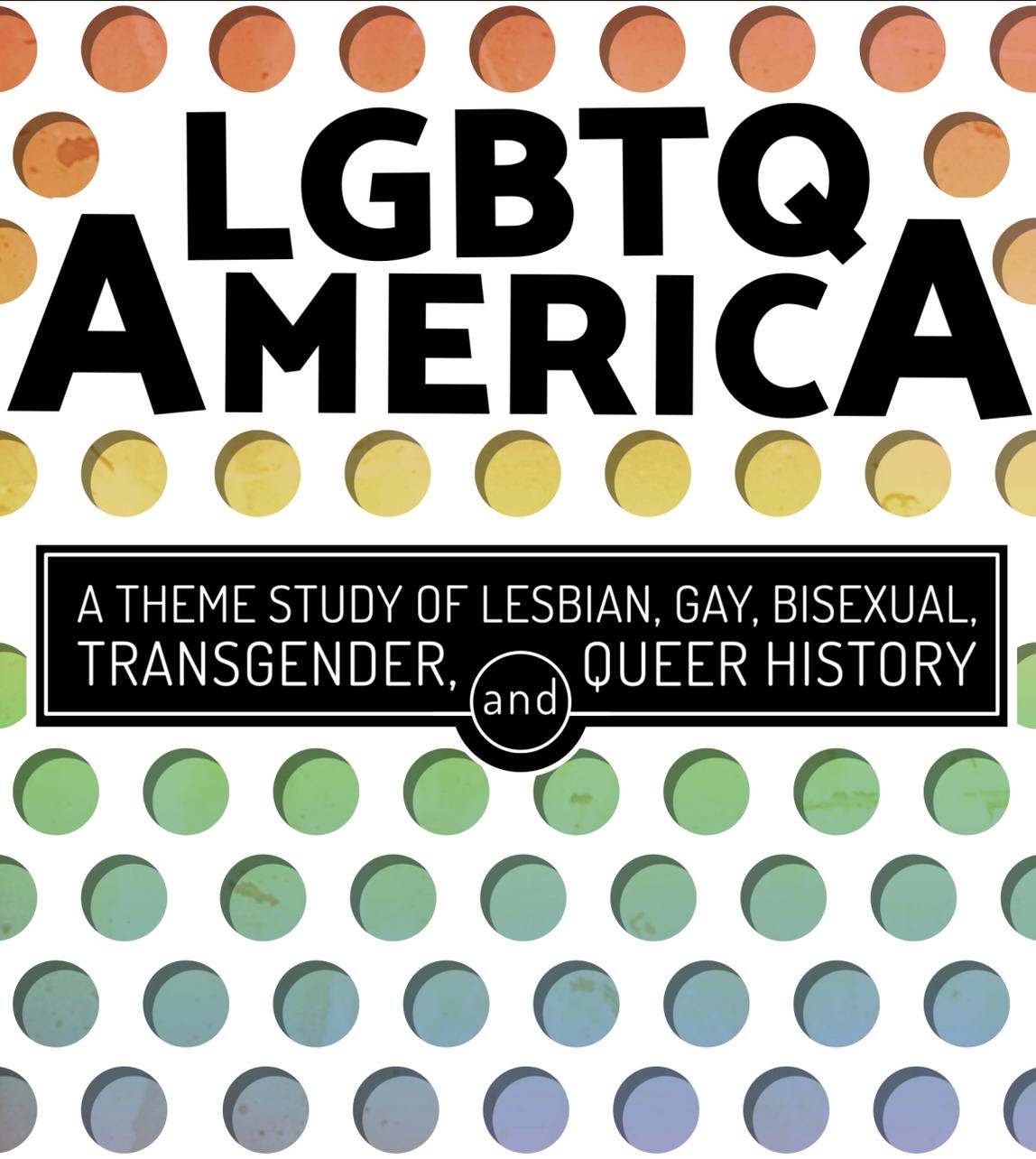


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LGBTQ AMERICA

A THEME STUDY OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL,
TRANSGENDER, and QUEER HISTORY

Edited by Megan E. Springate



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INTRODUCTION

The chapters in the Introduction section give context to the rest of the theme study. This is the context for the contexts, as it were. This section gives background on the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative and provides a broad social history of LGBTQ in America. The ideas in this introductory section will resonate throughout the rest of the theme study.

03 INTRODUCTION TO LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER HISTORY (LGBTQ HISTORY) IN THE UNITED STATES

Leisa Meyer and Helis Sikk

LGBTQ history is an umbrella term that captures the stories of strength and struggle of diverse individuals, cultures, and communities that have been considered nonnormative. It is the story of movements for justice; of moments of triumph and tragedy that people we now understand as LGBTQ have faced—and often continue to face—in our daily lives and demands for the right to live, love, and thrive. In the modern era, sexual and gender identity and expression have been central to Americans' understandings of themselves, even as they have been shaped by— and shaped—broader structures and attitudes toward race, ethnicity, class, gender, ability, and nation. Major institutions, governments, courts, churches,

and the medical profession, have served as arbiters, constructing normative and deviant sexualities and providing criteria for defining the range within each. Therefore, the study of LGBTQ history is the study of cultural, social, and legal politics in the United States and who and what is considered part of the “national” narrative. The National Park Service LGBTQ Heritage Initiative is a testament to how America’s perception of who is seen as part of the nation has shifted over the years.

LGBTQ history is an exercise in recovery and reclamation. Doing and telling this history involves finding traces of LGBTQ people in texts (letters, diaries, novels, popular print culture, court and police records), visual material (art, public spectacle), oral narratives and traditions, and the built environment (buildings, parks, homes as meeting places, churches). Exploring the spaces and places that LGBTQ people might have occupied, frequented, or passed through requires excavation—asking new questions of conventional sources of information. At the same time, we must also not presume that such traces are hidden, and look also to the vibrantly visible mentions overlooked by some and dismissed by others who have gone before us. As historian George Chauncey, Jr. remarked when asked why no one had ever discussed the vibrantly visible “gay world” he found in late nineteenth/early twentieth-century New York City: “Until recently, nobody looked for it.”¹ A strong necessity remains today to continue to excavate and look for such worlds and the historically specific sexual and gendered communities, systems, meanings, discourses, and realities they contained. In this process of seeing and excavation, we must keep at bay presumptions that LGBTQ people have been visible and publicly accepted only recently. We cannot frame our history in an oversimplified narrative of movement from repression to liberation.

¹ George Chauncey, Jr., *Gay New York: Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 9-10.

Early Moments and Findings

How do we uncover a history of individuals, peoples, and identities that shifted over time and were often distinct to place and cultures? How does one talk about sexual and gender identity and expression cross-culturally during periods when such identities and expressions were not necessarily linked to particular kinds of sexual or gendered behavior? How does one talk about sexual or gender identity cross-culturally or during periods in which the meanings of such behaviors were dramatically different than what they are today? Can we only use the terms “lesbian” or “gay” or “bisexual” or “transgender” or “queer” to describe those who would not have had such labels in the past? If so, should we only assign them to those people whom we can “prove” had same-sex sexual contact with one another, who explicitly spoke of their sexual desire for individuals of the same sex, or who explicitly articulated clear choices in relation to gender nonconformity? Or should we broaden our definitions of same-sex sexual categories and gender transgression to encompass multiple kinds of passions between individuals, including intimate same-sex friendships that might or might not have been sexual? Alternatively, should we talk only about lesbian or gay or bisexual or queer sexuality historically when individuals identified themselves explicitly as engaged in same-sex sexual relationships or only at the points when self-conscious cultures formed around shared sexual or gender identities? These are only a few of the many questions that anyone doing LGBTQ history today needs to consider when excavating the pasts of nonnormative identities, cultures, activities, and communities.

Thomas(ine) Hall’s life provides an example of how challenging it is to align LGBTQ “ancestors” with our contemporary understandings of sexual and gender identities, expressions, and categories. Born in 1603 in England and christened female, Hall as a child was trained and worked in sewing and needlework—conventionally feminine tasks for the period. Beginning in the 1620s Hall shifted gender presentation depending on the

circumstances—moving to a masculine gender presentation and going by Thomas to enter military service or to take advantage of work opportunities on the tobacco plantations of Virginia then moving to Thomasine immediately following his military service and when relocating as a female servant to the Plymouth Colony.² The fluidity of Hall’s gender presentation and reported intimate encounters with women and men drew the attention of authorities and community members in the small Virginia village where Hall resided. Town leaders detained Hall, who was physically examined first by a group of “leading women” then by a group of “leading men” in the settlement to ascertain Hall’s “true” sex. When no clear consensus emerged from the groups as to which category Hall belonged, the judiciary summoned the servant to the regional court in Jamestown, Virginia, where Hall was sentenced to dress in male and female clothing simultaneously.³ The court’s verdict marked Hall as always visibly outside of the “male/female” gender binary. What might we take from Thomas(ine)’s story in the twenty-first century? From the available records we could imagine that Hall’s sex and what we term today Hall’s gender identity/expression were distinctly genderqueer or gender fluid. Or perhaps we could claim Hall as a transgender forbearer. Or that Hall might have understood herself as a woman but donned male attire simply to gain employment and social mobility. Or given that Hall seemed to engage in sexual activity with both men and women, we might claim Thomas(ine) as bisexual. Rather than demanding this queer life history conform to one of these interpretations, however, LGBTQ history encourages us to keep open the possibilities of each, even as we look to the past to better understand the dominant cultural framework within which Hall existed. From there, we can determine the boundaries of acceptable gender and

² Kathleen Brown, “‘Changed into the Fashion of a Man’: The Politics of Sexual Difference in a Seventeenth Century Anglo-American Settlement,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 6, no. 2 (1995): 171-193. Plymouth, Massachusetts served as the capital of Plymouth Colony from when it was first founded in 1620 until its merger with the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691. Plimoth Plantation is a living history museum in Plymouth that interprets the original seventeenth-century Plymouth Colony as it would have been when Thomasine Hall worked there.

³ Historic Jamestowne, located at the original site of Jamestown, Virginia. Founded in 1609, it was the first permanent English settlement in what is now the United States. The Jamestown National Historic Site (part of the NPS) was listed on the NRHP on October 15, 1966.

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Figure 1: Deborah Sampson who fought as Robert Shurtleff with the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment during the Revolutionary War, c. 1797. Engraving by George Graham from a drawing by William Beastall, which in turn was based on a painting by Joseph Stone.⁴

sexual identity and expression in that time and place even as we seek to understand why and how transgression could—and did—occur.

Hall's shifting gender presentation, at one time at least ostensibly to enter military service, is an example of a larger historical pattern of people who crossed genders during times of war. Deborah Sampson was one such soldier who served in the Continental army during the American

Revolution (Figure 1).⁵ Early nationalists celebrated Sampson's gender-nonconforming exploits as

epitomizing the patriotic fervor of the colonists in their war against England. Although Sampson married a man after leaving military service, her subsequent apology for her “masquerade,” and assurances to public audiences that she had not engaged in any sexual transgressions with

⁴ License: Public Domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DeborahSampson.jpg> From Herman Mann, *The Female Review: Life of Deborah Sampson, the Female Soldier in the War of Revolution* (Boston: J.K. Wiggin & W.P. Lunt, 1866).

⁵ Sampson served seventeen months in the Continental army as Robert Shurtleff and served with the Light Infantry Company of the Fourth Massachusetts Regiment. Wounded in the leg in 1782 at a skirmish near Tarrytown, New York, she left the hospital before her wounds could be treated to avoid detection and removed a musket ball from her own leg using a penknife. Her leg healed poorly, and she was reassigned to serve as a waiter to General John Paterson. Though her identity as a woman was found out in the summer of 1783 after she got ill in Philadelphia, General Paterson did not reprimand her. She was honorably discharged at West Point, New York in October 1783. The United States Military Academy at West Point, New York on New York Route 218 was added to the NRHP on October 15, 1966 and designated an NHL on December 19, 1960.

women or men during her cross-dressing years, suggests the presumption that sexual deviance would accompany her actions.⁶

In contrast to Hall's example, which emerged from a western European ideological context we can see the much more fluid understandings of gender, sexuality, and identity in some indigenous North American cultures prior to, during, and after European colonization.⁷ Identified as "berdache" or "hermaphrodites" by Europeans (both in colonial times and more recently) many Native American nations have recognized a multiplicity of genders and sexualities. Since the 1970s, the term two-spirit has been adopted by many Native Americans and anthropologists as an umbrella term for these multiple identities. This concept developed out of and in response to the lengthy period of repression and violence under Euro-American colonial regimes, including the actions of government agents and missionaries to coercively "civilize" Native peoples in part by removing Native children to white Protestant boarding schools whose goal was to eradicate any elements of Native culture from these children. Two-spirit roles then became the focus of rediscovery, renewal, revival, re-interpretation, and theory since the 1970s, and two-spirit identified Native people are participating with growing prominence in pan-tribal and traditional settings.⁸

Each Native American group has had their own terms to describe these people, and different criteria for defining them. For example, a male two-spirit was called *boté* by the Crow and *nádleehí* by the Navajo. The most common trait attributed to male two-spirits across cultures (though not always) was skill in making crafts that were typically done by women.⁹

⁶ Leisa Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Julie Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maids: Women Who Dressed as Men in Pursuit of Life, Liberty, and Happiness* (London: Pandora Press, 1989).

⁷ For a detailed discussion, see Roscoe (this volume).

⁸ See Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds., *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

⁹ See Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones*, 213-247; Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang, eds., *Two-Spirit People*, 15.

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Figure 2: We'Wha (1849-1896), a Zuni *Ihamana*, weaving. Photo by John K. Hillers, c. 1781-1896, for the Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology (National Archives and Records Administration ID: 523558).¹⁰

These definitions could be much more complex than a man who lives as a woman: Zuni *Ihamana* We'Wha was a two-spirit male who government ethnologists encountered in 1879 while on an expedition to record “vanishing” Native American cultures as white America expanded westward (Figure 2). As a *Ihamana*, We'Wha embodied both male and female traits and activities while dressing in traditionally female clothing. We'Wha was a potter (a female craft) but also excelled in weaving (a male craft) as well as being a farmer and a member of the men's kachina society, who performed masked dances (both male-identified activities). In 1886, ethnologists Matilda Coxe Stevenson and her husband James Stevenson hosted We'Wha in Washington, DC.¹¹ Other colonial encounters

¹⁰ License: Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:We-Wa,_a_Zuni_berdache,_weaving_-_NARA_-_523797.jpg

¹¹ Matilda Coxe Stevenson, “The Zuni Indians: Their Mythology, Esoteric Fraternities, and Ceremonies,” *Twenty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1901-1902* (Washington, DC:

include: the sixteenth-century meeting between René Goulaine de Laudonnière's expedition to claim what is now Florida for the French and two-spirits of the local Timucua people; those between Captain Cook and *aikāne* representatives of Hawaiian chiefs and later between missionaries and the *māhū* in Hawai'i; between the Kutenai female two-spirit Qánqon and fur traders in the early nineteenth century along the border of Idaho and British Columbia; the alliance of *boté* Ohchiish with the US Army against the Lakota Sioux and Cheyenne in 1876 at the Battle of Rosebud in Montana.¹²

Unlike that of Native peoples, whose colonial-era identities and relationships we understand largely based on the descriptions left by European explorers and colonists, the identity and culture of white colonists have been to a large degree understood through their own written words.¹³ It is often in the correspondence between women and between men that we find LGBTQ history.¹⁴ Historian of sexuality and biographer Martin Duberman writes of the exchanges between James Henry Hammond (Jim) and his friend Thomas Jefferson Withers (Jeff) in the early nineteenth-century United States (Figure 3).¹⁵ These erotically charged and at moments explicitly sexual letters between these two “respectable” elite white southerners seem to suggest that same-sex sexual relationships might have been, if not common, at least somewhat

Government Printing Office, 1904); Will Roscoe, *The Zuni-Man Woman* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991).

¹² For more details, including specific places associated with these encounters, see Roscoe (this volume).

¹³ Archeological deposits, which often contain information about long-term, everyday activities, also have the potential to reveal information about same-sex and gender-variant pasts. See Springate's LGBTQ archeological context (this volume).

¹⁴ Other sources of information come from military records, court cases, newspapers, and other written documents; see, for example, Stein and Estes (this volume).

¹⁵ The letters describing James Henry Hammond's relationship with Thomas Jefferson Withers were written in 1826, just after Hammond left law school. He married the wealthy Catherine Elizabeth Fitzsimmons when she was seventeen years old, and entered the planter class, eventually amassing several plantation houses and more than three hundred enslaved persons. An attorney and outspoken supporter of slavery, Hammond served as a member of the US House of Representatives from 1835 to 1836, the Governor of South Carolina from 1842 to 1844, and as a US senator from 1857 to 1860. Redcliffe Plantation, 181 Redcliffe Road, Beech Island, South Carolina was completed in 1859, and has been home to Hammond and three generations of his descendants as well as generations of the enslaved. Now a South Carolina state park historic site, Redcliffe was added to the NRHP on May 8, 1973.

unremarkable for some during this period. Here again, it might not be the lack of evidence of an LGBTQ presence that explains our general absence from the historical record but rather scholars' concealment of that evidence and unwillingness to interrogate the possibilities of alternative or nonnormative sexualities and gender expressions in their interpretations of this history.¹⁶



Figure 3: Redcliffe Plantation house, Beach Island, South Carolina, home of James Henry Hammond from 1859. Photo by Bill Fitzpatrick, 2012.¹⁷

The oft-used theoretical concept, “romantic friendship” offers a somewhat ill-fitting category to frame women’s same-sex intimacies in seventeenth through early twentieth-century America. Some scholars have used this term to describe intimate relationships between women characterized by declarations of love for one another expressed in poetry and passionate letters replete with references to kissing, cuddling, and sharing a bed. Some historians have defined these relationships, especially during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the United States, as marking almost a lesbian “golden age.” According to this perspective, during this period women’s abiding affection for other women, especially in the emerging bourgeoisie, was not perceived as threatening to either heterosexual

¹⁶ Martin Duberman, “Writing Bedfellows’ In Antebellum South Carolina: Historical Interpretations and the Politics of Evidence,” in *Carryin’ On in the Lesbian and Gay South*, ed. John Howard (New York: New York University Press, 1997): 15-33, see especially note 15.

¹⁷ License: CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Redcliffe.jpg>

marriage or dominant standards of sexual morality. In fact, by the eighteenth century, the cultural norm of intense female friendships among white native-born women of the middle and upper classes was well established in the United States and rested on the white, middle-class assumptions that women were by nature virtuous and predominantly asexual.¹⁸ Thus, the acceptability of these relationships resided in their ostensibly nonsexual nature. Women in these relationships characterized their feelings for one another as “love,” yet did not proclaim, and often disclaimed any erotic attachment. There are numerous examples of romantic friendships that conform to this platonic model, while others suggest relationships of a more explicitly sexual nature.

Mary Grew and Margaret Burleigh were such lifelong companions in nineteenth-century America. In writing of their friendship, Grew characterized it as a “closer union than that of most marriages” while also describing her love for Burleigh as “spiritual” not “passionate” nor “sexual.”¹⁹ Almost a century later, however, two other “romantic friends,” Molly and Helena, implicitly acknowledge the passion that was central to their relationship. In a letter just prior to Helena’s marriage, Molly wrote to Helena’s betrothed that she and Helena had loved each other “almost as girls love their lovers.”²⁰ At the same time Frances Willard, a white middle-

¹⁸ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth Century America,” in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 53-76. Martha Vicinus, ed., *Lesbian Subjects: A Feminist Studies Reader* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1996).

¹⁹ Grew and Burleigh were “close companions” from the mid-1850s, and lived together until Burleigh’s death in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1891. Burleigh’s funeral took place at their residence, 116 North Eleventh Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (now demolished). Chris Dixon, “Grew, Mary,” *American National Biography Online*, <http://www.anb.org/articles/15/15-00893.html>, accessed via H-SHGAPE <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-shgape&month=0312&week=d&msg=pkWnqRyrfD6OV4scePKjCA>. Burleigh’s obituary is online at “Margaret Jones Burleigh,” Find A Grave website, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=99784442>.

²⁰ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Signs* 1, no. 1 (1975): 1-29; see note 12 for details on the relationship between Molly and Helena, which Smith-Rosenberg notes is based on “the 1868-1920 correspondence between Mary Hallock Foote and Helena, a New York friend (the Mary Hallock Foote Papers are in the Manuscript Division, Stanford University). Wallace E. Stegner has written a fictionalized biography of Mary Hallock Foote (*Angle of Repose* [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1971]). See, as well, her autobiography: *Mary Hallock Foote, A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West: The Reminiscences of Mary Hallock Foote*, ed. Rodman W. Paul (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1972), 5-6.”

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class female activist and creator of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, agonized in her diaries about her love for Mary, her brother's fiancée. She understood this love to be "abnormal" and reproached herself endlessly for the desires she felt toward her friend (Figure 4).²¹ In another example, two African American women, Addie Brown and Rebecca Primus, were involved for nine years in a relationship that was both highly visible within their Hartford, Connecticut, community and explicitly sexual.²² Moreover, even in relationships that generally were perceived as above reproach, popular suspicions of sexual deviance abounded.

While excavation and happenstance might help us locate implicit hints and explicit articulations of same-sex intimacies and desires, other evidence yields frustration and horror as we find references to letters documenting such relations being burned or destroyed, meet some archivists' refusal to allow materials to be published or to be read, and some scholars refusal to entertain the possibilities of same-sex desire and intimacy despite evidence to the contrary.²³ Such excavations are also always dependent on where we look, the questions we ask, and sometimes *how* we look. Characterizing these diverse examples as

²¹ Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, ed. *Writing Out My Heart: Selections from the Journals of Frances Willard, 1855-1896* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1985). Willard lived in the house her father built at 1730 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Illinois from 1871 until her death in 1898. From 1871 through 1874, she served as dean of the Women's College at Northwestern University. She helped found the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1874, and was president of the organization for nineteen years. Her home in Evanston served as an informal headquarters for the WCTU. The Frances Willard House is open as a museum; it was added to the NRHP on October 15, 1966 and designated an NHL on June 23, 1965.

²² Karen V. Hansen, "'No Kisses is Like Youres': An Erotic Friendship between Two African American Women during the Mid-Nineteenth Century," in Vicinus, *Lesbian Subjects*, 178-208. See also B. Denise Hawkins, "Addie & Rebecca - Letters of Free-Born African-American Women During the Civil War," *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, June 17, 2007, <http://diverseeducation.com/article/7496>. After the Civil War, the Hartford (Connecticut) Freedmen's Aid Society sent Primus, then twenty-nine years old, to Royal Oak, Talbot County, Maryland to help educate former slaves. In the four years she was there, she built a school house, completed in 1867, which the locals called the Primus Institute. County records indicate that a school for black children was present in Royal Oak through 1929. The building has since been lost. Travis Dunn, "Scholars Describe Historic Role of Primus Institute, School's Founder: School Started by a Freedmen's Aid Society," *Star-Democrat* (Easton, Maryland), February 28, 2001, 1A, 13A.

²³ Elizabeth W. Knowlton, "'Only a Woman Like Yourself' - Rebecca Alice Baldy; Dutiful Daughter, Stalwart Sister, and Lesbian Love of Nineteenth-Century Georgia," in Howard, *Carryin' On*, 34-53; Estelle Freedman, "'The Burning of Letters Continues': Elusive Identities and the Historical Construction of Sexuality," *Journal of Women's History* 9, no. 4 (Winter 1998).



Figure 4: Frances E. Willard House, Evanston, Illinois. Photo by Philip Turner, 1967 (Historic American Buildings Survey HABS ILL, 16-EVAN, 4-1).

“lesbian” or “gay” or evidence of same-sex desire, sexual intimacy or identity, turns on the question of how we define such terms. Is spiritual love between women sufficient for such a definition? Is explicitly sexual love sufficient? Must the women or men themselves or the culture in which they reside perceive such relationships as deviant from heterosexual norms of behavior in order to speak of them as queer?

Modern Moments and Naming

Some scholars argue that understandings of deviance in the nineteenth century in relation to same-sex intimacy as well as romantic friendship-type relations continued into the twentieth- and twenty-first

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centuries.²⁴ Yet what was distinct about the twentieth century was a steadily increasing effort to identify, name, and categorize sexualities and genders. One of the most influential theorists on modern sexuality, Michel Foucault, has articulated this gradual yet major shift in our understandings of sexuality as a difference between acts and identities. While in the nineteenth century, same-sex sexuality and nonconforming gender behavior were seen as discretely punishable acts, in the twentieth century such acts placed the individual in a specific category that indicated a state of being and a species: “homosexual,” “deviant,” or “invert.”²⁵

This shift from criminal acts to group identity was not immediate or even; as the twentieth century progressed a man engaged in genital sexual relations with another man might still be arrested for sodomy, but was now also likely to be defined by medical professionals as a “sexual invert.” This early twentieth-century category referenced not just the type of sexual behavior in which an individual was engaged, but also more broadly referenced the type of person who engaged in such behavior. This type was linked by sexologists to effeminacy in men and mannishness in women. For the British sexologist Havelock Ellis and others this phenomenon was worthy of sympathy—but sexual inversion transposed the issue of same-sex desire into one of gendered physical attributes, behaviors, and forms of dress. Thus many sexologists collapsed into one category a range of sexual orientations that we would now distinguish as bisexuality, transgender, and/or same-sex sexuality.²⁶ Here emerges another key question for those looking to excavate and document LGBTQ histories: who created modern understandings of sexual and gender

²⁴ Leisa D. Meyer, “Lesbians: Historical Perspectives,” in *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, eds. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science Ltd., 2001), 8720-8725. See also, Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present*, paperback ed. (New York: Morrow Quill, 1981); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct*; Vicinus, *Lesbian Subjects*; Gifford, *Writing Out My Heart*.

²⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I, An Introduction*, reissue ed. (New York: Vintage Press, 1990), 101.

²⁶ Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, vol. I (New York: Random House, 1915), see “The Sexual Impulse in Women,” 193-211; “Sexual Inversion in Men,” 82-96; “Sexual Inversion in Women,” 219-229; “The Nature of Sexual Inversion,” 289-297.

identities, and how do they change over time and context? Official arbiters—scientific, medical, legal, religious, and political institutions—have demarcated the categories of sexual “deviance” while simultaneously creating the range of behaviors attributed to normative sexualities.²⁷ Since the late nineteenth century, sexological (the science of sexuality) work has been one of the most influential arbiters in categorizing, describing, and assigning value to sexual and gender deviance—as well as scrutinizing the normal. In the first half of the twentieth century, religious pronouncements of “sin” and oral discourses engaging and describing sexual and gendered behavior as binary (homosexual/heterosexual; female/male) were increasingly joined and more than occasionally trumped by the emergence of parallel scientific and medical discourses addressing sexual and gender “deviance” and “normativity.” While Ellis and other sexologists highlighted the likely biological basis for sexual inversion or homosexuality, by the 1920s some psychologists, basing their approach on the work of Sigmund Freud’s theories of psychoanalysis, looked instead to the mind and environmental influences as central to shaping individuals’ sexual choices. In focusing on and creating detailed criteria for defining deviance, sexologists clarified implicitly the criteria defining “normal” sexual behavior—opposite sex partners and sex engaged within marriage. In contrast, Freud and his American followers sought to define the normal—seeing it as a category that itself required analysis and critique, and in providing criteria for this normal simultaneously defined those whose sexual choices did not fit such categories as deviant. In the end, by the 1920s sexologists and psychologists defined inversion more in terms of same-sex desire or sexual object choice and the concept of homosexuality was adopted as more accurate in encompassing a variety of same-sex orientations that sexologists confronted in their clinical practice. As the new binary between homosexuality and heterosexuality emerged,

²⁷ Gayle Rubin, who disentangled sex, gender, and sexuality as areas of inquiry, described the “Charmed Circle” of behaviors defined by society/law/religion/etc. as normal and acceptable; those identities and behaviors deemed deviant fell outside the circle. She noted that the Charmed Circle is not fixed; what is considered normal/deviant shifts and changes over time, and from culture to culture. Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex,” in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975).

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bisexuality was effectively removed from the discussion—an erasure that has continued to this day.²⁸

Similarly, courts and legal institutions have facilitated the broad and sweeping use of sodomy statutes and state and local gender codes to police, imprison, and constrain LGBTQ people's lives through the twenty-first century.²⁹ Gender historian Nayan Shah's study of Asian immigrants in the early twentieth-century northwest brings us the often complex dynamic of such sodomy laws. Anti-Asian immigrant sentiment was at a peak in the early twentieth century. Chinese and Indian men who engaged in interracial sexual encounters were arrested and charged with sodomy, marking them as deviants. As a result, they were denied access to citizenship. Their white partners, on the other hand, were often described as "victims."³⁰

No matter how seemingly powerful official arbiters have been during different moments in the past, they did not and do not create or assign sexual and gender identities. Historians have characterized medical literature and legal discourse as parts (albeit powerful ones) of many often competing sexual and gender ideologies. Joanne Meyerowitz, for instance, documents how discourse about transsexuals came in part from those hoping to change their sex, and not just from the popular culture, the courts, medicine, and science. Transsexual people "articulated their senses of self with the language and cultural forms available to them" and in doing so participated across the twentieth century in creating and reconfiguring their own identities.³¹ This continues today with growing calls for self-definition and agency. In other words, the formulation of modern understandings of sexuality was not abrupt and immediate, and official

²⁸ Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), see "The Sexual Aberrations," 1-38; "The Transformations of Puberty," and "Summary," 73-109; Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*.

²⁹ See Stein (this volume).

³⁰ Nayan Shah, "'Oriental Depravity' and 'Natural Degenerates': Spatial Borderlands and the Making of Ordinary Americans," *American Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2005): 703-725.

³¹ Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 9-10, 12-13.

systems of knowledge never held total sway. Rather, they were inconsistent, contested, and influenced by the people they were describing and categorizing. They continue to be challenged by a multitude of forces today, the most important of which are the people who live it.

Thus, excavating LGBTQ history means paying close attention and uncovering the often differing and not easily detectable markers that people have left behind. As one might expect, those with the greatest access to resources and education have historically left the most abundant textual records. The difficulties in locating records or traces of the sexualities of people of color make clear that while exploring the links between gender and sexuality are critical, attention to the relationships between sexuality, race, class, and ethnicity are equally if not more important. Finding traces of LGBTQ history among groups who have not had access to education and other resources requires both creativity and the willingness to look to what might be considered “unconventional” sources.

The feminist scholar, Domna Stanton identifies a “hybrid mode” of inquiry, which considers poetry, fiction, and autobiographical writings as central spaces through which LGBTQ people of color have expressed their sexual and gender identities.³² Stanton’s creative take on “unconventional” sources is only one of many approaches that help us include the stories of LGBTQ people of color as part of historical narratives. Given the often hidden, overlooked, or obscured nature of LGBTQ histories, other “unconventional” sources should be considered. For example, historians E. Patrick Johnson and John Howard discuss the importance of rumor, innuendo, and willful silences in doing LGBTQ history.³³

³² Domna Stanton, “Introduction,” in *Discourses of Sexuality: From Aristotle to AIDS* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 20. See also Hortense Spillers, “Interstices: A Small Drama of Words,” in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole S. Vance (London: Pandora Press, 1992), 74.

³³ E. Patrick Johnson, “Gays and Gospel: A Queer History of Sacred Music,” in *Out in Chicago: LGBT History at the Crossroads*, eds. Jill Austin and Jennifer Brier (Chicago: Chicago History Museum, 2011),

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Literary critic Siobhan Somerville's hybrid mode combines late nineteenth and early twentieth-century legal, sexological, film, and literary texts to point out how the formation of the homosexual/heterosexual identity binary in the late nineteenth-century United States took place at the same time that distinctions and boundaries between black and white bodies were being established.³⁴ Somerville's elegant study cautions against oversimplifying linkages between race and sexuality through the language of analogy. In 2016, as we write this chapter, some activists and historians are pointing to the 1967 Supreme Court decision in *Loving v. Virginia* (which struck down state statutes banning interracial marriage) as a legal precedent to striking down bans on same-sex marriage. Somerville makes clear in her work that



Figure 5: Gertrude Pridgett "Ma" Rainey, 1917. Photographer unknown.³⁵

analogies like this erase identities that exist at the intersections of queer and nonwhite.

Performance and musical expression have joined fiction as another possible "unconventional" source for excavating the stories of LGBTQ people of color. For example, the musical performances carried out by female blues singers during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1910s and 1920s. Ma Rainey's "Prove It On Me Blues," which openly

116: John Howard, *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 5.

³⁴ Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 3

³⁵ License: Public Domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MaRainey.jpg>

references intimate relationships between women, has become a staple of lesbian genealogy (Figure 5).³⁶ Gladys Bentley performed during the 1920s and early 1930s in full male regalia (a tuxedo and tails) and explicitly identified and was understood as a lesbian during that period.³⁷ To complicate these racial ethnic narratives and directly challenge the black/white binary within sexuality studies, historian Emma Pérez draws our attention to *corridos*, narrative songs or ballads generated by Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Chicana/os throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These musical performances speak to significant themes in Mexican and Mexican American history including immigration, border crossings, and the dangers of love and war, and offer valuable tools for exploring the LGBTQ histories heretofore hidden, only hinted at, or willfully ignored in these communities.³⁸

Contemporary Moments and Community Formations

Yet “community,” defined primarily as based on shared sexuality and/or gender identity, is itself a “naming” that oversimplifies LGBTQ life in the United States. The presumption that “community” is or *should* be the goal for sexual and gender minorities and the implicitly celebratory stance of many studies of sexual communities has been challenged by several scholars, including historian Karen Krauhlik in her study of Provincetown, Massachusetts (Figure 6). She investigates the interactions between white Yankee residents and Portuguese immigrants, and Portuguese residents and lesbian, gay, and transgender tourists and

³⁶ Lyrics from “Prove It on Me Blues” include “They said I do it, ain’t nobody caught me. Sure got to prove it on me. Went out last night with a crowd of my friends. They must’ve been women, cause I don’t like no men.” After her singing career ended, Ma Rainey (born Gertrude Pridgett in 1886) moved to 805 Fifth Avenue, Columbus, Georgia. She lived in this home, now open as a museum, until her death in 1939.

³⁷ Bentley gained notoriety for her performances at gay speakeasy, Harry Hansberry’s Clam House on 133rd Street in Harlem, New York City. In the early 1930s, she headlined at the Ubangi Club at 131st Street and Seventh Avenue, Harlem, New York (now demolished). During the McCarthy Era, Bentley married, and disavowed her earlier lesbianism. See Gladys Bentley, “I Am a Woman Again,” *Ebony* 7, no. 10 (August 1952): 94.

³⁸ Emma Pérez, “Queering the Borderlands: The Challenges of Excavating the Invisible and Unheard,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 24, nos. 2&3 (2003): 125.

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neighbors throughout the twentieth century. The stories highlight that “community” is defined as much by who is excluded as it is by who is included. The initial forays of effeminate white gay men to Provincetown in the 1950s, for instance, challenged residents’ mainstream understandings of manhood and masculinity; the later presence of white lesbian entrepreneurs in the 1970s likewise called into question assumptions that men were more suited than women to the business world. At the same time, however, the choice of



Figure 6: The Atlantic House, Provincetown, Massachusetts. Built in 1798, it has been a gay bar since the 1950s. Photo by Thomas Beauchamp-Arnold, 2004.⁴⁰

some white gay men to appear in blackface during local parades in the 1990s maintained and reinvigorated racial stereotypes and hierarchies. Kraulik suggests the need to move beyond a simple celebration of the creation of queer community and look to the consequences of such creation. In other words, the creation of a queer community—like the creation of any other community—is always also about constructing boundaries—boundaries that operate *within* communities as well as *between* emergent and existing communities.³⁹

³⁹ Karen Kraulik, *Provincetown: From Pilgrim Landing to Gay Resort* (New York: NYU Press, 2005). The Provincetown Historic District was listed on the NRHP on August 30, 1989. The Atlantic House at 4-6 Masonic Place, Provincetown, Massachusetts was built in 1798. Many of America’s most noted writers, including gay playwright Tennessee Williams, were patrons in the 1920s. It became truly gay-friendly in the early 1950s, and has continued as a gay bar ever since. See also, Scott Herring, *Queering the Underworld: Slumming, Literature, and the Undoing of Lesbian and Gay History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

⁴⁰ License: CC BY-NC 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/blueherondesign/7841835094>

The complexities of the idea of “community” in LGBTQ history is also highlighted by scholarship done on cities as the place where, during the twentieth century, queer subcultures have formed and found spaces.⁴¹ “Gay New York” boasted an effervescent and highly visible “gay world” in the early twentieth century, years before the 1969 Stonewall rebellion that for some has symbolized the beginnings of LGBTQ liberation.⁴² In this world gay men were not isolated from one another or from the broader culture within which they lived, rather they were visible to the “outside” world and they also were not self-hating (as some contemporaneous medical opinions held). New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, San Francisco, and Atlanta (among others) had neighborhoods within which gay men, bisexuals, and lesbians lived and thrived—leaving markers of their presence by wearing red ties or “dropping hair pins” so others could find them and identify the spaces they frequented.⁴³ Moreover, during the first third of the twentieth century, the stunningly rendered, highly visible, and well-attended drag balls of the 1920s in these cities made the visibility of LGBTQ people explicit (Figure 7).⁴⁴

⁴¹ See also Hanhardt and Giesecking (this volume).

⁴² See George Chauncey, Jr., *Gay New York*. Stonewall at 51-53 Christopher Street, New York City, New York was listed on the NRHP on June 28, 1999; designated an NHL on February 16, 2000; and declared the Stonewall National Monument on June 24, 2016.

⁴³ George Chauncey, Jr. argues that the “slang expressions” used by some gay men to identify themselves to others often “hinged on...the difference between the ‘masculinity’ of the personas they normally presented in public and the supposed ‘femininity’ of the inner homosexual self, which expressed a ‘womanlike’ sexual desire for men.” So “letting one’s hair down” often meant making one’s homosexuality explicit to a group or individual acquaintance. Chauncey, Jr., *Gay New York*, 289.

⁴⁴ Predominantly put on by and for members of the African American drag communities, drag balls were also attended by well-to-do whites, who would travel to Harlem to observe and take part in the gender-bending and queer culture. Webster Hall and Annex, famous in the 1910s and 1920s as a site of masquerade and drag balls, is located at 119-125 East 11th Street, New York City, New York. Rockland Palace, 280 West 115th Street, New York City, New York (demolished in the 1960s) was another well-known location of drag balls. Organized by the black fraternal organization, Hamilton Lodge No. 710 of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, balls here drew up to eight thousand attendees—participants and observers (it was fashionable for white and black social leaders to attend these balls as observers. Visitors to the Rockland Palace balls of the 1920s and 1930s included Tallulah Bankhead and members of the Astor and Vanderbilt families).



Figure 7: Rockland Palace in Harlem was home to popular drag balls in the 1920s and 1930s that would draw thousands of spectators and participants. Photographer unknown.⁴⁵

Cities continued to be important geographic spaces where LGBTQ cultures were created, maintained, and rebuilt through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The urban community study—a common approach to regional history—has served to both bring LGBTQ history to the forefront, but also to hide or gloss over it. The deep context and historical specificity of many of these studies both describe and revise dominant understandings of the LGBTQ history. That said, the very term “community” also suggests the creation of new generalizations and exclusions. The late historian Horacio Roque Ramirez, who studied LGBTQ Latina/o communities, explicitly points out one of the most striking blind spots of the majority of community histories: the failure to analyze and center the movements and experiences of LGBTQ people of color. Ramirez

⁴⁵ License: Free to use. <http://fdipmm.libertynet.org/word6/fdrp.html>

urges scholars of queer communities and activism to go beyond the question of how LGBTQ people of color fit into, or are related to the implicitly white gay movement. Instead, he proposes that scholars ask and research the importance of people of color forming and acting within their own “racial communities.”⁴⁶

Another generalization found in many urban community studies is the presumption that sexual systems, behaviors, and norms have their origins in metropolitan areas and move outward to smaller cities, towns, and rural areas. Other scholars have challenged this idea, suggesting instead that residents of towns and other smaller communities developed their own understandings of sexuality and gender based on their unique histories, locations, and populations. These understandings may or may not mirror developments in urban America, but they are not blind copies of the changes happening in city centers.⁴⁷ Historian John Howard addresses this explicitly in his study of same-sex male sexualities in twentieth-century Mississippi. Howard shows us that queer sexuality in rural Mississippi was not based on “urban archetypes” but was regionally specific and rooted in local community folkways and institutions.⁴⁸ Using the term “queer network” instead of “queer community,” Howard criticizes the privileging of “community and subculture” in other queer histories, instead, he focuses on “desire” as an organizing category for explaining and interrogating the many varieties of sexual activities “worked out between two men.” Created via the highways that took gay men to bars, rest stops, bus stations, and hotels, Mississippi’s gay cultures existed “alongside and

⁴⁶ Horacio Roque Ramirez, “Communities of Desire: Queer Latina/Latino History and Memory, San Francisco Bay Area, 1960s-1990s,” PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2001. See also, Horacio Roque Ramirez, “‘That’s My Place!’: Negotiating Racial, Sexual and Gender Politics in San Francisco’s Gay Latino Alliance, 1975-1984,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12, no. 2 (April 2003): 258. See González and Hernández, Harris, Sueyoshi, Roscoe (this volume). A similar argument can be made for other communities that fall under the LGBTQ umbrella, including bisexual and transgender communities; see Hutchins and Stryker (this volume).

⁴⁷ Sharon Ullman, *Sex Seen: The Emergence of Modern Sexuality in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 10-11. For examples of regional differences between LGBTQ communities, see Graves and Watson, Capo, Auer, Shockley, and Herczeg-Konecny (this volume). For an example of differences in gender between urban and rural areas, see Emily Kazyak, “Midwest or Lesbian? Gender, Rurality, and Sexuality,” *Gender & Society* 26, no. 6 (2012): 825-848.

⁴⁸ John Howard, *Men Like That: A Southern Queer History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 12.

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within” broader queer networks and “self-identified gay men shared spaces with presumably large numbers of non-gay-identified queers.”⁴⁹

It was the United States’ involvement in World War II that provided an unprecedented opportunity for LGBTQ people to begin to imagine themselves as part of a community that stretched across the country’s rural and urban areas. The massive mobilization of people that was needed to conduct a total war (and WWII was indeed such) meant that Americans left their homes for new war-based jobs and found themselves in largely gender-segregated communities without the restrictions and

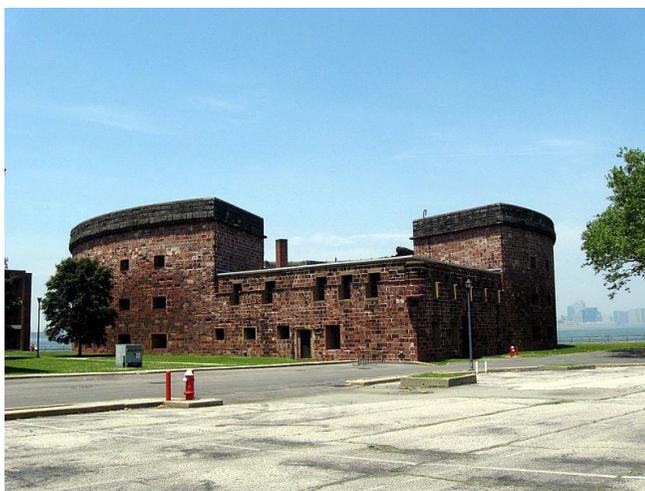


Figure 8: The guard house on Governor’s Island occupied the two-story angled portion of Castle Williams. During his posting at Governor’s Island during World War II, Henry Gerber (who in 1924 had founded the Society for Human Rights in Chicago) spent time confined in the guard house because of his homosexuality. Photo by Jim Henderson, 2008.⁵⁰

constraints typical of their hometowns. This provided multiple possibilities to explore their sexualities and gender identities. For men and women conscious of a strong attraction to their own sex but constrained by social norms from acting on it, the

war years eased the coming out process and facilitated entry into the “gay” world (Figure 8).⁵¹

⁴⁹ Howard, *Men Like That*, 78.

⁵⁰ License: Public Domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Castle_Williams_land_side_jeh.JPG

⁵¹ For men, the military offered opportunities to be around, and with, other men. Homosexual activity among the ranks did not go unnoticed. Henry Gerber, who in 1924 had cofounded the Society for Human Rights and operated it from his boardinghouse flat in Chicago’s Old Town Triangle neighborhood until it was raided in 1925, spent the last portion of his US Army career stationed at

The transformations induced by the war also created possibilities for gay men and lesbians to create institutions that bolstered and protected their identities. During the 1940s, exclusively gay bars appeared for the first time in cities as diverse as San Jose, Denver, Kansas City, Atlanta, and Cleveland. As significant, during the war the various military branches called on psychiatrists to evaluate the suitability of the male draftees and male and female volunteers for military service. The military collaboration with psychiatric professionals meant that male and female inductees were asked directly whether or not they had thought about or engaged in homosexual encounters. While intended to eliminate those soldiers, sailors, marines, and officers who might be homosexual or present stereotypical homosexual tendencies, this policy instead introduced the concept of same-sex sexuality to many of these enlistees and draftees for the first time and for some of them gave, finally, a definition that seemed consistent with how they understood themselves. The effects of the war on the latter half of the twentieth-century LGBTQ history cannot be overstated. The war years were crucial for thousands of LGBTQ to understand who they were and to be more certain than ever in their identities and collective interests, erotic or otherwise.

In 1948 and again in 1953, zoologist, taxonomist, and sexologist Alfred Kinsey shocked Americans when he published his respective reports on male and female sexuality and reported that people had sex—lots of it, and in many different configurations.⁵² With massive quantities of data,

Governors Island, New York. Because of his homosexuality, he was subject to beatings, blackmail, and other harassment including confinement in the guardhouse by other members of the military also stationed at Governors Island. Gerber was honorably discharged in 1942. See “Henry Gerber,” Governor’s Island National Monument website, <https://www.nps.gov/gois/learn/historyculture/henry-gerber.htm>. Governor’s Island was listed on the NRHP and designated an NHL on February 4, 1985. It was designated a National Monument, becoming part of the NPS system, on January 19, 2001. Gerber’s residence in Chicago was designated an NHL on June 19, 2015. Beginning in 2014, Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park began collecting stories about life on the home front of WWII from LGBTQ people. See “NPS Seeking LGBT Stories,” National Park Service website, March 5, 2014, <https://www.nps.gov/resources/news.htm?newsID=A5D4EBC4-EB30-573F-B14BE1C932E3CB9A>. For more on LGBTQ in the military, see Estes (this volume). See also, Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* (New York: The Free Press, 2000); Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

⁵² From 1927 until his death in 1956, Kinsey lived in a house he built near the University of Indiana in Bloomington. He lived there with his wife and daughter; after his daughter moved out in 1940, he

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the Kinsey reports documented the wide gap between what Americans did and what they said they did. Kinsey popularized conversations about sex and sexuality at a time when there was a calculated targeting of lesbians and gay men as sexually subversive (known as the “Lavender Scare”), the continuing listing of homosexuality as a mental illness in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), and an uneasy silence on broader questions of what was “normal.” Most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, Kinsey argued that sexuality was best defined as a continuum with his zero to six scale, with exclusive heterosexuality at one end, exclusive homosexuality at the other, and shades of bisexuality in between. His studies showed that same-sex sexual behavior and fantasies were, if not common, at least significantly present among both men and women in the American population. This “new” sexual knowledge produced by Kinsey and his team has left a lasting legacy in relation to same-sex sexualities. Kinsey’s zero to six scale and the 10 percent figure loosely describing the instances of homosexual expression, desire, and fantasy (alone or as well as heterosexual expression, desire, and fantasy) in the general population have remained with us today.⁵³ His studies were among the reasons that the APA removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders in the DSM in 1973.⁵⁴

began using her old bedroom for some of his studies. The Alfred and Clara Kinsey House is a contributing element of the Vinegar Hill Historic District, listed on the NRHP on June 17, 2005. Originally founded by Kinsey in 1947 as the Institute for Sex Research to house his decades of research notes, the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction is located in Morrison Hall, University of Indiana, Bloomington. Alfred Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948; repr., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Alfred Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953; repr., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

⁵³ Donna Drucker, *The Classification of Sex: Alfred Kinsey and the Organization of Knowledge* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014). See also, Janice Irvine, *Disorders of Desire: Sexuality and Gender in Modern American Sexology*, revised and expanded ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Life* (New York: W.W. Norton Company, 2005).

⁵⁴ This decision was the product of research by other psychologists, including Dr. Evelyn Hooker, who found that the correlation between homosexuality and mental illness was false. See Evelyn Hooker, “The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual,” *Journal of Projective Techniques* 21 (1957): 18-31. Dr. Hooker’s office at the time she published this paper was in the psychology department of the University of California, Los Angeles. The change in the DSM was also the result of lesbian and gay

The two decades following the World War II period were a study in contrasts between highly visible dominant cultural norms and ideals, the lived experiences of many Americans, and the emerging social movements that formed resistance to many of these norms. The 1950s witnessed the emergence of the lesbian and gay homophile movement, through organizations such as the Daughters of Bilitis (lesbians) and the Mattachine Society (gay men).⁵⁵ The chapters of each of these that formed in a variety of places across the country established themselves as a counterpoints to the military purges of LGBTQ people after World War II. Those organizations took hold at the height of what is commonly referred to as the Lavender Scare: witch hunts and mass firings of homosexuals who, as potential traitors and communists, were seen as moral and political subversives that had to be contained lest they undermine the American ideal of the white, middle class, heterosexual nuclear family.⁵⁶ In other words, the 1950s political and popular rhetoric directly linked the survival of democracy to the suppression of LGBTQ life and visibility. The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) supported LGBTQ people through those difficult times by lobbying with local government officials for equal rights, creating spaces where people could come together and discuss the issues most pressing to them, and by publishing newsletters and other mailings to communicate relevant information to the community.

activism especially by homophile organizations protesting the definition of homosexuality as a mental illness. It occurred in the context of other powerful movements for civil rights and social justice from the 1950s to the 1970s, including the African American civil rights movement, the women's rights and liberation movements, and the gay rights and liberation movements. Dr. Franklin E. Kameny is especially noted for his work in having homosexuality removed from the DSM. His residence in the northwest quadrant of Washington, DC, was added to the NRHP on November 2, 2011.

⁵⁵ The Mattachine Society was founded in 1950 by Harry Hay and others in Los Angeles, California. Early meetings were held at his homes in the Hollywood Hills and Silver Lake neighborhoods. The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) were formed in 1955 after a meeting of women including Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon (often credited as founding the DOB) at the home of Filipina Rose Bamburger in San Francisco. In the 1950s and 1960s, the DOB and the Mattachine Society had offices in the Williams Building, 693 Mission Street, San Francisco, California. The building also housed the offices of Pan Graphic Press, one of the first small gay presses in the United States, who printed (among other things) the monthly *Mattachine Review* and the DOB monthly, *The Ladder*. See Marcia Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement* (New York: Seal Press, 2007).

⁵⁶ Dr. Franklin Kameny was just one of the casualties of the Lavender Scare; he was fired from the Army Map Service in 1957 after being asked if he was gay.

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Historian John D'Emilio's pathbreaking 1983 book, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* was the first to bring our attention to the critical contributions of these groups in the service of homosexual rights.⁵⁷ Other historical studies about mid-twentieth century LGBTQ communities have highlighted the importance of working-class people in the fight for LGBTQ public places. For example, at Compton's Cafeteria on an August night in 1966, drag queens and transsexuals—some of whom had working-class jobs while others worked the streets—rioted in San Francisco in reaction to police harassment and discrimination.⁵⁸ On the other side of the country, working-class butches and femme lesbians in 1950s Buffalo, New York resisted being labeled as deviant by holding hands in public and participating openly as couples in public establishments, most often bars.⁵⁹

It was these same butches and femmes who joined with drag queens, street hustlers, and others on Friday evening June 27, 1969, to protest yet another raid by the New York City Tactical Police Force at a popular Greenwich Village gay bar, The Stonewall Inn.⁶⁰ Raids were not unusual in 1969. In fact, they were conducted regularly without much resistance. However, that night the street erupted into violent protest as the patrons, largely working-class people of color, fought back. The backlash and the several nights of protests that followed have come to be known as the Stonewall Riots. The Stonewall Riots have been considered *the event* marking the beginning of gay liberation and critical in a transformation from accommodation and silence to active protest and visibility, pride, and

⁵⁷ John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of A Homosexual Minority, 1940-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). See also, Marcia Gallo, *Different Daughters*.

⁵⁸ Compton's Cafeteria was located at 101 Taylor Street, San Francisco, California. The building is a contributing element to the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District, listed on the NRHP on February 5, 2009. See *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria*, directed by Victor Silverman and Susan Stryker (San Francisco: Frameline, 2005).

⁵⁹ Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline D. Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Routledge Press, 1993). Ralph Martin's at 58 Elliott Street, Buffalo, New York (now demolished) was the center of Buffalo's LGBTQ bar life in the 1940s. It catered to a large mixed gender/mixed orientation/racially diverse crowd from 1934 to 1951.

⁶⁰ The Stonewall Inn is located at 51-53 Christopher Street, New York City, New York. Stonewall was listed on the NRHP on June 28, 1999; designated an NHL on February 16, 2000; and declared the Stonewall National Monument on June 24, 2016.

action. Yet we should not forget the everyday activism and moments of more conservative visibility undertaken by the homophile organizations and their members: from picketing in front of Independence Hall (in respectable dress slacks and ties for the men and dresses for the women) to attending psychiatric conferences trying to persuade these professionals that “homosexuals” were not ill or deviant.⁶¹

Despite their efforts in creating a public stage of protest and visibility, drag queens and butch-femme lesbians would be left behind for a period. The gay rights and liberation movements as well as the lesbian coalitions that subsequently emerged via feminist activism constructed new standards of appropriate behavior for the LGBTQ community. These new standards, rooted in middle-class respectability politics, demanded “respectable” presentation of members, which meant that mostly white gay liberation and lesbian feminist activists started to identify against and exclude people of color, those from lower (and occasionally higher) classes including working-class butches and femmes, and those like drag queens and transsexuals who transgressed gender norms. As the LGBTQ community became more visible it also became more exclusive; those who were formerly included became marginalized by many lesbians and gay men.

Undeniably, the work done by white gay rights activists and lesbian feminists is important. Yet, we should look at this history with a hint of caution. The politics of sexuality works both ways—to include as well as exclude—and it is important to recognize the costs of the community

⁶¹ From 1965 to 1969, homophile groups picketed Independence Hall on July 4 (Independence Day). Known as the Annual Reminders, the purpose of the picket was to remind people that not all US citizens shared the same rights laid out in the Constitution of the United States. Independence Hall, 520 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is a contributing element of Independence National Historical Park. The park was formed on June 28, 1948 and designated an NHL on October 15, 1966. At the 1972 American Psychiatric Association’s Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas, Dr. John E. Fryer, wearing a joke-shop rubber mask and introduced as Dr. H. Anonymous to protect himself from professional censure, was the first psychiatrist to speak publicly about his homosexuality. It was part of a many-year campaign by activists including Dr. Frank Kameny and Barbara Gittings to have homosexuality removed from the DSM. The annual meeting was held at the Dallas Memorial Auditorium and Convention Center, now known as the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, Canton and Akard Streets, Dallas, Texas.

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formation at various moments throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that has been and is so necessary for all of our survival. The appeal by Sylvia Rivera during New York City's 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally (an early Gay Pride event) highlights how such inclusions are a matter of life and death (Figure 9). A Latina transgender woman of Puerto Rican and Venezuelan descent, Rivera was one of the main actors in the Stonewall Riots. She took the stage at Washington Square Park and shouted, while accompanied by boos from the crowd: "I have been beaten, I have had my nose broken, I have been thrown in jail! I lost my job, I lost my apartment for gay liberation... and you all treat me this way?"⁶² Rivera's frustration and demands for inclusion over thirty years ago seem even more harrowing now, as transgender people,



Figure 9: Sylvia Rivera at the 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally, New York City. Still image taken from the video "y'all better quiet down!" by Reina Gossett.⁶³

particularly transgender women of color, are bearing the brunt of not just street violence resulting in a record number of transgender deaths in 2015, but also violence at the hands of the state.

Gay rights and liberation activists, as well as lesbian feminists, would be critical players in other moments through the 1970s and 1980s. The 1970s campaign to elect Harvey Milk to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors was actively supported by gay and lesbian liberation activists. During Milk's successful 1977 campaign, he convinced the growing LGBTQ population of San Francisco that they could have a role in city

⁶² Sylvia Rivera, "Y'all Better Quiet Down" speech at New York City's 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day, YouTube video, posted by Luz Violeta, October 22, 2014, accessed March 16, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QijgzCCEtQ>.

⁶³ License: CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://vimeo.com/45479858>

leadership, and people turned out to form “human billboards” for him along major streets and highways surrounding and in the city.⁶⁴ In doing so, they outed themselves in a way once unthinkable. His successful election to the board in 1977 was a moment of triumph, as he became the first openly gay man elected to serve in a major political office.⁶⁵ For many in San Francisco it was invigorating, and the mobilization inspired people across the country. As one 68-year-old lesbian wrote after his election—“I thank god I have lived long enough to see my people emerge from the shadows and join the human race!”⁶⁶

Milk’s election, however, was followed by tragedy. On November 27, 1978, former San Francisco Supervisor Dan White assassinated Milk and San Francisco Mayor George Moscone.⁶⁷ White quickly admitted to the murders but a jury convicted him of manslaughter—a lighter charge—and sentenced him to just five years with parole. While San Franciscans marched in silent candlelight protests after the murders, the sentencing brought two days of rioting known as the White Night Riots (Figure 10).⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Harvey Milk operated his camera shop, Castro Camera, and lived at 573-575 Castro Street, San Francisco, California. He also ran his election campaign from the storefront.

⁶⁵ In 1974, Kathy Kozachenko was the first openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual candidate to win public office in the United States when she won a seat on the city council for Ann Arbor, Michigan. Elaine Noble, who came out as a lesbian during her campaign, was the first openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual candidate elected to a state-level office when she won the race for the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1974. See Tina Gianoulis, “Noble, Elaine (b. 1944),” GLBTQ: An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer Culture website, http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/noble_e.html, archived at https://web.archive.org/web/20061019230759/http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/noble_e.html.

⁶⁶ John D’Emilio, Urvashi Vaid, and William Turner, eds. *Creating Change: Sexuality, Public Policy, and Civil Rights* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000).

⁶⁷ Moscone and Milk were murdered at San Francisco City Hall, part of the Civic Center Historic District, listed on the NRHP on October 10, 1978 and designated an NHL on February 27, 1987.

⁶⁸ Early on in the White Night Riots, the chief of police ordered the police not to retaliate against the protesters. Despite orders, police officers entered the Elephant Walk Bar on Castro Street and began beating patrons. By the time the chief of police had ordered officers out of the Castro, sixty-one police officers and one hundred civilians had been hospitalized.

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Figure 10: Rioters outside San Francisco City Hall the evening of May 21, 1979, reacting to the voluntary manslaughter verdict for Dan White that ensured White would serve only five years for the double murders of Harvey Milk and George Moscone. San Franciscans protested peacefully following the murders, but rioted in the streets (the White Night riots) following the verdict. Photo by Daniel Nicoletta, 1979.⁶⁹

Milk's assassination was followed just a few years later by a far more devastating blow. At a moment when gay men and lesbians were claiming their right to freely express their sexuality, in 1981 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) quietly announced the emergence of a new and deadly disease. Because it seemed to affect mostly gay men, the disease was initially labeled "GRID"—gay-related immune deficiency. Shortly thereafter, because of protests that GRID stigmatized the gay population and the fact that the virus was also found in intravenous drug users, Haitians, and patients who had received blood transfusions, the name was changed to

⁶⁹ License: Free to use.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rioters_outside_San_Francisco_City_Hall_May_21_1979.jpg

AIDS—acquired immune deficiency syndrome. By the end of 1981, there were 234 known cases and the numbers increased dramatically each year; by 1987 over forty thousand people had been infected.

The CDC's announcement precipitated a general public hysteria with calls for quarantining homosexuals and IV drug users. Responses to the epidemic saw healthcare workers refuse to treat AIDS patients and first responders refuse to resuscitate men suspected of being gay. Religious evangelicals including Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell characterized AIDS not as a disease caused by a virus, but rather as god's punishment for an immoral lifestyle. They dubbed AIDS the "Gay Plague." Moreover, the response of the federal government under the leadership of President Ronald Reagan was extraordinarily slow. Reagan did not mention AIDS until 1985 and did not hold a press conference to address it until 1987.⁷⁰

In response to this neglect LGBTQ people formed organizations throughout the country to combat the disease. These efforts included the formation of cooperatives to research medications and protests to pressure drug companies and the Food and Drug Administration to speed up their efforts to find effective, affordable treatments. A new type of protest began in 1987 when New York City activists founded ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power).⁷¹ Focused on increasing public visibility around the disease and criticizing the lack of action by the federal government to address the epidemic, ACT UP took to the streets in "die-ins," lying on the ground in t-shirts emblazoned "Silence=Death" until law enforcement removed them (Figure 11). They posted statements on billboards and flyers, and distributed buttons throughout New York and

⁷⁰ Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987); Jennifer Brier, *Infectious Ideas: U.S. Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); "Fact Sheet 2016," UNAIDS website, http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/20150901_FactSheet_2015_en.pdf; "A Timeline of HIV/AIDS," AIDS.gov website, <https://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/hiv-aids-101/aids-timeline>, accessed May 20, 2016.

⁷¹ ACT UP had their first meeting at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York City, New York in March 1987.

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Figure 11: A mass “die in” on the lawn of the National Institutes of Health during ACT UPs May 21, 1990 “Storm the NIH” demonstration. Photo by William or Ernie Branson for the National Institutes of Health.⁷²

other cities—doing all they could to draw attention to the disease and ways to prevent its spread, including safer-sex workshops and handing out free condoms. By the early 2000s, the total number of fatalities from the disease in the United States topped one-half million while globally the pandemic had claimed over six million lives and was marked by over twenty-two million infected individuals. While there are treatments that allow those that can afford them to live longer, there is not yet a cure for AIDS.⁷³

The public panic around AIDS also led to an increase in attacks on LGBTQ people. In gay communities across the country, street patrols formed to help prevent anti-LGBTQ violence.⁷⁴ The violent murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming in 1998 received

⁷² License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nihlibrary/5489664638>

⁷³ “A Brief Timeline of AIDS,” Fighting AIDS Continuously Together website, accessed April 14, 2016, <http://www.factlv.org/timeline.htm>.

⁷⁴ The increase in anti-LGBTQ violence also led to an increase in people taking self-defense classes, formalizing buddy systems while out, and people arming themselves with mace and other weapons. The antiviolence patrols were carried out by groups like Queer Nation and the Gay Safe Street Patrols. See, for example, Hugo Martin, “Gays Form Patrols to Battle Hate Crimes: Self Defense: With Attacks on Homosexuals Increasing, the West Hollywood Effort is Part of a Mobilization Throughout the Southland,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 3, 1991, http://articles.latimes.com/1991-12-03/local/me-628_1_anti-gay-hate-crimes.

huge national and international attention.⁷⁵ The antigay protests at his funeral generated unprecedented sympathy and outrage for the struggles of LGBTQ people in America. Despite this outpouring of support, the disturbingly high number of murders in the last few years of transgender women of color has not caused the same level of public outcry. In the first two months of 2015, transgender women of color were murdered at a rate of almost one per week.⁷⁶ Out of all the documented anti-LGBTQ homicide victims in 2014, 80 percent were people of color and 55 percent were transgender women whereas transgender survivors of color were 6.2 times more likely to experience police violence.⁷⁷ Transgender people are also four times more likely to live in poverty than the rest of the general population and the prevalence of HIV among transgender women is nearly fifty times higher than for other adults.⁷⁸ As always, the race, class, and gender status of activists and victims determines how much or little attention will be paid to the situations of individuals, and continues to mark the value attached to particular lives.

Why LGBTQ History Matters

Despite these moments of tragedy, despair, and sorrow, we should also mark those signifying LGBTQ resilience and triumphs. In the last two decades there have been a number of significant changes in legislation that have had a major impact on the everyday lives of LGBTQ people in

⁷⁵ On October 6, 1998, Matthew Shepard was brutally beaten and left to die at the intersection of Pilot Peak and Snowy View Roads, Laramie, Wyoming.

⁷⁶ Samantha Michaels, "It's Incredibly Scary to Be a Transgender Woman of Color Right Now," *Mother Jones*, June 26, 2015, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/06/transgender-women-disproportionately-targeted-violent-hate-crimes>.

⁷⁷ National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, *Hate Violence Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Communities* (New York: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, June 2015). Significantly, this report includes data only from organizations who are partners with NCAVP that is headquartered in New York City. Founded in 1995, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) brings together anti-violence programs in cities and regions across the United States. Although this report is by far not perfect, it's more thorough than the annual FBI report on hate crimes.

⁷⁸ Center for American Progress and Movement Advancement Project, *Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty for Being LGBT in America* (Denver, CO: Movement Advancement Project, 2014), accessed January 8, 2016, <http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/paying-an-unfair-price-full-report.pdf>; "HIV Among Transgender People," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, last modified April 18, 2016, accessed January 8, 2016, <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/gender/transgender/index.html>.

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America. A series of court decisions in the early 2000s overturned previous rulings that had kept in place the often reinforced state and federal laws which constrained and limited the possibilities for LGBTQ people. In 2003 the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* demonstrated the importance of activism, visibility, and of writing LGBTQ history. On June 16, 2003 the highest court in the nation struck down the Texas sodomy law that made consensual sex between men illegal. In doing so, the court implicitly rendered other sodomy and so-called "crimes against nature" laws unconstitutional. Sodomy laws had a long history in the United States of being used to criminalize and imprison predominantly gay men as sex offenders, as well as being used as the rationale for denying or removing children from the custody of gay and lesbian parents.⁷⁹

The majority decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy reflected the work of those who had been recording LGBTQ histories. In fact, Kennedy based a substantial portion of his opinion on the historical research outlined by historian George Chauncey and nine other LGBTQ scholars. As John D'Emilio remarked in an article discussing his reactions to the decision, when Justice Kennedy "used words such as 'transcendent' and 'dignity' when referring to intimate same-sex relationships" it was a "dizzying and heady moment for me"—"oh my god, I thought, 'history really does matter!'" LGBTQ history is American history; it "really does matter" in part by helping to shape the politics and policies of our local, state, and federal institutions and leaders.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ See also Stein (this volume).

⁸⁰ John D'Emilio, "The Day the Supreme Court Quoted My Book," *History News Network*, July 14, 2003, <http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/1563>; Rick Perlstein, "What Gay Studies Taught the Court," *Washington Post*, July 13, 2003, B03, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2003/07/13/what-gay-studies-taught-the-court/d8e3988c-dfa7-498c-a281-15d2b043a3a0>; Peter Edidin, "In Changing the Law of the Land, Six Justices Turned to Its History," *New York Times*, July 20, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/20/weekinreview/20WORD.html>.

Most recently, the US Supreme Court in *United States v. Windsor* (2013) and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act (and similar statutes passed by individual states), legalizing same-sex marriage nationally (Figure 12).⁸² At the same time as the Windsor decision, however, the Supreme Court also gutted key provisions of the long-standing 1964 Voting Rights Act. In one fell swoop, the court created cause for optimism and hope among some LGBTQ people and simultaneously delivered a devastating blow to the continuing struggle for racial justice and equity—a blow that affects straight and LGBTQ people



Figure 12: The White House is lit up in the colors of the rainbow to celebrate the Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which struck down the federal Defense of Marriage act and legalized same-sex marriage across the country. Photo by David Shelby for the United States Department of State, June 2015.⁸¹

⁸¹ License: CC BY-NC 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/iip-photo-archive/19080149740>

⁸² *United States v. Windsor*, online at http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/12pdf/12-307_6j37.pdf; “*Obergefell v. Hodges*,” *SCOTUSblog*, <http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/obergefell-v-hodges>; for *Shelby County v. Holder*, see Adam Liptak, “Supreme Court Invalidates Key Part of Voting Rights Act,” *New York Times*, June 25, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/26/us/supreme-court-ruling.html>.

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alike. The legalization of same-sex marriage has created backlash in two related and overlapping types of legal responses. The first is modeled on federal religious freedom provisions and aims to remove sexual orientation and gender identity from state legal protections; the second are the so-called bathroom bills that target transgender people directly.⁸³ As the American Civil Liberties Union notes on its website, “There are bills in state legislatures across the country and in Congress that could allow religion to be used to discriminate against gay and transgender people in virtually all aspects of their lives.”⁸⁴ In North Carolina, HB2 has codified this discrimination to directly target transgender people by requiring them to use bathrooms and other facilities in government buildings and public schools that match the sex on their birth certificates. In May 2016, the federal Department of Justice responded by filing suit related to gender discrimination; later in the month, a joint letter from the Departments of Education and Justice issued guidelines directing public schools to allow transgender students to use facilities that match their gender identity.⁸⁵

These moments speak to the politics of intimacy and the importance of sexual and gender diversity to politics. Above all, these recent moments show that in order to effectively fight for the civil and equal rights of all LGBTQ people in this country, we need to remember and recall the struggles of the past. It is vital to remember moments in the life of LGBTQ America that have made up our history and that many have sought to claim and restore. Indeed, the National Park Service Initiative to recognize, interpret, and make visible LGBTQ historic places across the country is central to this claiming and restoration. These moments have certainly

⁸³ Both of these types of laws also affect straight or non-transgender people, making those who may be perceived as LGBTQ for whatever reason, also targets for legal discrimination.

⁸⁴ “Anti-LGBT Religious Exemption Legislation Across the Country,” American Civil Liberties Union website, May 5, 2016, accessed May 7, 2016, <https://www.aclu.org/anti-lgbt-religious-exemption-legislation-across-country>.

⁸⁵ Colin Campbell and Craig Jarvis, “LGBT Protections End As NC governor Signs Bill,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), March 23, 2016, accessed May 7, 2016, <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/under-the-dome/article67731847.html>; Emanuella Grinberg, “Feds Issue Guidance on Transgender Access to School Bathrooms,” *CNN*, May 14, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/12/politics/transgender-bathrooms-obama-administration/index.html>; “Obama Administration Sues North Carolina Over Anti-LGBT Law,” *BBC News*, May 9, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-36252949>.

been marked by oppression and despair, tragedy and violence, but also by struggles to build communities and cultures, create coalitions, and contest the designation of LGBTQ lives as not worthy of respect or dignity.

As the selection of stories in this chapter illustrates, every historical narrative is by definition exclusive. Telling a story is similar to taking a photograph: it brings our attention to only a very small fraction of the world. LGBTQ histories are as varied and distinct as the fields and approaches of those who teach or research or live it. Thus, the histories that we have agreed upon on at this moment are not set in stone and constantly need to be interrogated by the public, by us, by you. It is up to the visitors as excavators in their own right to interrogate this heritage project—the texts and sites—and provide their own narratives that would help to complicate and expand the current boundaries of what we now consider part of LGBTQ history. Be in the place, take time to understand the stories that are told, but always be vigilant to the histories, stories, and identities that are missing. LGBTQ history is a project in the making as we continue to excavate previously untold stories and pay attention to important moments as we move forward.