored and scorned by other 'outsider' groups, even other 'official' minorities, quite as much as by the majority. While the gay rights movement has had its leaders, its celebrities - and its martyrs, in most cases their peak of fame was brief. Far more than many others, it has been a movement of unknown soldiers - of men and women working tirelessly day after day and year after year to combat the ignorance, the prejudice, the hostility around them, trusting that their efforts would leave an enduring legacy to their spiritual if not physical descendants. So it is with confidence in the ultimate victory of their movement that gay Americans can look to the 1990s and to the tasks and challenges of the decade that lies ahead.

Warren Johansson is Associate Editor of the Encyclopedia of Homosexuality (1990) and lives in New York City. This paper first appeared in the C·L·G·H Newsletter of the American Historical Association, Vol. 4, No. 2, September, 1990.
Social theory, social movements and public policy:

recent accomplishments of the gay and lesbian movements in Minneapolis, Minnesota

by Lawrence Knopp

In recent years there has been a proliferation of ostensibly non class-based social movements throughout the world. In the west, movements organized around issues of gender, sexuality, the environment, and nuclear war have all but displaced more traditional and self consciously class-based ones. To be sure there are factions, sometimes strong, within each of these which stress the class origins of their particular concerns. But such analyses are rarely popularized, even within the movements. This proliferation of seemingly non class-based movements poses both theoretical and practical problems for a political-economic analysis of contemporary capitalist society. Strict economistic approaches usually reduce to functionalism, and ignore the important substance of many of these movements' critiques of society. Thus the women's movement, for example, is all too often 'factored out' of analyses of urban restructuring (see Rose, 1984, 52). Similarly, Castells (1978, 152-66) regards the environmental movement in the US as simply an 'ideological mystification. What is needed here is the drawing of non-functionalist linkages between the class interests of human beings and their propensities to act politically on the basis of other affiliations.

Concomitant with this theoretical problem are the practical political dangers inherent in playing off traditional class-based movements against seemingly non-class-based ones. Class-based stratifications have developed within many movements which have resulted in the partial redefinition of their agendas by conservative interests (e.g. certain debates at the 1985 International Women's Conference and the growth of 'gay Republicanism' in the US).

The gay and lesbian movements are excellent examples of movements which warrant analysis from a non-functionalist political-economy perspective. Historically, they have been leaders in revealing the socially constructed nature of reality at the level of everyday experience. This is because they have combined powerful critiques of the prevailing social definitions of gender and sexuality in capitalist society. But the gay and lesbian movements themselves do not normally make linkages to the issue of class.¹

The purpose of this paper is to examine the ways in which social definitions of

¹This is more true of the US movement than of its European counterparts.
gender and sexuality were altered in a particular case through the struggles of gay and lesbian activists, and to make linkages between these struggles and a broader system of capitalist social relations. The class positions of various actors are identified, as are the class interests which their action served (these two are often not equivalent). The paper also explores the implications more generally of the challenge to contemporary capitalist social formations which the lesbian and gay movements represent.

I Social theory, social movements, and sexuality

Both liberal and much Marxist theory have failed to account adequately for the recent proliferation of seemingly non class-based social and political movements. To many Marxists, an America in which organized lesbians and gay men in some places rival organized labour for political clout (e.g. San Francisco) is highly problematical. A great many neo-Marxists have scrambled to account for these movements, but except for feminist and/or lesbian and gay scholars, they have tended to regard them as, at best epiphenomenal and, at worst, counter-revolutionary.²

In the liberal tradition, these movements could not have been anticipated at all, since it was expected that the sway of ‘collective conscience’ and small ‘moral communities’ over individuals would diminish as the division of labour in society increased, to be replaced by a primary allegiance to the social ‘organism’ (Saunders, 1981, 35–47; Murray, 1984, 11). Even liberal positivists like Kinsey et al. (1948; 1953) denied the ontological status of identities, focusing instead on (sexual) behaviours and thus denying the possibility of new political subjects emerging from their analyses. According to Kinsey, there were no sexual identities, only sexual acts. There could therefore be no social movements based on a shared sense of sexual identity. Neo-Weberian analyses, meanwhile, tend to ignore the substance of the critiques which these social movements represent. They focus instead on creating typologies, understanding personal motivations through verstehen, and establishing correlations between events. The result is often superficial and trivial analyses (see, for example, Wilson’s (1973, 45–47) discussion of US campus activism in the 1960s).

These problems pose what may be the most important set of issues in social theory: What is the relationship between the motivations and consciousnesses of human subjects and the social structures which they (re)produce and transform through their actions? How are personal identities sufficiently meaningful to fuel these movements formed, even while the sway of other affiliations seems to be declining? In short, how can we account for social change, the face of which is

²There is a strong tradition among some Marxists which is openly hostile to movements for ‘sexual liberation’ (see Derbyshire, 1980, for a review of Marxist theory and practice regarding gay men and lesbians). Herbert Marcuses’ Eros and civilization (1955) is an exception.
quite different from that for which our theories have prepared us?

Radical theory has tended to stress the importance of unperceived structures, in the context of capitalist societies imbued with 'voluntarist' ideology (e.g. Fainstein and Fainstein, 1983; Clark and Dear, 1984). But too often radical theory has failed to conceptualize important links between these real structures and the active human subjects whose social relations these structures are, in particular the capacities of these subjects to struggle against domination in a multiplicity of ways. Liberal and conservative theories (both positivists and hermeneutic), \(^3\) meanwhile, have simplistically assumed the primacy of human agency (e.g. 'public choice' theory (Archer, 1981) and symbolic-interactionist studies of subcultures (e.g. Anderson, 1923)).

A considerable body of recently developed social theory recognizes these shortcomings (Giddens, 1979; 1981, Bhaskar, 1979). In political and economic geography, applications involve the development of new conceptualizations of 'explanation' which transcend the 'structure/agency' dichotomy (Sayer, 1982; Chouinard et al., 1984; Thrift, 1983).\(^4\) In feminist and lesbian/gay studies, similar developments are taking place. Here 'social constructionist' perspectives (Berger and Luckman, 1966) are gaining currency. Murray (1984, 56), for example, notes that the 'salience' of gender as an organizing principle varies from culture to culture. Escoffier (1985, 136) points out that even the link between genetic assignment and anatomy is not invariant. Similarly, concepts like 'sexual orientation', which categorize according to both the subjective perception of self and external labelling, have been shown to be highly culture-specific (Weeks, 1985; Murray, 1984; Carrier, 1980).

Lauria and Knopp (1985, 156–57) provide the rudiments of a political-economic accounting of the social construction of the modern 'gay identity'. They suggest that homosexual repression is tied to the repression of sexuality generally, and specifically to a form of gender relations in which women are dominated by men. Unrepressed homosexual relations are seen as a threat to the economically efficient (for capital) nuclear family, which, through its internal relations of gender and sexuality, sustains the ideological separation between the 'productive' and 'reproductive' spheres of daily life. The gay and lesbian movements are seen as reactions to this historically specific form of oppression.

More comprehensive efforts to approach the 'gay identity' (and social movements organized around it) from this perspective are found in the works of various feminist and lesbian/gay theorists (Snitow et al., 1983; Ross and Rapp, 1983; Altman, 1982; D'Emilio, 1981; 1983a; 1983b; Escoffier, 1985; Weeks, 1981; 1981; 1985). Here, sexual identities (indeed, sexuality itself) are also seen as deriving from industrial capitalism's separation of 'productive' and 'reproductive'

---

\(^3\) This is not meant to imply that hermeneutics are necessarily liberal or voluntarist; on the contrary, most are not.

\(^4\) Thrift (1983) suggests that the 'structure/agency' dichotomy itself reflects the bifurcation at the level of appearances of everyday life into spheres of production and consumption under capitalism.
life. The argument is roughly as follows: As capitalism developed, and free-labour and exchange relations came to dominate production, the family became more narrowly defined in terms of the reproduction of labour-power. Many of the needs of labourers were now met within the family by unwaged (and hence 'unproductive' yet superexploited) domestic labour. An ideal of monogamous (and patriar-chal) heterosexuality underpinned the system ideologically. But at the same time, the autonomous 'personal' realm created by the intersection of waged-labour and industrialization made it possible (economically, if not ideologically) for waged-labourers to explore non family-centred avenues of fulfillment. Sexual (and other) subcultures thus emerged. The labelling of people engaged in same-sex sexual relationships as 'homosexuals' by the medical profession in the late nineteenth century then provided the final link in the process of personal and group identity formation.

Escoffier (1985, 120–21) disaggregates the process of lesbian and gay identity formation even further. He views sexual identities as

... the results of struggles among concrete historical actors (for example, between prostitutes and the state) and shaped by the social relations of... the ensemble of discourses, practices and institutions that structure and regulate the social relations of gender as well as the varieties of sexual behaviour (the 'sex/gender system').

In particular, he argues that the modern lesbian and gay identities emerged from the sexual revolution of the post-World War II era, which he links to the growth of the welfare state. As women entered the work force, and more people lived outside family households, 'cultural revolts' (e.g. the Beat Generation) and urban subcultures (including sexual subcultures), steadily grew. Fueled by these developments, and by the growth of the women's movement, the identity-based lesbian and gay political movements developed. But Escoffier also notes that these movements are currently attempting to cope with the realization that the 'identities' upon which they are based are not fixed:

[By] reinterpret[ing] the symbolic significance of sexuality and gender... [by] splitting sexual object preference from gender, and by challenging the heterosexual assumption, [the movements have] legitimated the social construction of sexual identity (Escoffier, 1985, 147).

Escoffier argues that because of this, any movement based on identity will eventually have to stress a politics of at least limited difference as well as of shared experience. Hence the emergence of separate lesbian and gay movements and of intense controversies within these communities regarding, for example, sexual ethics (e.g. debates about pornography, the practice of certain kinds of sexual 'play' (i.e. S/M), and how best to acknowledge and accommodate child sexuality) (Escoffier, 1985, 147–49).

5 This is not meant to suggest that 'heterosexism' is found only in capitalism or that sexual 'networks' have not existed in previous modes of production (see Boswell, 1980, for evidence to the contrary). I do mean to suggest, however, that the sexual identities and subcultures constructed in capitalism are different from those found elsewhere.
Lauria and Knopp (1985) contend that a modest redefinition of the social relations of gender and sexuality may be in the interest of certain factions of capital. 'Service-sector' jobs in the centre-city, for example, are quite easily filled by gay men (Gagnon and Simon, 1973; Harry and Devall, 1978), many of whom locate in centre-city areas because of the concentration of gay institutions there. Similarly, the development of 'rent gaps' in the urban land market (Smith, 1979) favours the development of consumer markets for 'gentrified' housing (and other 'higher and better' land uses) among lesbian and gay populations. This is due to a combination of the relatively high disposable incomes of middle-class lesbians and gay men (especially the latter) and these groups' frequent preferences for easy accessibility to lesbian and gay social and cultural institutions.

Still, the process of redefining the social relations of gender and sexuality, which the gay and lesbian movements have encouraged, has been an uneven one. Arguably, it is not very advanced. For every San Francisco or Amsterdam there are hundreds of Wichitas. For every 'jet-set' there are thousands of traditional 'sets' that cling tenaciously to established norms. While the processes which Escoffier, Lauria and Knopp, and others identify are certainly occurring in the mass cultures of advanced capitalism, the actual struggles bringing about concrete changes have yet to be identified and analysed. The present study is an attempt to identify, in the context of a specific case, the process whereby a concrete change was achieved though a conscious struggle to redefine the social relations of gender and sexuality at the level of everyday life and experience. This redefinition has important implications for the particular class-based social formation which is advanced capitalism.

II Gay and lesbian politics in Minneapolis in the seventies

The State of Minnesota has a liberal political culture. Except for a brief period during the 1930s, when its electoral politics were dominated by the left leaning Farm-Labor Party, the economic and social policies pursued by the state have been solidly Keynesian.

Postwar Keynesian liberalism has had contradictory social and cultural effects, however (Bell, 1976). On the one hand, the era's economic growth and rising material expectations have fostered the development of a libertarian individualist ethos, which translates into popular demands for equality of 'opportunity' and freedom from cultural 'constraints' of various kinds (e.g. traditional gender and sex roles). On the other hand, tight labour markets, the rising cost of living relative to the established family wage, and the attempted reconversion to a 'peacetime' (i.e. male-dominated) labour force, have created pressure for the reestablishment of

---

6 Wichita, Kansas was one of several cities in the US where gay rights ordinances were repealed by popular referendum in 1977 and 1978.
7 Exceptions may be New York (Teal, 1971; Marotta, 1981), San Francisco (D’Emilio, 1981; Castells and Murphy, 1982; Castells, 1983) and Weimar Germany (Steakley, 1975).
Table 1  The political development of Minneapolis’s gay and lesbian communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>May 18 – Fight Repression of Erotic Expression (FREE) founded at the University of Minnesota.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>May 18 – Jack Baker attempts to secure marriage license for himself and Michael McConnell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer-fall – State Board of Regents rescinds hiring of McConnell as university librarian; ACLU takes case, wins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October – National gay and lesbian conference at the University of Minnesota sponsored by FREE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Spring – Baker elected president of Minnesota Students’ Association (MSA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October – Appeals court overturns lower court decision in McConnell case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Fall – 100–200 gays participate in DFL (Democratic Party) precinct caucuses; gay rights, planks passed as State Convention; gay alternate elected to national Convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>** – First attempt to pass statewide gay-rights bill is made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>** – FREE becomes Minnesota Gay Activists (MGA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>March 29 – Minneapolis gay-rights ordinance passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May 11 – Minnesota Committee for Gay Rights (MCGR) founded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>July 16 – St Paul gay-rights ordinance passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 9 – State Senator Allan Spear acknowledges publicly that he is gay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>** – Baker brings suit against Big Brothers of Minneapolis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>** – MCGR compromises on language of statewide gay-rights bill; Baker faction protests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June 13 – City Council proclaims last day of June Gay Pride Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November – Conservative ex-Mayor Stervig defeats liberal DFL mayor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>October 9 – City Council rescinds Gay Pride Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November – Spear wins reelection over a Baker supporter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June 23 – Target City coalition founded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall – 1300+ local gays and lesbians stage anti-Anita Bryant rally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>April 25 – St Paul gay-rights ordinance is repealed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November – Rally held locally on evening of gay-rights victories in California and Seattle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>June- November – 8 murders of gay men in Minneapolis and St Paul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June 28 – First police raid on a local gay bathhouse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>July 27 – State Supreme Court rules against Baker in Big Brothers case.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** = Exact dates unavailable.
traditional (patriarchal) relations of gender and sexuality (among other sets of social relations). These contradictions were evidenced in Minneapolis during the 1970s by a profound ambivalence towards ‘liberal’ social agendas in elections. For the first four years of the decade (and two more later on), the city was presided over not by a DFL (Democratic Party) liberal, but by a conservative Independent mayor drawn from the ranks of the Police Department.

For the gay and lesbian movements the decade was a period of growth (Table 1). One of the first direct challenges to the prevailing social definitions of marriage, sexuality, and the family in Minneapolis was a well-publicized attempt to secure a marriage license by a leader of the city’s first gay-oriented political organization, Jack Baker, and his male lover, in 1970. By appealing to the authority of the local state apparatus the two activists at once challenged and acknowledged the power of state sanction to legitimize the social construction of some kinds of social relations.

Others during the 1970s engaged in strictly pluralist, ‘interest group’-orientated gay politics. Initial successes included the founding of a gay lobbying organization in 1971, the election of openly-gay delegates to the State DFL Convention in 1972, and the enactment of gay-rights ordinances in both Minneapolis and neighbouring St Paul in 1974.

But no sooner had these successes been achieved than pluralist tactics began to fail. In 1975, a liberal gay lobby agreed to compromise the language of a statewide gay-rights bill. This was because of two widely publicized and very controversial lawsuits brought by Baker under the ‘public services’ provisions of the Twin Cities’ gay-rights ordinances. Baker challenged the Big Brothers organization in Minneapolis, and an adoption agency in St Paul, for inquiring as to the sexual orientations of prospective Big Brothers and adoptive parents, and using this information to screen applicants. Here he was challenging the social definition of the relationship between sexuality and parenting. This precipitated a considerable amount of hostile reaction. Eventually he lost the Big Brothers case. But in so doing Baker demonstrated that the prevailing social definitions of sexuality and parenting, and the legal structure which supported them, were patently contradictory.

Reacting to the liberal gays’ compromise, supporters of Baker conducted a high-visibility campaign to support the original version of the statewide gay-rights bill. This included a mock press conference in a Capitol building men’s room and a parade of ‘drag queens’ (transvestites) testifying at committee hearings. The former was intended to expose the men’s room as a place where many of the legislators voting ‘no’ on gay-rights were saying ‘yes’ to gay sex (i.e. actually having semi-anonymous gay sexual encounters) — an example of what Goffman (1959) and Giddens (1979, 207) call ‘back regions’. or locations in space and/or time where certain social contradictions are allowed to play themselves out. The transvestites’ actions, meanwhile, can be seen as an even more radical attack on traditional

---

*In this case, the contradiction was between many legislators’ socially constructed ‘personal’ sexual proclivities and their internalization of a ‘public’ sexual morality which could not accommodate these proclivities.
notions of gender and sexual normalcy. These activists were symbolically reinterpreting the connections between gender, gender roles, and sexual preference (see Escoffier, 1985, 140–41). By demonstrating that men could affect feminine manners and roles, including a sexual preference for other men, these actors validated the social construction of gender and sexuality.

Pluralist tactics, meanwhile, continued to fail through the end of the decade. In 1975, a conservative ex-mayor campaigned against gay-rights and was elected in an upset. In 1977, a statewide gay-rights bill, which appeared likely to pass the State Legislature, was defeated. Then, in 1978, a campaign to repeal gay-rights laws came to neighbouring St Paul and succeeded overwhelmingly. In 1979, trouble between the Police Department and the gay-male community began. Furthermore, there were eight murders of gay men in Minneapolis that year, so many that one issue of Positively Gay, a gay newspaper, featured the headline, 'Another month, another murder' (Positively Gay, 1979a).

These assaults mobilized the gay community. A 'radical' gay political organization, Target City, was formed. It was composed of both leftist and non-leftist activists who were united by a conviction that high visibility, confrontational responses to oppression were necessary. Its members engaged in, among other things, a series of 'pie in the face' attacks on antigay public figures. Although Target City never achieved the 'official' clout of liberal gay organizations, its members' tactics were crucial to the outcome of the conflict between the Police Department and the gay male community which erupted in 1979.

III 1979–1985: the battle over 'indecent conduct'

Through most of the 1970s, the primary source of hostility towards gays and lesbians was not the Police Department but rather other local state apparatuses (e.g. the courts, the city administration, the State Legislature) and non-state actors. Friendly police walkthroughs of gay bars were in fact common, and reports of police brutality and harassment of gays were sporadic.

But on the morning of Gay Pride Day, 1979 (28 June), a series of events began which can only be characterized as open warfare between gays and certain members of the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) (Table 2). At 4.00 am, the head of the MPD Vice Squad, along with the deputy mayor and a municipal bond salesman, forcibly entered a gay steambath and threw out the patrons. No arrests or citations were made. Affidavits signed by patrons claimed the intruders were drunk and abusive. A scandal ensued. At a meeting with the police chief, the head of the Vice Squad, and the deputy mayor (before it was learned that the latter was involved in

9Target City was so named because in 1978 antigay activist Anita Bryant had identified Minneapolis and St Paul as 'Target Cities' for her national gay-rights repeal campaign.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1979 | June 28 (Gay Pride Day) — First bathhouse raid.  
July 3 — Gays meet with police chief, head of vice, and deputy mayor.  
July — Cover-up of June 28 incident charged by deputy police chief; deputy police chief demoted.  
August 9 — Police chief resigns; deputy mayor suspended.  
Fall — Large-scale arrests for 'indecent conduct' in adult bookstores begins; Tim Campbell runs for mayor, campaigns against police harassment.  
December 1 — Second bathhouse raid. |
| 1980 | January 1 — 3 Popular gay bars raided for being open after hours on New Year's Eve.  
January 10 — Third bathhouse raid.  
** — Meetings between gays, Mayor Fraser, city council members held; bathhouse raids stop.  
November — Target City runs slate of candidates for city offices; openly-lesbian Karen Clark elected to State House of Representatives. |
| 1981—1982 |  
** — Meetings between gays and city officials held periodically.  
** — Allegations of police brutality against gays escalates; civil suits cost city thousands of dollars.  
November, 1981 — Four openly-gay men run for sixth ward City Council seat. |
| 1983 | November — Openly-gay Brian Coyle elected to sixth ward City Council seat. |
| 1984 | May 23 — Coyle meets with police chief; 'got nowhere'.  
May 24 — Coyle, another council member, meets with Fraser, attorneys for arrestees; Fraser refuses to interfere with police practices.  
Summer — Allegations of police brutality, entrapment arrests escalate, spread to city parks and Park Police.  
September 21 — Coyle meets with Fraser; mayor claims directive was issued to cease entrapments.  
November 7–8 — Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission holds hearings on police brutality; 'seemed to favor' citizens review panel.  
November 20 — Intensive campaign by police against two bookstores downtown launched; 20+ visits a day; frequent arrests.  
November 30 — Gay aides to Coyle and Fraser stress 'equal enforcement' concerns to police chief and head of Vice Squad.  
December — Coyle pressures police chief publicly at appearance before gay business organization. |
| 1985 | January 10 — Municipal judge rules that bookstore cubicles are not public places.  
February 15 — Attorney for Tim Campbell arrested while attempting to serve summons on officers named in class-action suit.  
February 19 — Meeting between various gay and non-gay city officials; police chief tells Star and Tribune 'I caved in'.  
February 21 — Police chief orders Vice Squad to 'radically deemphasize' bookstore patrols; acknowledges effectiveness of gay lobbying.  
February 22 — Police chief denies gay lobbying influenced decision to change policy.  
February 25 — New policy formalized and 'accepted' by Fraser.  
March 1 — May 20 — Only four 'indecent conduct' arrests in Minneapolis |

* * = Exact dates unavailable.
the raid), members of the gay community were assured that the incident did not signal a change of policy towards gays in the Police Department or at City Hall (Positively Gay, 1979b).

But shortly thereafter, the attacks on gay men and gay establishments escalated. A pattern of large-scale arrests for 'indecent conduct' in adult bookstores began in the fall (Halfhill, 1984; GLC Voice, 1985a). Arrestees were almost always gay or bisexual men whose sexual proclivities were for the most part hidden from friends and family. Typically, the police would employ decoys and/or storm through the establishments, forcing open doors to viewing booths and roughing-up patrons. Numerous complaints were filed with the Police Internal Affairs Unit. Rarely, if ever, were these sustained.10

In December and January there were two more raids on bathhouses, resulting in over 200 arrests or citations, including nine for sodomy, which is a felony in Minnesota. Then three popular gay bars were raided for being open after hours on New Year's Eve, 1980.

Target City responded to eight murders, a hostile State Supreme Court ruling on the Big Brothers issue, and a sudden upsurge of antigay police harassment and violence by running a slate of third-party candidates for city offices and demanding meetings with the new mayor and members of the City Council. A list of demands was formulated which included abolition of the Vice Squad and reparations for victims of the bathhouse and bookstore raids. Although no policy concessions were made, the bathhouse raids did stop. The bookstore raids did not.

The city's daily newspapers, meanwhile, ran lurid stories about drugs and unusual sexual paraphernalia at one of the bathhouses (Halfhill, 1984). It was the conclusion of many in Target City, at the time, that the increased police harassment downtown, and the sensationalist press coverage of it, were part of an effort by the city to legitimize the redevelopment of a downtown street on which many gay businesses are located.

Over the next four and a half years there were between 3500 and 5000 arrests of gay and bisexual men for 'indecent conduct', most of them in adult bookstores (GLC Voice, 1984a; 1984c; 1985b; Halfhill, 1984; interviews). Allegations of police brutality against gays escalated, and meetings between representatives of the gay community and the city were held at least once a year (GLC Voice, 1985a).

Members of the local gay press took a very active role in these meetings and the conflict in general. Bruce Brockway and Tim Campbell (both of whom had ties to Target City) published Positively Gay and, later, GLC Voice, carefully documenting every arrest, beating, trial and election concerning the gay community. These journalist-activists always contrasted 'official' accounts of incidents involving the police with those of eyewitnesses, and exposed contradictory official accounts and missing or altered police reports, as well. They frequently helped coordinate meetings and public demonstrations. Their advocacy style of journalism made the

10 Of 144 complaints filed from March 1 through August 31, 1984, none was sustained (GLC Voice, 1985c).
capricious and unequal enforcement of indecent conduct laws an indisputable fact in the gay community, and many of their findings were picked up by the mainstream press as well (e.g. Davies, 1985).

These gay activists also continually questioned prevailing sexual norms. *Positively Gay* pressed Mayor Fraser in a 1979 pre-election interview to comment on the 'legitimacy' and 'morality' of gay sex (*Positively Gay*, 1979c). Fraser refused to discuss the issue in these terms. He did, however, evince mixed feelings about the Big Brothers case:

... under these circumstances the question of sexual preference... is a different kind of issue than religion, color, race. (*Positively Gay*, 1979c, 8.)

In the case of morals code enforcement he drew the line at 'public sex'. This distinction between 'public' and 'private' sex had repeatedly been used by the police to justify their enforcement practices. It also raised important questions about where the line between 'public' and 'private' was to be drawn, and whether or not there was a public interest in holding gays to a different standard than straights in this regard.

Brockway, Campbell, and others relentlessly challenged the *purpose* of distinctions like 'public' versus 'private' sex, as well. In 1984, Campbell documented a correlation between police harassment of two adult bookstores, declining business at those stores, and an increased number of offers by property brokers to purchase the businesses (*GLC Voice*, 1984d). Campbell charged 'graft', asserting a connection between the city's December designation of an area adjacent to these bookstores as the site of a proposed convention centre, and a particularly intense campaign of police harassment at these locations in November. Furthermore, Campbell argued forcefully throughout the conflict that the place where most of the so-called 'public sex' was taking place (adult bookstore movie cubicles and certain portions of public parks late at night) constituted essentially *private* places, and moreover that they were the *only* private places available to some gay people, namely those who have not come to terms with their sexualities (*GLC Voice*, 1982b; 1984b; 1984c; 1985a; 1985d; 1985e). Thus like the Capitol building activists in 1975, he identified perfectly a set of 'back regions', the only difference being that this time their patrons were cast in a more sympathetic light. In both cases the 'back regions', and their patrons' confused 'identities', were presented unequivocally as *social* products. Campbell also argued that sexual activities had been going on in these places for years without apparent harm to anyone.\(^\text{11}\)

'Radical' gay activists also stressed the *history* of morals codes and the 'gay experience' to present policies and practices. At one of the earlier meetings between

\(^{11}\) Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) did not enter the public consciousness as an issue until relatively late in this conflict. Furthermore, the same gay press which struggled against harassment of bookstore patrons was at the same time painstakingly educating its readers about the disease and demanding that the city and the state devote more resources to coping with and preventing it.
gays, Fraser, and Police Chief Bouza, a non-traditional ‘sensitivity training’ was proposed for the police by gays. This included calls for a look at uneven patterns of law enforcement vis-a-vis morals codes, presentations of the history of the development of gay and other sexual subcultures, and an examination of the contradiction between the city’s human rights ordinance and the state’s sodomy laws (GLC Voice, 1982a). These proposals were clearly an attempt to raise consciousnesses and force an examination of the issues raised by Fraser’s and Bouza’s explanations.

Gays and lesbians in the DFL (and therefore in the city bureaucracy and on the staffs of DFL officeholders, including Fraser) also brought pressure on the mayor and the police chief to resolve the conflict. However, this was only after the problem became very large scale and these ‘insiders’ were either personally touched by it or pressured by their gay constituents because of it. An open lesbian, Karen Clark, was elected to the State Legislature from a central-Minneapolis district in 1980. In 1983 a gay man, Brian Coyle, was elected to the City Council from the city’s sixth ward, which includes most of the areas with heavy concentrations of gays. Neither of these two emphasized gay and lesbian politics, or this particular conflict, in their campaigns, however. Indeed, they generally opposed the high visibility tactics and specifically ‘gay’ agendas of Target City and people like Campbell and Baker. Nevertheless, by 1984 Coyle (under pressure from gay constituents and Campbell’s GLC Voice) was publicly pressuring Chief Bouza to change his enforcement policy.

The enforcement policy was finally changed in February, 1985. Chief Bouza’s public reaction reveals both his bitterness at being forced into this position and his acknowledgement of the role played by gay activists in bringing it about:

I caved in. I always cave in to every pressure group. Whatever they want. All they have to do is ask me (GLC Voice, 1985a, 3);

and

I succumbed to the pressure . . . It’s absolutely true, there’s no doubt, I’ve never been involved with such a high-powered effort to influence policy involving gays (Minneapolis Star and Tribune, 1985a, 1A.)

The new policy calls for irregular Vice Squad entries into adult bookstores, usually only when uniformed officers report trouble (Minneapolis Star and Tribune, 1985c). Since its implementation, indecent conduct arrests have decreased significantly: only four were recorded between March 1 and May 20, 1985 (GLC Voice, 1985b.) For the moment, arrests in city parks have declined as well.

The policy change does not mark an end to the battle over the redefinition of

---

Clark, as a lesbian, did not have to interpret the bookstore arrests as a lesbian issue. Indeed, she could have allied herself with feminist antipornographers who opposed such establishments as a matter of principle. She did not.

In subsequent races against other gays with ties to Target City, both Coyle and openly-gay State Senator Allan Spear have won handily.
the social relations of gender and sexuality in Minneapolis. Mayor Fraser still clings steadfastly to the importance of a police department being able to act independently, free of 'political' pressures. Thus he dislikes interfering in matters of police policy and continues to oppose a citizens' review board to handle complaints of police misconduct. And at the same time that he announced the 'radical de-emphasis' of bookstore patrols, Chief Bouza told the Minneapolis Star and Tribune:

I want to make it clear these places won't become privileged sanctuaries where the police won't ever intrude. We'll still patrol. And anything that spills into the public won't be tolerated if it's indecent conduct . . . I'm saying this: Keep it discreet and keep it very private. (Minneapolis Star and Tribune, 1985a, 6A.)

IV Discussion: identity politics and class

By the late 1970s liberal lesbians and gay men had finally secured more or less permanent access to most local state apparatuses in Minneapolis, through the DFL's lock on local electoral politics. Whereas previously their main opponents had been non-state actors and state apparatuses other than the police, the police were now the one state apparatus with which they (or, more specifically, gay men) were most in conflict. Liberal gays and their allies were unable to do anything about the massive assault waged by the police on gay men for over five years, just as they had failed to turn back other assaults earlier (e.g. the 1978 gay-rights repeal in St Paul). More 'tactically radical' gay activists struggled to expose the police campaign as contradictory and plainly homophobic. They effectively challenged official accounts of events and motives, including arguing that the police campaign was linked to city and private developers' plans to redevelop a downtown street on which the majority of Minneapolis's gay establishments are located. But their success was also due, in part, to their enemies' overzealousness. Analysts of minority activism, from Suttles (1972) to Murray (1984) have acknowledged that hostile external assaults often galvanize oppressed groups so that they react.

These 'tactically radical' gays were not necessarily consciously anticapitalist. Tim Campbell, for example, describes himself as 'very comfortable in capitalism' (personal interview, 19 July, 1985). Conversely, Council member Coyle, while eschewing 'special interest' gay politics, comes from a background of tenants'-rights activism, and is generally sceptical of the public-private economic development 'partnerships' which have been the hallmark of liberal DFL urban policy in Minneapolis in recent years. Such contradictions can be found in the internal politics of Minneapolis's gay press. In April of 1982, a second gay newspaper, Equal Time, was founded. Although tactically much more 'conservative' than GLC Voice, it also claimed to be addressing needs of the usually more radical lesbian community, which GLC Voice was allegedly ignoring. Equal Time's downplaying of

Very recently Coyle has strengthened his ties to the DFL establishment and Mayor Fraser, and muted his criticism of some forms of urban redevelopment and revitalization (e.g. gentrification – see Knopp, 1986).
explicitly sexual issues (its coverage of the bookstore issue was scarcely more extensive than that given it by the Minneapolis Star and Tribune) was regarded by at least one staffer as reflecting a desire to de-emphasize casual (and especially commodified) sex, which he felt the gay male subculture, and GLC Voice, promote irresponsibly (personal communication).

These contradictions are symptomatic of the heterogeneity inherent in any social movement organized around a socially constructed (and hence dynamic) identity which crosses class boundaries. But this is not to say that gay and lesbian actors are lacking in class interests, or that their actions' impacts are 'class-neutral'. Rather, there are divergences between the real class interests of some of these actors and those on behalf of which they may consciously (though incidentally) have been working. Confrontational yet avowedly accumulation-minded activists like Campbell, for instance, consistently challenged the limits of contemporary capitalism's relations of gender and sexuality during the course of the police-gay community conflict. In spite of their personal aspirations, such individuals paid a price for their activism. For example, the publication of an article on 'man-boy love' in the May, 1984 issue of GLC Voice (though not directly related to the police-gay community conflict) prompted several advertisers, both gay and nongay, to withdraw their support for the paper permanently. Similarly, Jack Baker, though now an attorney, is not particularly influential, even within the gay community. On the other hand, gays like Brian Coyle, whose political backgrounds and personal histories are more traditionally 'progressive', have fared quite well personally.

Thus the gay and lesbian activists who radically challenged contemporary capitalist social relations of gender and sexuality in Minneapolis were successful only in so far as they were able to expose members of the police department (and their actions) as deeply reactionary, or as acting in the interests of certain factions of local capital (i.e. developers). They helped bring about only a partial redefinition of gender and sexual relations in Minneapolis, the same redefinition which their liberal brethren had also been struggling to accomplish (with only limited success). This redefinition could only accommodate a very narrow and fixed form of homosexuality. It could not accommodate other, more radical redventions which recognize gender and sexuality as changing social constructions (e.g. transvestism, non-monogamy, and intergenerational sex). This is because such redefinition would undermine many of the foundations of contemporary capitalist social formations (e.g. gender divisions of labour, stable 'family' units, and the socialization of children into these). Liberal and middle-class gays, then, whose politics of a fixed gay identity had been losing ground to the political right through much of the 1970s, were, ironically, the primary beneficiaries of the actions of these more 'radical' gay activists.
V Conclusion

The gay and lesbian movements in Minneapolis have succeeded in altering the social relations of gender and sexuality which prevail there. Middle-class lesbians and gay men are now well integrated into the prevailing liberal political culture, and to a considerable extent into the popular culture as well. In contrast to the San Francisco experience (Castells, 1983, 138-70), this is the result of neither spatial concentration nor the development of gay community economic clout. Rather, it is the result of struggles between lesbian and gay activists (usually without a ‘class analysis’ of their own oppression) and various state actors representing traditional gender and sexual norms. Also in contrast to the San Francisco experience, this redefinition of social relations has been extremely modest.

The contradictions and tactical divisions within Minneapolis’ gay and lesbian movements are a testament to the variety of ‘gay identities’ which exist there. The difference between the two tactical factions is that one recognizes this diversity as the product of an ongoing process of social construction while the other denies it. Neither camp, however, necessarily makes links between gender and sexual relations and the class structure of advanced capitalism. Yet both advance the interests of one or more factions of capital and/or labour. In the conflicts recounted here, liberal gay men and lesbians advanced the interests of what might be termed ‘progressive capital’ – those capitalist interests (e.g. the ‘service sector’ in the centrality) which stand to benefit from a modest alteration in the social definitions of gender and sexuality – and those gay and lesbian people (disproportionately white, male and middle class) who can fit into these redefinitions. More ‘radical’ gay and lesbian activists, regardless of their conscious intentions, challenged contemporary capitalist social formations much more deeply, by challenging the present social relations of gender and sexuality almost completely. These social relations are critical links in the particular social formation which is advanced capitalism. Thus ‘radical’ lesbians and gay men undermined the interests of capital generally, and of many middle and upper-middle class lesbians and gay men, as well. The police, meanwhile, by attempting to enforce the ‘naturalness’ (ideologically) of existing social definitions of gender and sexuality, advanced the interests of what might be called ‘conservative capital’ – those factions (e.g. manufacturing) which continue to benefit from strictly defined gender and sexual relations.

Gay men and lesbians have gained a certain amount of acceptance in Minneapolis. But, like other minorities, they face the dual obstacles of increasing internal heterogeneity and a tenacious system of social relations which cannot offer many of their members full ‘citizenship’. The outcomes of similar battles elsewhere, and of struggles over other aspects of social relations (including other aspects of gender and sexual relations), will ultimately determine the extent to which all individuals are able consciously to participate in the social construction of their world.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Jim Blaut, Maggie Clover, Richard Kujawa, Mickey Lauria, David R. Reynolds, Joe Scarpaci, Fred Shelley, Fran Ufkes-Daniels, and an anonymous referee for comments of earlier drafts of this paper.

VI References

Davies, P. 1985: To protect and serve. City Pages, July 17.


GLC Voice 1982a: Bouza holding tight against inservice training on police-gay relations; Fraser thinking, stalling for time. Issue 7, February 1.
1982b: Judge Porter decision thought likely to slow down gay arrests. Issue 8, February 15.
1984b: Police decoys shift all efforts to gays and bisexuals. Issue 106, December 2.
1984c: Police decoy operations lead to third death. Issue 102, October 1.
Knopp, L. 1986: Gentrification and gay community development: a case study of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Paper presented to a special session on urban restructuring at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers, May, Minneapolis, MN.
Minneapolis Star and Tribune 1985a: Bouza curtails bookstore patrols. February 22.
1985b: Bouza denies gay pressure on bookstores. February 23.
1985c: New policy will send vice squad into bookstores less frequently. February 26.
Personal interview, Craig Anderson, August 1, 1985.
Personal interview, Tim Campbell, July 19, 1985.
Personal interview, Brian Coyle, July 15, 1985.
Personal interview, Jim St George, March 28, 1985.
1979c: special election pullout. September.
Rose, D. 1984: Rethinking gentrification: beyond the uneven development of
marxist urban theory. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 1,
47–74.
Ross, E. and Rapp, R. 1983: Sex and society: a research note from social history
and anthropology. In Snitow, A., Stansell, C. and Thompson, S., editors,
Saunders, P. 1981: Social theory and the urban question. New York: Holmes and
Meier Publishers, Inc.
Sayer, A. 1982: Explanation in economic geography. Progress in Human Geography
6, 68–88.
Smith, N. 1979: Toward a theory of gentrification: a back to the city movement by
Snitow, A., Stansell, C. and Thompson, S. 1983: Introduction to Powers of desire:
Steakley, J. 1975: The homosexual emancipation movement in Germany. New
York: Arno.
Suttles, G. 1972: The social construction of communities. Chicago: University of
Chicago Press.
Thrift, N. 1983: On the determination of social action in space and time. Environment
and Planning D: Society and Space 1, 23–57.
London: Longman.
Oxford: Oxford University Press.

La prolifération récente de mouvements sociaux apparemment non basés sur les classes pose des
problèmes théoriques et pratiques pour l'analyse politico-économique d'une société capitaliste
avancée. Il est nécessaire d'établir des liens non-fonctionnels entre les mobilisations basées sur
la structure des classes et non basées sur elle. Les liens sociaux de genre et de sexualité sont des
éléments importants de tout système de rapports de classes. Les mouvements de gais et de
lesbiennes ont mis en question les rapports actuels du genre et de la sexualité. Ils méritent, de
ce fait, une analyse politico-économique attentive (c.à.d. non-fonctionnelle). Cet article examine,
dans cette perspective, ce qui a été récemment accompli à Minneapolis par les mouvements de
gais et de lesbiennes. On s'attache tout particulièrement à étudier un conflit entre la communauté
des homosexuels et la Police. Les acteurs, les événements examinés se situent dans un système
assez lâche de rapports de classes, tel qu'on le rencontre à l'échelle locale. Les activistes,
homosexuels et lesbiennes, ont fait appel à une stratégie de confrontation qui a exposé le caractère
de genre et d'identité sexuelle élaboré par la société. L'une des conséquences non intentionnelles
de cette stratégie est qu'elle sape un lien important dans le système élargi des rapports sociaux
en société capitaliste.

La reciente proliferación de movimientos sociales aparentemente no clasistas plantea problemas teóricos y prácticos para un análisis político- económico de una sociedad capitalista avanzada. Es necesario establecer lazos no funcionales entre las movilizaciones basadas sobre la estructura de clases y las movilizaciones sin base clasista. Las relaciones sociales de género y sexualidad son componentes importantes de cualquier sistema de relaciones de clases. Los movimientos de hombres y mujeres homosexuales han puesto en tela de juicio las relaciones actuales de género y sexualidad. Por consiguiente, merecen un análisis político- económico profundo (es decir no funcional). Este documento examina los logros de los movimientos de hombres y mujeres homosexuales en Minneapolis desde dicha perspectiva. Se ha prestado especial atención a un conflicto entre la comunidad “gay” y la Policía. Los actores y acontecimientos considerados, están situados dentro de un sistema amplio de relaciones de clases, según se experimenta a escala local. Los activistas homosexuales emplearon una estrategia de confrontaciones que expuso el carácter de género e identidad sexual elaborado por la sociedad. Una consecuencia no prevista de esta estrategia fue el debilitamiento de un eslabón importante en el sistema más amplio de las relaciones sociales en una sociedad capitalista.
STUDENT HOMOPHILE LEAGUE: FOUNDER'S RETROSPECT

Robert A. Martin
(“Stephen Donaldson”)

The spring of 1982 saw the fifteenth anniversary of an historic moment in the history of the gay movement, an event which made the front page of The New York Times and reverberated around the world. In late April, 1967 (the 23rd or 27th, more likely the latter date, if memory serves me), Columbia University gave official recognition to the first known/public gay student group in North America, and quite possibly the world. This group, recognized then as the Student Homophile League, later changed its name to Gay People at Columbia-Barnard.

The historical memory of student groups, with their rapid turnover, is notoriously short, but there is a great deal of which to be proud. So that the history of that time, of the beginning of the gay student movement which now spans the globe, shall not be lost, I have undertaken to write this memoir. I must draw entirely on my own memory, for I have no access to the documents of the times. But I was there; I was the founder; and I am proud.

Background

Columbia has come a long, long way. I talked to Allen Ginsburg, the poet, one time in the late sixties. Allen told me that he was expelled from Columbia College in 1947 on suspicion of homosexuality, at a time when, according to him, he was still a virgin.

In the 1964-65 school year, the Board of Managers of Columbia’s Ferris Booth Hall (FBH) created a furor by inviting a representative of the Mattachine Society of New York (MSNY) to speak as part of a series of FBH lectures. Prof. Gilbert Highef of the Classics Department cancelled his own lecture at FBH in protest against allowing a homosexual to speak on campus. In the same year, according to reports I heard two years later, one of the more athletic-oriented fraternities had a gay student playing piano at one of their parties. Getting drunk, they forced the pianist to perform sexually and then systematically broke his fingers. This was hushed up by the administration and the fraternity involved received a private slap on the wrist.

In the summer of 1965, prior to my registration as a freshman in the College, I had a social worker from Traveler’s Aid (I had run away from home) call the dean’s office, not using my name, to find out whether Columbia would allow a homosexual student known to them to register. It took two weeks for the administration to make up its mind; I have no idea how far up the decision went, but there was clearly no precedent. When the decision came down, it was this: the student would be allowed to register, on condition that he undergo psychotherapy and not attempt to seduce other students.

With this understanding, I began my studies in the fall of 1965, as far as I could determine the first officially cognized homosexual student to be tolerated. I was and am actually bisexual, but orientational dualism was even stronger then that it is now, and anyone who related to the same gender was considered homosexual.

During my entire freshman year I did not discover any other gay students (or faculty, for that matter) at Columbia, which tells you a lot about the atmosphere at that time. I began in a four-man suite in Carman Hall, but in December of 1965 my suite-mates went to the dean’s office and told the dean that they felt uncomfortable having a homosexual living with them. I was taken out of Carman and assigned a single, 322 Livingston Hall, where I resided for the rest of my undergraduate days. This incident left a deep impression on me.

Meanwhile, I had “come out” in the spring and summer of 1965 and joined MSNY at that time. Having run away from home due to my mother’s hysteria over homosexuality, I accepted an invitation from Julian Hodges, then president of MSNY (New York’s major gay group at that time, founded in 1953), to stay at his apartment. So I began gay life with instruction from a movement activist. Spending August ’65 with Hodges, I met Dr. Franklin E. Kameny at a meeting held in Hodges’ Greenwich Village apartment.

Frank Kameny’s significance to the gay movement is well recognized. He and I became friends; in the summer of 1966 I got a job as a House of Representatives intern (with Rep. Donald E. Lukens, R-Ohio) and lived with him in Washington. Frank, unemployed at the time, was an enormous influence on me, one of two people who have shaped my thinking modes (the other being my