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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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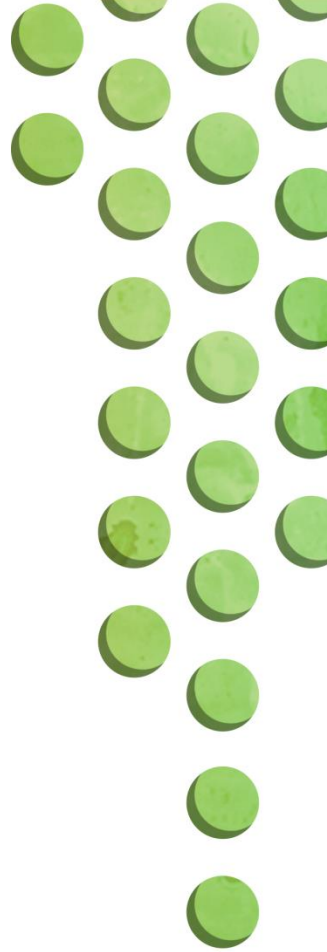
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# THEMES

*The chapters in this section take themes as their starting points. They explore different aspects of LGBTQ history and heritage, tying them to specific places across the country. They include examinations of LGBTQ community, civil rights, the law, health, art and artists, commerce, the military, sports and leisure, and sex, love, and relationships.*

# 14 LGBTQ SPACES AND PLACES

Jen Jack Giesecking

As LGBTQ people have been invisibilized, criminalized, and outcast, they have created ways to respond specific to their geographies. Like the injustices they have suffered, their tactics of resilience and resistance and their spaces and places are similar to but unique from other marginalized groups. Since sexuality is not always visible in a person's appearance, certain types of places and spaces have developed as key environments for LGBTQ people to find one another, develop relationships, and build community. Due to unjust laws and social mores, socialization among LGBTQ people focused on sex and relationships or was limited to small groups until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. LGBTQ people created social and political spaces in order to share face-to-face contact and find community. The physical landscape of LGBTQ lives, therefore, plays a special role in this group's history. This chapter looks at a range of LGBTQ spaces and places to provide a broad context for thinking about them as they are discussed in other chapters.

While LGBTQ people are discussed here as a group, each sexual identity—lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer—is specific not only to that group, geography, and period, but also to the individuals

themselves. Gay and lesbian spaces are a longtime part of the American landscape, but queer places are more recent. The reclaiming of the derogatory “queer” in the 1980s and 1990s as part of LGBTQ activism relates to the act of “queering space”—developed from queer theory—which envisions a space as in flux rather than fixed.<sup>1</sup> There are few specific bisexual or transgender physical spaces, as these groups often navigate between straight, lesbian, and gay spaces, and cisgender (gender conforming) and gender nonconforming spaces.<sup>2</sup> As such, the meanings of spaces and places discussed here also shift over time, just as spaces and places change and grow through history.

Since at least the 1920s, the association between LGBTQ people and spaces in the popular and LGBTQ media, as well as in scholarly research, is often reduced to three geographies: the city, the neighborhood, and the place of the bar.<sup>3</sup> With greater acceptance and tolerance toward LGBTQ people in recent decades, the understandings around and recognition of LGBTQ spaces and places are also increasing to encompass more diverse places, including bookstores, community centers, and public spaces. This essay pays special attention to LGBTQ environments from a geographic perspective, including those at the scale of the individual as well as temporary places and places of memorialization.

## The Space of the Body, Bodies Making Space

For some LGBTQ people, sexuality is at the core of their being; more

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<sup>1</sup> Kath Browne, “Challenging Queer Geographies,” *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* 38, no. 5 (2006): 885-893; Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: NYU Press, 1997); Natalie Oswin, “Critical Geographies and the Uses of Sexuality: Deconstructing Queer Space,” *Progress in Human Geography* 32, no. 1 (February 2008): 89-103; and Melissa W. Wright, “Gender and Geography II: Bridging the Gap – Feminist, Queer, and the Geographical Imaginary,” *Progress in Human Geography* 34, no. 1 (February 2010): 56-66.

<sup>2</sup> Petra L. Doan, “Queers in the American City: Transgendered Perceptions of Urban Space,” *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 14 no. 1 (2007): 57-74; Clare Hemmings, *Bisexual Spaces: A Geography of Sexuality and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2002); and Catherine J. Nash, “Trans Experiences in Lesbian and Queer Space,” *The Canadian Geographer* 55 no. 2 (Summer 2011): 192-207.

<sup>3</sup>Jen Jack Giesecking, “Dyked New York: Opening Up a Typology of Urban LGBTQ Spaces through Lesbian-Queer Experience,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Geographies of Sex and Sexualities*, eds. G. Brown and K. Browne (New York: Ashgate, forthcoming).

recently, some LGBTQ people claim their sexual identity is tangential and identify as “post-gay.”<sup>4</sup> Regardless, behaviors of LGBTQ people often link their spaces to practices related to their sexuality, ranging from the political or social, economic or cultural, to sexual acts or being in relationships.<sup>5</sup>

The visibility and recognition of LGBTQ people changed drastically throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, affording a public LGBTQ presence. Since the late 2000s, scholars across the disciplines have made further attempts to take an intersectional approach to LGBTQ studies and preservation.<sup>6</sup> Intersectionality recognizes that identity is not singular to one dimension (gender or race or class) but that each person is all identities at once.<sup>7</sup>

The visibility of LGBTQ spaces is heavily related to the dynamics of private and public spaces. Since the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century, most gay, bisexual, and queer men were largely unable to occupy private spaces alone together with the result that their “privacy could only be had in public.”<sup>8</sup> Such practices of meeting in public venues for sex, friendship, and conversation still continue today.<sup>9</sup> Women and transgender people are more often associated with private spaces like the home or indoor gathering spaces as the persistent male gaze and claim to public space limit their options.<sup>10</sup> The claims of women and transgender

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<sup>4</sup> Catherine J. Nash, “The Age of the ‘Post-Mo’? Toronto’s Gay Village and a New Generation,” *Geoforum*, 49 (October 2013): 243-252.

<sup>5</sup> Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1989); and Elizabeth Grosz, “Bodies-Cities,” in *Sexuality & Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 241-254.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Brown, “Gender and Sexuality I: Intersectional Anxieties,” *Progress in Human Geography* 36, no. 4 (2012): 541–550.

<sup>7</sup> See Springate on nominating properties to the NRHP and NHL (this volume).

<sup>8</sup> George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> David J. Bell, “One-handed Geographies: An Archaeology of Public Sex,” in *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance*, eds. Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter (Seattle: Bay Press, 1997), 81-87; and Shaka McGlotten, “A Brief and Improper Geography of Queerspaces and Sexpublics in Austin, Texas,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 21, no. 4 (2014): 471–488.

<sup>10</sup> Nash, “Trans Experiences”; Jen Jack Gieseck, “Queering the Meaning of ‘Neighbourhood’: Reinterpreting the Lesbian-Queer Experience of Park Slope, Brooklyn, 1983-2008,” in *Queer*



people to public spaces are more transient and ephemeral, such as the use of softball fields (Figure 1).<sup>11</sup> Age and generation also matter: an individual who made their sexuality known to others (many would use the term “came out”) during the McCarthy era of the 1950s or the AIDS crisis of the 1980s will have a very different outlook than someone who comes out today.<sup>12</sup> For example, young people today now see positive representations of themselves in the media and have greater legal supports so that they feel more confident and well adjusted.



Race and class are key factors in the production of LGBTQ spaces that are often linked and always reveal the stark limits placed on people of color and the poor. The extra policing and more extreme regulation of people of color make clear that not all public spaces are made equally. An example of this is the treatment of gender nonconforming and LGBTQ youth of color on the streets of New York City who are more heavily policed and harassed

Figure 1: As a member of Dykes on Bikes, Woody Woodward of Boston, Massachusetts often led New York City's Gay Pride Parade. Woodward passed away on June 13, 2009. Photo by David Shankbone, June 2007.<sup>13</sup>

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*Presences and Absences*, eds. Yvette Taylor and Michelle Addison (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 178-200.

<sup>11</sup> See Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Arlene Stein, *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Loree Cook-Daniels, “Living Memory LGBT History Timeline: Current Elders Would Have Been This Old When These Events Happened...,” Transgender Aging Network; FORGE, 2007, [http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/LGBT\\_elder\\_timeline\\_FINAL.pdf](http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/LGBT_elder_timeline_FINAL.pdf); and Giesecking, “Queering the Meaning of ‘Neighbourhood’”.

<sup>13</sup> License: CC BY-SA 3.0.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:A\\_Dyke\\_on\\_a\\_Bike\\_by\\_David\\_Shankbone.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:A_Dyke_on_a_Bike_by_David_Shankbone.jpg)

than gender conforming youth of color.<sup>14</sup> Even today, the role of class also plays out in the harassment, violence, and rape common for LGBTQ steel workers in northeastern Indiana.<sup>15</sup> People of color make less and have less access to resources, which means that their ability to make or retain spaces is often drastically decreased; dynamics of racism, sexism, transphobia, and classism often divide different groups into more segmented communities. The role of religion and cultural beliefs across races, classes, and ethnicities deeply affects the types of LGBTQ spaces and places that individuals can and will frequent. Context and intersectionality must always be considered to account for this group's "situated knowledges," or the place- and identity-specific experiences of actual individuals that define a place.<sup>16</sup>

## City, Suburb, Rural

This section addresses the scale of geographic settings: large cities, small cities, vacation towns, suburban areas, and the rural. Special attention is made to reject stereotypes around LGBTQ people in these settings to provide a more comprehensive, complicated view of American LGBTQ environments. Each city, town, suburb, or rural environment relates to the context of its state and region; however, rarely is research conducted at the level of the state, region, or nation state. Identities and communities including LGBTQ develop differently in different places. All

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<sup>14</sup> Michelle Fine and Jessica Ruglis, "Circuits and Consequences of Dispossession: The Racialized Realignment of the Public Sphere for US Youth," *Transforming Anthropology* 17, no. 1 (2009): 20–33; Brett G. Stoudt and María Elena Torre, "The Morris Justice Project: Participatory Action Research," ed. Patrick Brindle, *SAGE Cases in Methodology* (2014); Caitlin Cahill, Brett G. Stoudt, María Elena Torre, Jose Lopez, and Researchers for Fair Policing, "Fair Policing for the Fair City?" *Aggregate* 2 (March 2015), <http://we-aggregate.org/piece/fair-policing-for-the-fair-city>; Petra L. Doan, ed. *Planning and LGBTQ Communities: The Need for Inclusive Queer Spaces* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Michelle Billies, "Low Income LGBTGNC (Gender Nonconforming) Struggles over Shelters as Public Space," *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 14, no. 4 (2016): 989–10007.

<sup>15</sup> Anne Balay, *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

<sup>16</sup> See Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1990).





cities, suburbs, and rural settings have included LGBTQ people, whether or not they are visibly read as such.<sup>17</sup>

LGBTQ people have always existed in America's urban areas.<sup>18</sup> Cities are territories of dense populations, often with large varieties of difference among people, which serve as trading hubs, marketplaces, and cultural centers. Studying San Francisco in the early 1990s, anthropologist Kath Weston wrote that "The result is a sexual geography in which the city represents a beacon of tolerance and gay community."<sup>19</sup> Some researchers, activists, and biographers have contended that the city is the most viable home for LGBTQ people because of the cover of anonymity and for social interaction across differences it affords.<sup>20</sup> It is essential to note that LGBTQ identities, cultures, and politics do not develop in cities and then "diffuse" to suburban and rural locales, rather each environment produces its own, which are connected via media and social networks.<sup>21</sup>

Yet this sense of urban promise was, and is, both myth and fact. The clustering of gendered workforces in cities in World War II, especially the likes of San Francisco, and increased job opportunities and pay for women radically altered the possibility for many lesbians and gays to build and afford lives together.<sup>22</sup> Soon thereafter, anti-urbanism, racist, and antihomosexual projects of the federal, state, and local governments of the suburbanizing 1950s went hand-in-hand with increased urban immigration of LGBTQ people.<sup>23</sup> In other words, LGBTQ people found an

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<sup>17</sup> See Emily Kazyak, "Midwest or Lesbian? Gender, Rurality, and Sexuality," *Gender & Society* 26, no. 6 (December 1, 2012): 825-848.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Aldrich, "Homosexuality and the City: An Historical Overview," *Urban Studies* 41, no. 9 (2004): 1719-1737.

<sup>19</sup> Kath Weston, "Get Thee to a Big City: Sexual Imaginary and the Great Gay Migration," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 2, no. 3 (1995): 282.

<sup>20</sup> Samuel R. Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (New York: NYU Press, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence Knopp and Michael Brown, "Queer Diffusions," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21, no. 4 (2003): 409-424.

<sup>22</sup> John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) and "Capitalism and Gay Identity" in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, eds. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), 100-113; Allan Bérubé, "Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II," in *Powers of Desire*; Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Penguin, 1992); Chauncey, *Gay New York*; and Aldrich, "Homosexuality and the City."

<sup>23</sup> John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); and Karen Brodtkin, "How Did the Jews Become White Folks?" in

increased refuge in cities just as they were decimated, while the heterosexual families of the suburbs were heralded as “normal.” LGBTQ poor and people of color especially were driven out of cities by waves of gentrification. Other numbers of the same group were unable to move out of cities or rural areas as they were most limited in their ability to choose where they could live.

The white flight to the suburbs in the mid-twentieth century induced a re-norming of the heterosexual family which often made it necessary for LGBTQ people to move into cities and cluster. The LGBTQ movement and spaces began to become more publicly visible in the 1970s and 1980s, just as the United States saw massive funding cuts and the breakdown of



Figure 2: Pride at the Idaho State Capitol Building, 700 West Jefferson Street, Boise, Idaho. Photo by Kencf0618, 2011.<sup>24</sup>

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*Off White: Readings on Power, Privilege, and Resistance*, eds. Michelle Fine et al., 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> License: CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StatehouseBoisePride2011.jpg>

most city infrastructures.<sup>25</sup> Since then, US cities have experienced a renaissance with many Americans leaving rural and suburban environments to dwell in cities. In the late twentieth century and at the turn of the twenty-first century most especially, LGBTQ people played an important role in the gentrification of cities across the United States.<sup>26</sup> This process is addressed further in the next section.

San Francisco and New York City are the two most well-known American cities associated with LGBTQ politics, culture, business, and history.<sup>27</sup> All cities and towns are just as essential to the LGBTQ movement, and most key activism took place in urban centers. For example, the first gay rights organization, the Society for Human Rights, was founded by Henry Gerber in his Chicago home in 1924, and the more well-known homophile or gay rights organization, the Mattachine Society, was founded by Harry Hay and others in his Los Angeles home in 1950.<sup>28</sup> A number of in-depth histories of everyday, urban LGBTQ lives in US cities have been written since the 1980s.<sup>29</sup> There is a recent and vast in-migration of

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<sup>25</sup> Christina Hanhardt, *Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> Neil Smith, "'Class Struggle on Avenue B': The Lower East Side as the Wild Wild West" in *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 3-29; Lawrence Knopp, "Gentrification and Gay Neighborhood Formation in New Orleans: A Case Study," in *Homo Economics: Capitalism, Community, and Lesbian and Gay Life*, eds. Amy Gluckman and Betsy Reed (New York: Routledge, 1997), 45-64; and Sarah Schulman, *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

<sup>27</sup> See Herczeg-Konecny, Shockley, and Watson and Graves (all this volume).

<sup>28</sup> Marc Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012). The Henry Gerber House is the second NHL designated for its association with LGBTQ history. It was designated a NHL on June 19, 2015.

<sup>29</sup> To date, there are book-length works on various cities, including New York City: Chauncey, *Gay New York*; James F. Wilson, *Bulldaggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies: Performance, Race, and Sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011); A. B. Christa Schwarz, *Gay Voices of the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Hanhardt, *Safe Space*; Philadelphia: Marc Stein, *City Of Sisterly And Brotherly Loves: Lesbian and Gay Philadelphia, 1945-1972* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004); Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Penguin, 1994); Los Angeles: Moira Rachel Kenney, *Mapping Gay L.A.: The Intersection of Place and Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L. A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); San Francisco: Kath Weston, *Families We Choose*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Hanhardt, *Safe Space*; Detroit: Enke, *Finding the Movement*; Marlon M. Bailey, *Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Gender, Performance and Ballroom Culture in Detroit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); Kansas City: David W. Jackson, *Changing Times: Almanac and Digest of Kansas City's Gay and Lesbian History* (Kansas City, MO: The Orderly Pack Rat, 2011);

straight residents into cities identified closely with LGBTQ communities as varied as San Francisco or Ogunquit, Maine. Along with the often steep increases in property values and mortgage loads, there is much debate over whether these gay villages have assimilated, or are being “de-gayd” through processes of gentrification.<sup>30</sup>

LGBTQ experiences in smaller cities and towns, such as Reno and Boise, have been largely overlooked by researchers (Figure 2).<sup>31</sup> In contrast, much has been written on vacation towns and places frequented by LGBTQ visitors. With limited resources and places to gather through the twentieth century, LGBTQ people desired an elsewhere to go and be among like-minded people. Towns like Northampton and Provincetown, Massachusetts; and Cherry Grove and Fire Island Pines, New York have been LGBTQ oases in the vast national sea of homophobia from the 1930s through the present.<sup>32</sup> Other vacation towns include Asheville, North Carolina; Ogunquit, Maine; Saugatuck, Michigan; Guerneville, California; and Key West, Florida. Other LGBTQ tourist venues that are more transient as well: Pensacola Beach, Florida, on Memorial Day; Gay Days at Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Park in Orlando, Florida,

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Minneapolis: Enke, *Finding the Movement*; Twin Cities: GLBT Oral History Project, *Queer Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Stewart Van Cleve, *Land of 10,000 Loves: A History of Queer Minnesota* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Milwaukee: Enke, *Finding the Movement*; The History Project, *Improper Bostonians: Lesbian and Gay History from the Puritans to Playland* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998); Washington, D.C.: Kwame Holmes, “Chocolate to Rainbow City: The Dialectics of Black and Gay Community Formation in Postwar Washington, D.C., 1946-1978,” PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011; Miami: Susana Peña, *Oye Loca: From the Mariel Boatlift to Gay Cuban Miami* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); and Chicago: Tracy Baim, *Out and Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City's Gay Community* (Chicago: Agate Surrey, 2008); St. Sukie de la Croix and John D’Emilio, *Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago before Stonewall* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012); and Amin Ghaziani, *There Goes the Gayborhood?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Michael Brown, “Gender and Sexuality II: There Goes the Gayborhood?” *Progress in Human Geography* 38, no. 3 (June 2014): 457-465; and Ghaziani, *There Goes the Gayborhood?*

<sup>31</sup> Dereka Rushbrook, “Cities, Queer Space, and the Cosmopolitan Tourist”; *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Studies* 8, no. 1/2 (January 2002): 183; and Nan Alamilla Boyd, “San Francisco’s Castro District: From Gay Liberation to Tourist Destination,” *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 9, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 237-248. See Auer (this volume).

<sup>32</sup> Benjamin Forest, “West Hollywood as Symbol: The Significance of Place in the Construction of a Gay Identity,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13, no. 2 (1995): 133-157; and Esther Newton, *Cherry Grove Fire Island: Sixty Years in America’s First Gay and Lesbian Town* (New York: Beacon Press, 1995); Karen Christel Krahulik, “Cape Queer?: A Case Study of Provincetown, Massachusetts,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 52, no. 1/2 (December 10, 2006): 185-212.



and Anaheim, California, respectively.<sup>33</sup> Tourist places privilege the middle and upper classes in that they can afford the travel, time away, and costs associated with such trips. The towns, especially, catered to white LGBTQ populations who possessed the privileged ability to move more freely about the United States and congregate without police agitation. Also, given men's increased incomes, LGBTQ tourism has primarily targeted gay men. Locations once shared by word of mouth became part of the central advertising focus of the increasingly visible LGBTQ media outlets of the 1990s and this still continues today.

Heteronormativity, or the privileging of male and heterosexual identities and relations while casting all others as deviant or lesser than, became the norm post-World War II, the same period of mass suburbanization. As a result, LGBTQ people were often discouraged from finding a way to make a home in the suburbs through the 2000s.<sup>34</sup> However, many suburbs are seeing a rise in LGBTQ populations as increased legal protections and social tolerance allows for a greater range of living options.<sup>35</sup> Karen Tongson's recent work on Los Angeles suburbs upsets the rural/urban dichotomy.<sup>36</sup> She pays special attention to the growing body of LGBTQ people of color in suburban landscapes, indicating a profound shift in these areas. Tongson especially brings to light the experience of LGBTQ people of color in suburbs as these areas diversify racially across the United States.

After decades of media and popular culture painting the rural as backwards or hateful, understandings of rural queer life have begun to shift in the public eye.<sup>37</sup> Historically, LGBTQ people remained closeted in rural environments or relied on upper-class status and white privilege to

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<sup>33</sup> See Petra L. Doan, *Queering Planning* (London: Ashgate, 2011).

<sup>34</sup> Gill Valentine, "Negotiating and Managing Multiple Sexual Identities: Lesbian Time-Space Strategies," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 18 no. 2 (1993): 237-248; and Petra L. Doan, "The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces - Reflections from Beyond the Gender Dichotomy," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 17, no. 5 (2010): 635-654.

<sup>35</sup> See Doan, *Queering Planning*.

<sup>36</sup> Karen Tongson, *Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries* (New York: NYU Press, 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Jon Binnie and Gill Valentine, "Geographies of Sexuality - a Review of Progress," *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 2 (June 1999): 175-187.

bend gender and sexual norms.<sup>38</sup> Until recently, conservative politics largely sided with anti-same-sex marriage bills by claiming LGBTQ people are deviant or undesirable in small tightly-knit communities, namely as a push against cosmopolitanism.<sup>39</sup> The violent murders of Brandon Teena in 1993 in his home in Humboldt, Nebraska, and of Matthew Shepard in 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming—as well as the films, television specials, and plays developed from their stories—brought national attention to the experiences of LGBTQ people in rural environments.<sup>40</sup> As shows like “Queer Eye for the Straight Eye” took off to national acclaim only a few years later in 2003, the American tendency toward cosmopolitanism as “chic” and rurality as “backward” became profound.

Of course, many LGBTQ people have made happy homes in rural environs.<sup>41</sup> Unlike cities that afford visible difference, processes of kinship and community override private sexual practices in longtime rural, working-class communities.<sup>42</sup> The internet, social media, and mobile apps developed into a means of connection, support, and education for these more dispersed, rural populations, just as they have for urban residents.<sup>43</sup> LGBTQ people in non-urban communities also use and appropriate the resources they have available to them: anthropologist Mary Gray writes of white, working class LGBTQ youth in rural Kentucky embodying their genders and sexualities by performing drag in their local Wal-Mart in the 2000s. The documentary “Small Town Gay Bar” (2006) charts the dispersed, close-knit, and mid-sized community of LGBTQ people in rural

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<sup>38</sup> James T. Sears, *Lonely Hunters: An Oral History of Lesbian and Gay Southern Life, 1948-1968* (Boulder, CO: Basic Books, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> Claire E. Rasmussen, “We’re No Metrosexuals: Identity, Place and Sexuality in the Struggle over Gay Marriage,” *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, no. 5 (October 2006): 807-825.

<sup>40</sup> Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998) and *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: NYU Press, 2005); E. Cram, “(Dis)locating Queer Citizenship: Imagining Rurality in Matthew Shepard’s Memory,” in *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies*, eds. by Mary L. Gray, Colin R. Johnson, and Brian J. Gilley (New York: NYU Press, 2016), 267–289.

<sup>41</sup> Mary L. Gray, Colin R. Johnson, and Brian J. Gilley, eds. *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies* (New York: NYU Press, 2016).

<sup>42</sup> Mary L. Gray, *Out in the Country: Youth, Media, and Queer Visibility in Rural America* (New York: NYU Press, 2009); Herring, *Another Country*; and Colin R. Johnson, *Just Queer Folks: Gender and Sexuality in Rural America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

<sup>43</sup> Shaka McGlotten, *Virtual Intimacies: Media, Affect, and Queer Sociality* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013).





Mississippi.<sup>44</sup> In many of these studies and histories, gender plays out differently in these areas, and masculinity in both men and women is generally accepted.<sup>45</sup> In all of these examples, however, most attention is paid to white experience and paints rural LGBTQ people of color still having less support and infrastructure to claim and enact physical space.

## Neighborhoods and Territories



Figure 3: Harlem United provides help and advice for people in the community with HIV/AIDS. Since 1988 it has provided health and housing related services in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City, New York. Photo taken at New York City Pride by Tadekk, 2008.<sup>46</sup>

Throughout the twentieth century, LGBTQ people have developed physical enclaves in the form of territories in suburban or rural settings or ghettos and/or neighborhoods within cities. These spaces afford more navigable areas within those larger landscapes from which to create and share community, culture, politics, rituals, and economies. LGBTQ neighborhoods hold an iconic place in literature and popular media as a

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<sup>44</sup> Malcolm Ingram, *Small Town Gay Bar*. Documentary, 2006.

<sup>45</sup> Kazyak, "Midwest or Lesbian?"

<sup>46</sup> License: CC BY 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/tadekk/4184079836/in/album-72157622972335626>

space (real or imagined) of total community, collectivity, and prosperity.<sup>47</sup> It is essential that any study of a LGBTQ neighborhood, ghetto, territory, or enclave be situated within the cultural, political, and economic context of the city in which it is located. For example, for gay men in New York City at the turn of the twentieth century: “the emergence of gay speakeasies and drag balls...can be understood only in the context of and more general changes in the social geography of the city,” so that while neighborhoods like the West Village and Harlem (Figure 3) afforded spatial community, these changes related heavily to the spirit of the city itself.<sup>48</sup> The best-known American LGBTQ neighborhoods are the Tenderloin and Castro Districts in San Francisco (Figure 4), Washington, DC's Dupont Circle, and the Greenwich Village and Chelsea neighborhoods of New York City, all of which are often used as a measure of what is or is not a LGBTQ neighborhood; as always, context matters. Other well-established LGBTQ neighborhoods include Los Angeles County's West Hollywood (California), Philadelphia's Gayborhood (Pennsylvania), Chicago's Boystown (Illinois), Houston's Montrose (Texas), San Diego's Hillcrest (California), Midtown Atlanta (Georgia), Miami Beach (Florida), and San Jose's St. Leo neighborhood (California).

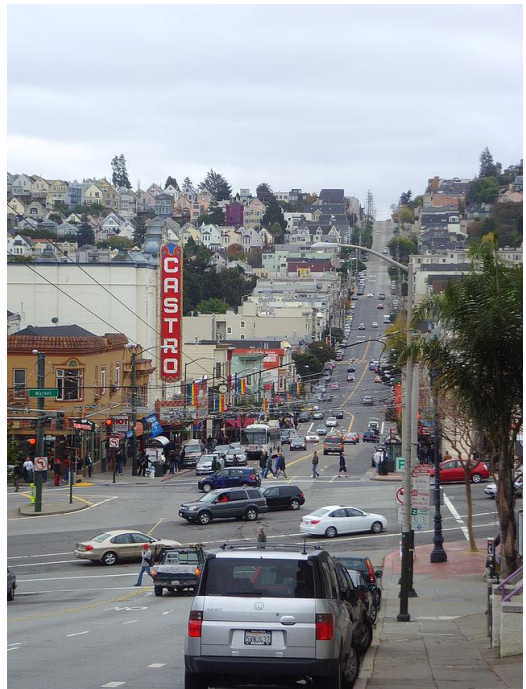


Figure 4: Castro Street, San Francisco showing the Castro Street Theatre, 429 Castro Street, San Francisco, California. Photo by Jamezcd, January 2009.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Brown, “Gender and Sexuality II.”

<sup>48</sup> Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 1994, 28.



Since the 1920s, LGBTQ spaces have been understood as being neighborhoods or territories.<sup>50</sup> A neighborhood is “dominated by residential uses,” “walkable” in scale, and has a (physical) territory that is often conflated with the (social) communities that live within it.<sup>51</sup> LGBTQ neighborhoods are also referred to more globally as “gay villages” or, in the United States, under the colloquial term “gayborhoods.”<sup>52</sup> These neighborhoods grew as key public establishments, public meeting grounds and centers, businesses, and residences were knit together through LGBTQ people’s repeated gathering in these spaces over time. These neighborhoods form, shift, and dissolve as political economies and social and commercial networks change over time. Similar to the dissolution of other ethnic enclaves such as Chinatowns or Little Italys, the intensified gentrification, tourism, and financialization in San Francisco, for example, has rendered the Castro unrecognizable to many long-term residents and more a tourist hub.<sup>53</sup>

LGBTQ people in the 1970s, primarily white and middle class, developed more formal spatial concentrations in urban residential areas which eventually coalesced as “gay ghettos.”<sup>54</sup> The term “ghetto” evokes both the broader public sense of unwanted enclaves of LGBTQ people and the margins on which they lived in society; despite this, the term has become common parlance within LGBTQ discourse as a term of recognition of overcoming such marginalization. The term “gay neighborhood,” in contrast, evokes white individuals in cities, mimicking idyllic small-town life.<sup>55</sup> Manuel Castells argued that gay men in San Francisco’s Castro District were living not in a ghetto but in a *neighborhood* based on the confluence of their unique production of

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<sup>49</sup> License: CC BY-SA 3.0. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Castro\\_street\\_theatre.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Castro_street_theatre.JPG)

<sup>50</sup> Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 1994; and Weston, “Get Thee to a Big City.”

<sup>51</sup> Derek Gregory et al., *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); see also Monica Colombo, Cristina Mosso, and Norma De Piccoli, “Sense of Community and Participation in Urban Contexts,” *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 11, no. 6 (2001): 457-464.

<sup>52</sup> Brown, “Gender and Sexuality II.”

<sup>53</sup> Boyd, “San Francisco’s Castro District.”

<sup>54</sup> Martin P. Levine, *Gay Men: The Sociology of Male Homosexuality* (New York: HarperCollins, 1979).

<sup>55</sup> Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961).

culture, economy, and physical spaces.<sup>56</sup> Still today the common narrative of the LGBTQ neighborhood is a utopian one: those LGBTQ people who lived in or used these spaces often experienced a reprieve from isolation and grew communities from which to work toward social and political gains.<sup>57</sup> The term LGBTQ-friendly neighborhood, in comparison, refers to areas where LGBTQ business and people are in the minority, but openly welcomed, or are areas that target LGBTQ tourists.<sup>58</sup> The use of “ghetto” or “neighborhood” usually changed over time but also relates to an LGBTQ person’s connection with that area relative to when the change in terminology happened. In more recent years, the idea of a “creative class” extols the role of LGBTQ people and artists in “improving” the conditions of cities.<sup>59</sup> Yet, this viewpoint is narrow.<sup>60</sup> As early as the 1970s, it was clear that LGBTQ people’s territorial gains at society’s “margins” were at the expense of a loss of space for working-class people and people of color—including LGBTQ people, making LGBTQ people key players in processes of gentrification.<sup>61</sup>

Due to their decreased economic and political power, it is much more difficult, if not impossible, for people of color, the poor, and women to sustain formal LGBTQ neighborhoods. Gay and queer men’s bars and informal territories often dissipate and then come together again through intermittent instances of hate crimes and practices of cruising, respectively. This dissolve-rebuild pattern can be seen, for example, in communities of Latino and South Asian men in the Jackson Heights

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<sup>56</sup> Manuel Castells, “Cultural Identity, Sexual Liberation and Urban Structure: The Gay Community in San Francisco,” in *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 138-172.

<sup>57</sup> Knopp, *Homo Economics*; Sarah Elwood, “Lesbian Living Spaces: Multiple Meanings of Home,” in *From Nowhere to Everywhere: Lesbian Geographies*, ed. Gill Valentine (Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 2000), 11-28; and Enke, *Finding the Movement*.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew Gorman-Murray and Gordon Waitt, “Queer-Friendly Neighbourhoods: Interrogating Social Cohesion Across Sexual Differences in Two Australian Neighbourhoods,” *Environment and Planning A* 41, no. 12 (2009): 2855-2873; Boyd, “San Francisco’s Castro District.”

<sup>59</sup> Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class—Revisited: 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2012).

<sup>60</sup> Tiffany Muller Myrdahl, “Queering Creative Cities,” in *Queering Planning*, 157-168.

<sup>61</sup> Hanhardt, *Safe Space*.



neighborhood in Queens, New York.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps the only neighborhoods to lay claim to the title “lesbian neighborhoods” are Park Slope in Brooklyn, New York, Andersonville in Chicago, Illinois, and the Mission or Valencia of San Francisco, California.<sup>63</sup> Unlike gay men’s neighborhoods or cruising grounds, lesbians and queer women possess “spatial concentrations” because they are rarely known to possess and retain urban territories.<sup>64</sup>

This distinction is based largely on the ever persistent gender pay gap and women’s lesser power and authority, which leads them to rent longer and buy later as house prices continue to climb.<sup>65</sup> Lesbians’ sexual practices also do not require or claim public cruising spaces like those of gay men, which also adds to their invisibility.<sup>66</sup> Most invisible are lesbians and queer women of color whose neighborhood-like areas may be intentionally less visible in neighborhoods of color.<sup>67</sup> An expectation that LGBTQ people are able to territorialize and own their spaces privileges the viewpoint of elite, white capitalist society. As a result, special attention must be paid to those spaces which may not have been owned by LGBTQ people.

Scholars have noted that gentrifiers who possess less wealth—namely women and people of color—are eventually economically displaced by later,

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<sup>62</sup> Martin F. Manalansan IV, “Race, Violence, and Neoliberal Spatial Politics in the Global City,” *Social Text* 23, no. 3/4 (Fall 2005): 41-55.

<sup>63</sup> See Tamar Y. Rothenberg, ““And She Told Two Friends”: Lesbians Creating Urban Social Space,” in *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, eds. David J. Bell and Gill Valentine (New York: Routledge, 1995), 165-181; Ghaziani, *There Goes the Gayborhood?*; and Deborah Goleman Wolf, *The Lesbian Community* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

<sup>64</sup> Rothenberg, “And She Told Two Friends”; Doan, *Planning and LGBTQ Communities*.

<sup>65</sup> S.Y. Adler and Johanna Brenner, “Gender and Space: Lesbian and Gay Men in the City,” *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 16, no. 1 (1992): 24-34; Melissa W. Wright, *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2006); and Jen Jack Giesecking, “Crossing Over into Territories of the Body: Urban Territories, Borders, and Lesbian-Queer Bodies in New York City,” *Area*, 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Jen Jack Giesecking, “Living in an (In)Visible World: Lesbians’ and Queer Women’s Spaces and Experiences of Justice and Oppression in New York City, 1983-2008,” PhD diss., The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2013, <http://jgieseking.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Giesecking-dissertation-Living-in-an-InVisible-World-2013.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> Mignon R. Moore, *Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships, and Motherhood among Black Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); and Giesecking, “Crossing Over.”

more economically stable waves of gentrification.<sup>69</sup> Much has been made of the 2000 and 2010 census data on the location of same-sex couples which has been interpreted as showing the waning of LGBTQ neighborhoods throughout the United States.<sup>70</sup> As many LGBTQ people do not have the means to form full neighborhoods, some LGBTQ people are grouping together in smaller enclaves or clusters of residences rather than full neighborhoods with commercial and residential elements. Still, across races and classes, LGBTQ neighborhoods matter to people across gender



Figure 5: The Bay Area American Indian Two Spirits march in the San Francisco Pride Parade. Photo by InSapphoWeTrust, 2013.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> License: CC BY-SA 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/skinnylawyer/9214887596>

<sup>69</sup> Tiffany Muller Myrdahl, "Ordinary (small) Cities and LGBTQ Lives," *ACME* 12, no. 2 (2009): 279-304; Petra L. Doan and Harrison Higgins, "The Demise of Queer Space? Resurgent Gentrification and the Assimilation of LGBT Neighborhoods," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 31, no. 1 (March 2011): 6-25; and Gieseeking, "Crossing Over."

<sup>70</sup> Gary Gates, Jason Ost, and Elizabeth Birch, *The Gay & Lesbian Atlas* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 2004); Michael Brown and Larry Knopp, "Places or Polygons? Governmentality, Scale, and the Census in the Gay and Lesbian Atlas," *Population, Space and Place* 12, no. 4 (July 1, 2006): 223-242; and Amy L. Spring, "Declining Segregation of Same-Sex Partners: Evidence from Census 2000 and 2010," *Population Research and Policy Review* 32, no. 5 (October 2013): 687-716.



Figure 6: Harry Hay (lower left, in the cap), one of the founders of the Radical Faeries, at San Francisco Pride—likely with other Faeries. Photo by Alan Light, June 1986.<sup>72</sup>

and sexual identities—who see these spaces as a place to meet, mingle, and mark history.<sup>71</sup>

The concept of territories is best applied to areas carved out by LGBTQ people in urban

public spaces or within rural spaces. From the 1890s through the 1920s, gay men in New York City claimed the most remote and unwanted spaces of the city as cruising grounds for public sex, friendship, conversation, and recognition. Cruising grounds included public spaces the likes of waterfronts, beaches, bathrooms, bathhouses, and parks such as the Ramble in Central Park in Manhattan and Riis Beach in Queens, New York.<sup>73</sup> Such areas are still used today by men and transgender people across races and classes, despite intensified policing and gentrification that have made them difficult to sustain.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Nathaniel M. Lewis, "Moving 'Out,' Moving On: Gay Men's Migrations Through the Life Course," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104, no. 2 (March 2014): 225-233; and Giesecking, "Crossing Over."

<sup>72</sup> License: CC BY 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/alan-light/1929106169>

<sup>73</sup> Chauncey, "Stud". Central Park was listed on the NRHP on October 15, 1966 and designated an NHL on May 23, 1963. Riis Beach, part of Jacob Riis Park, is part of the Jamaica Bay Unit of the NPS's Gateway National Recreation Area. Jacob Riis Park Historic District was listed on the NRHP on June 17, 1981. Other cruising spaces include The Block (bounded by First, Franklin, Main, and Foushee Streets in Richmond, Virginia) a gay cruising area in the 1940s; and Pershing Square (South Olive Street, Los Angeles, California), known from the 1920s-1960s as "The Run," a cruising place for men that included the Central Library (listed on the NRHP on December 18, 1970), bathrooms in the Subway Terminal Building (Hill and Olive Streets; listed on the NRHP on August 2, 2006; now used as residences), and the bar at the Biltmore Hotel (506 South Grand Avenue).

<sup>74</sup> Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*; and McGlotten, "A Brief and Improper History of Queerspaces and Sexpublics in Austin, Texas."



In rural environments, LGBTQ people have created their own loosely-knit residential communities.<sup>75</sup> On reservations, and beyond, Native Americans who identify as two-spirit organize and gather (Figure 5).<sup>76</sup> Other rural territories have been established driven by gender separatism and a need to escape the mass of city denizens and social expectations. In the 1970s, lesbian feminists created their own Lesbian Nation, territories away from mainstream patriarchal society in the form of “women’s land” or the “landdyke movement.”<sup>77</sup> These territories include Sugarloaf Women’s Village in the Florida Keys, Florida, and the Wisconsin Womyn’s Land Co-op in Monroe County, Wisconsin. Fewer women are



Figure 7: Judith Casselberry singing "Amazon/Rise Again" at the opening celebration of the final Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in 2015. Pictured in the background (left to right) are the following Amazons: Shelley Nicole, Gina Breedlove, Cree Breedlove McClellan, Gretchen Phillips, Hanifah Walidah, Bitch, Cris Williamson, Allison Miller (drums), and Aleah Long. Photo courtesy of photographer MJ Stephenson.

<sup>75</sup> See Kate Davis, *Southern Comfort*, 2001.

<sup>76</sup> See Will Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman*, reprint ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992); Scott Lauria Morgensen, *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*, (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 2011). For more information on Native American experiences, see Roscoe (this volume).

<sup>77</sup> Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*; Gill Valentine, "Making Space: Lesbian Separatist Communities in the United States," in *Contested Countryside Cultures: Rural and Socio-Cultural Marginalisation*, eds. Paul Cloke and Jo Little (New York: Routledge, 1997), 105-117.

moving to these lands and with few children and a refusal to permit men on the land, many of these matriarchal communities, including the Alapine Village in northeastern Alabama, are starting to fade.<sup>78</sup> Men also have created separate spaces for themselves in rural areas. While now a multigender group, the Radical Faeries have been practicing rituals of men-loving-men in eleven rural “sanctuaries” across the United States (Figure 6).<sup>79</sup> In 1979, the Radical Faeries had their first gathering at Sri Ram Ashram Ranch, located outside Benson, Arizona. The Camp Trans campground in Monroe County, Wisconsin, was formed in opposition to and outside of the women-born-women-only policy of the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, and affords a space for people across genders who support and respect transgender people. The MichFest, as it was informally known, ran for forty years from 1976 to 2015 and afforded freedom and security for tens of thousands of cis-gendered women in rural Michigan that they previously could not imagine (Figure 7).

## A Range of LGBTQ Places

Across cities, suburbs, and rural settings, and within and beyond territories and neighborhoods, LGBTQ places evoke the practices that define this group and vice versa. Contrary to the idea of place as merely fixed coordinates on a map, place is dynamic; it is always becoming.<sup>80</sup> Attachments to and memories of place contribute to forming identities and navigating experiences.<sup>81</sup> In this section, places are examined by the primary practices that form them. Because LGBTQ people often have fewer resources and access to capital, many LGBTQ places are impermanent and temporary—for example, rented, or borrowed spaces for

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<sup>78</sup> Sarah Kershaw, “My Sister’s Keeper,” *New York Times*, February 1, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/01/fashion/01womyn.html?scp=1&sq=kershaw%20keeper&st=cse>

<sup>79</sup> Morgensen, *Spaces between Us*.

<sup>80</sup> Harold Proshansky, Anne K. Fabian, and Robert Kaminoff, “Place-Identity: Physical World Socialization of the Self,” *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 3 (1983): 57–83; and Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*, Minnesota Archive Editions (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

<sup>81</sup> Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997).

meetings. This impermanence, however, does not necessarily lessen the importance of these places.

Since the 1920s, one type of space, bars, has been most closely associated with LGBTQ communities by both society at large and LGBTQ individuals.<sup>83</sup> Bars were the only spaces that afforded socializing and “prepolitical” gatherings in the 1930s to 1960s, places where those of varying genders, sexualities, and races could mix. These were



Figure 8: Plaque commemorating the Compton's Cafeteria riot of 1966, located at the corner of Taylor and Turk Streets, San Francisco, California. Photo by GayleSF, June 2006.<sup>82</sup>

predominantly working-class establishments.<sup>84</sup> While smaller cities and towns have fewer places where all LGBTQ people can gather, LGBTQ bars in cities are often highly segregated by race and class because greater numbers of people allowed for places where specific groups can congregate.

In a recent study of transgender people's experience of LGBTQ place, female-to-male transgender people often are not welcome or feel unwelcome in women-only lesbian or male-only gay bars, and seek out queer bars instead, which welcome a broad spectrum of genders.<sup>85</sup> Male-to-female transgender people and drag queens more

<sup>82</sup> Image in public domain.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Plaque\\_commemorating\\_Compton's\\_Cafeteria\\_riot.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Plaque_commemorating_Compton's_Cafeteria_riot.jpg)

<sup>83</sup> See Joseph Harry, “Urbanization and the Gay Life,” *The Journal of Sex Research* 10, no. 3 (August 1, 1974): 238–247; D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*; Kennedy and Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold*; Joan Nestle in *Queers in Space*, 61–68; and Wolfe in *Queers in Space*, 301–324.

<sup>84</sup> Kennedy and Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold*; see also D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*.

<sup>85</sup> Nash, “Trans Experiences in Lesbian and Queer Space.”



often find community in gay men's bars.<sup>86</sup> Intensifying gentrification and rising rents and property values have played a role in the closing of many LGBTQ bars today; the last lesbian bars in San Francisco (the Lexington Club) and in Washington, DC (Phase One) closed early in 2015, and the oldest continuing black LGBTQ bar in New York City, the Starlite Lounge, closed in 2011 after fifty-two years in business.<sup>87</sup>

In addition to bars, LGBTQ people are often associated with political spaces and spaces of protest because of the strong visibility of the LGBTQ movement. Bold activist protests have been hallmarks of the movement. In 1966, a group of LGBTQ hustlers and drag queens refused to acquiesce to police brutality at Compton's Cafeteria in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco and, for the first time in recorded history, fought back against police (Figure 8).<sup>88</sup> This event and others paved the way for a spontaneous riot against police brutality of LGBTQ individuals on June 27, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn, a predominantly gay bar with a smaller clientele of lesbians, transgender people, and bisexuals in New York City's Greenwich Village.<sup>89</sup> Since 1970, the Stonewall Riot has been marked and celebrated annually and internationally as the Pride March and Pride celebrations. Inspired by these uprisings and the radical movements of the 1960s and 1970s, a public gay and lesbian movement grew alongside and often in solidarity with other movements, often occupying homes, workplaces, campuses, and antiracist, anarchist, labor, and Marxist meeting spaces.<sup>90</sup> Examples

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<sup>86</sup> Kale Bantigue Fajardo, "Queering and Transing the Great Lakes Filipino/a Tomboy Masculinities and Manhoods across Waters," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2014): 115–140.

<sup>87</sup> Jen Jack Gieseeking, "On the Closing of the Last Lesbian Bar in San Francisco: What the Demise of the Lex Tells Us About Gentrification," *Huffington Post*, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jen-jack-gieseeking/on-the-closing-of-the-las\\_b\\_6057122.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jen-jack-gieseeking/on-the-closing-of-the-las_b_6057122.html). The Lexington Club was located at 3464 Nineteenth Street, San Francisco, California; Phase One was located at 525 Eighth Street NE, Washington, DC; and the Starlite Lounge was at 1213 McDonald Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.

<sup>88</sup> Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *Radical History Review*, no. 100 (2008): 144–157; and Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008). Compton Cafeteria was located at 101 Taylor Street, San Francisco, California. It is a contributing element to the Uptown Tenderloin Historic District (listed on the NRHP on February 5, 2009).

<sup>89</sup> Martin Bauml Duberman, *Stonewall* (New York: Plume, 1994); and Karla Jay, *Tales Of The Lavender Menace: A Memoir Of Liberation*, new edition (New York: Basic Books, 2000). Stonewall, at 53 Christopher Street, New York City, was listed on the NRHP on June 28, 1999; designated an NHL on February 16, 2000; and declared the Stonewall National Monument (an NPS unit) on June 24, 2016.

<sup>90</sup> Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement*; and Hanhardt, *Safe Space*.

include the first Latino/a LGBTQ rights organization, Gay Latino Alliance, founded in San Francisco in 1975, as well as the Community Building in Washington, DC.<sup>91</sup>

The eruption of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s incited the growth of national and international in-your-face activist actions, confronting issues such as healthcare, childcare, harassment, racism, violence, and the gender pay gap.<sup>92</sup> These groups took the fight to those who ignored their cries for help; the group ACT UP laid down during the archbishop's mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue in New York City to protest the Vatican's dismissal of AIDS research and rejection of LGBTQ people in 1989 (Figure 9).<sup>93</sup> At the same time, thousands of small local organizations formed in cities, towns, colleges, and high schools across the country to address local injustices. In the 1990s, large rounds of defunding of the federal government led to the outgrowth of a nonprofit industrialization complex, absorbing nascent organizations into official nonprofit status and often dampening radical trajectories.<sup>94</sup> In the 2000s, the mainstream LGBTQ movement began to focus almost exclusively on obtaining same-sex marriage rights and overturning "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policies in the military.<sup>95</sup> Conversations around "respectability politics," laying claim to being part of already dominant social norms like marriage, are now at the center of many LGBTQ debates and will likely define many

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<sup>91</sup> Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, "That's My Place!: Negotiating Racial, Sexual, and Gender Politics in San Francisco's Gay Latino Alliance, 1975-1983," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12, no. 2 (April 2003): 224-258.

The key period of significance for the Community Center was 1971 to 1981. In the 1960s and early 1970s, this location, known as the Community Building, was a center of counterculture and antiwar activity. The site housed Earthworks and Lambda Rising and organized the first Gay Pride in 1975. The building also housed the Gay Switchboard, "Blade," "off our backs," Bread and Roses, The Black Panther Defense League, and other organizations. It was located at 1724 Twentieth Street NW, Washington, DC.

<sup>92</sup> Laraine Sommeila and Maxine Wolfe in *Queers in Space*, 407-438; and Hanhardt, *Safe Space*.

<sup>93</sup> Sommeila and Wolfe, *Queers in Space*, 407-438. St. Patrick's Cathedral was listed on the NRHP and designated an NHL on December 8, 1976.

<sup>94</sup> Max J. Andrucki and Glen S. Elder, "Locating the State in Queer Space: GLBT Non-Profit Organizations in Vermont, USA," *Social & Cultural Geography* 8 (February 2007): 89-104; and INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, ed., *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2009).

<sup>95</sup> Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 20.



Practices of socialization are a central element of all LGBTQ spaces and take many forms, ranging from churches to coffee shops, Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) games to Pride parades, community centers to music festivals.<sup>98</sup> The sexual openness of the late 1910s and 1920s afforded a wider but still small swath of places with which to find one another.<sup>99</sup> As the twentieth century progressed, LGBTQ individuals and communities—and therefore their spaces—became more



Figure 9: ACT UP demonstration, "Storm the NIH," at the National Institutes of Health on May 21, 1990. These demonstrations included various ACT UP groups from different parts of the United States; this photo shows the Shreveport, Louisiana ACT UP group. Photo from the Branson Collection, NIH.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Melinda Chateauvert, *Sex Workers Unite: A History of the Movement from Stonewall to SlutWalk* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014).

<sup>97</sup> License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nihlibrary/5489664922/in/photostream/>

<sup>98</sup> See Gill Valentine, "Creating Transgressive Space: The Music of k. d. Lang," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 20, no. 4 (1995): 474–485; Retter in *Queers in Space*; Wolfe in *Queers in Space*, 199; Neil Miller, *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present* (New York: Advocate Books, 2008); and Tiffany Muller Myrdahl, "Lesbian Visibility and the Politics of Covering in Women's Basketball Game Spaces," *Leisure Studies* 30, no. 2 (2011): 139–156.

<sup>99</sup> Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 1994.

and more visible. In recent decades, this turning sociopolitical tide has included religious spaces.<sup>100</sup> Founded by Reverend Troy Perry and others in 1969 in his private residence in Huntington Park, California, the now international Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) gave many LGBTQ people a home when other churches rejected them.<sup>101</sup> By the late twentieth century, LGBTQ leisure spaces maintained specific roles “as sites of safety, community, political power and identity formation.”<sup>102</sup> For example, WNBA games across the United States are particularly welcoming spaces for lesbians.<sup>103</sup>

Cultural institutions including museums, universities, archives, libraries, and theaters have traditionally provided spaces for LGBTQ people to gather and express themselves. Artists pushed boundaries and brought to light difficult issues. In 2010, gay artist David Wojnarowicz’s artwork was removed from a National Portrait Gallery show in Washington, DC after the second outcry about its profanity; the first negative responses came in 1989 when the work was first shown.<sup>104</sup> This event also recalled the 1989 debates over gay artist Robert Mapplethorpe’s art not being shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art after it was shown, along with Wojnarowicz’s work, at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>105</sup> LGBTQ archives have become cutting-edge research sites located across the country. Some examples include: the ONE National Gay & Lesbian

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<sup>100</sup> For more information on the role of religion in LGBTQ spaces, see Bourn (this volume).

<sup>101</sup> Jenell Williams Paris and Rory E. Anderson, “Faith-Based Queer Space in Washington, DC: The Metropolitan Community Church-DC and Mount Vernon Square,” *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 8, no. 2 (June 2001): 149–168.

<sup>102</sup> Kath Browne and Leela Bakshi, “We Are Here to Party? Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Leisurescapes beyond Commercial Gay Scenes,” *Leisure Studies* 30, no. 2 (April 2011): 179–196.

<sup>103</sup> Tiffany Muller Myrdahl, “Lesbian Visibility.”

<sup>104</sup> Holland Cotter, “As Ants Crawl Over Crucifix, Dead Artist Is Assailed Again,” *New York Times*, December 10, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/11/arts/design/11ants.html>. The National Portrait Gallery is located in the Old Patent Office Building at Eighth Street NW and F Street NW, Washington, DC. It was listed on the NRHP on October 15, 1966 and designated an NHL on January 12, 1965. The Institute of Contemporary Art is located at 118 South Thirty-Sixth Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

<sup>105</sup> Judith Tannenbaum, “Robert Mapplethorpe: The Philadelphia Story,” *Art Journal* 50, no. 4 (December 1, 1991): 71–76; The Corcoran Gallery, which closed in 2014, was located at Seventeenth Street NW at New York Avenue, Washington, DC. It was listed on the NRHP on May 6, 1971 and designated an NHL on April 27, 1992. For more information on this topic, see Burk (this volume). See also Helen Molesworth, *This Will Have Been: Art, Love, and Politics in the 1980s* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 369–373.



Archives at the University of Southern California and older LGBTQ archives like the Buffalo Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Archives now at SUNY Buffalo; the Black Queer Studies Collection at the University of Texas at Austin; the June Mazer Lesbian Archives; the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America at the University of Missouri-Kansas City; the Transgender Archives at the Transgender Foundation of America; and the Lesbian Herstory Archives.<sup>106</sup> Some of the archives remain in private holdings in private homes, although many have become part of public archives.<sup>107</sup>

Queer economies are as complicated and diverse as the people themselves. The concept for LGBTQ people to “Buy gay!” emerged from Harvey Milk’s 1977 campaign in San Francisco’s Castro District as a response to the heterosexuals who would not sell to LGBTQ people.<sup>108</sup> LGBTQ publicly-owned and run businesses like restaurants, cafes, food co-operatives, bars, bookstores, and sex toy stores have played an essential role in the survival and community of this group. Like most LGBTQ businesses—once a central part of the American urban landscape from the 1970s through the 2000s—LGBTQ bookstores (and presses and publishers) are steadily disappearing.<sup>109</sup> Like other key businesses before them, one of the oldest and best-known bookstores, Women & Children First serves as a hub for Chicago’s LGBTQ neighborhood of Andersonville,

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<sup>106</sup> See Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); and Rachel Wexelbaum, ed., *Queers Online: LGBT Digital Practices in Libraries, Archives, and Museums* (Sacramento, CA: Litwin Books, 2015). The ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives are located at 909 West Adams Boulevard, Los Angeles, California; the Buffalo Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Archives are located at 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York; the June Mazer Lesbian Archives are located at 626 North Robertson Boulevard, West Hollywood, California; the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America is at 800 East Fifty-First Street, Kansas City, Missouri; the Transgender Archives are located at 604 Pacific Street, Houston, Texas; the Lesbian Herstory Archives was founded and housed for many years in the apartment of Joan Nestle on 92nd Street before moving to 484 14th Street, Brooklyn, New York.

<sup>107</sup> For more information on archival preservation, see Koskovich (this volume).

<sup>108</sup> Alexandra Chasin, *Selling Out: The Gay and Lesbian Movement Goes to Market* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001). Milk ran his campaign from his shop, Castro Camera, at 573-575 Castro Street, San Francisco, CA.

<sup>109</sup> See for example the ever dwindling numbers of bookstores at “LGBT Bookstores,” Lambda Literary Foundation website, accessed June 2, 2015, <http://www.lambdaliterary.org/resources/bookstores>.

and Charis Books and More serves as a hub for the Candler Park neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>110</sup> LGBTQ communities and areas built up around certain places.<sup>111</sup> Much of LGBTQ culture and many LGBTQ spaces have been commodified because of what is read as their cosmopolitanism or through processes of gentrification.<sup>112</sup> The country's first LGBTQ bookstore, Giovanni's Room recently reopened as a thrift- and bookstore.<sup>113</sup> This change in business focus is due to processes of gentrification as well as the shift to online book buying. At the same time, many LGBTQ people seek to fight against capitalist practices that work hand-in-hand with patriarchal, racist, colonial, and heterosexist oppressions by producing more diverse and less hierarchical economic practices.<sup>114</sup>

While many view home as a refuge, many LGBTQ people have experienced unsafe circumstances, domestic violence, and/or being unwelcome in their family homes (Figure 10).<sup>116</sup> In



Figure 10: *The Gay Liberation Monument* (1980) by artist George Segal, located in Christopher Park, across the street from the Stonewall Inn, New York City. Photo by Raphael Isla, August 2013.<sup>115</sup>

the early twentieth century, some upper-class women lived together in

<sup>110</sup> Women & Children First is located at 5233 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois; Charis Books and More is located at 1189 Euclid Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>111</sup> For example, Hula's Bar and Lei Stand, 2103 Kuhio Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i. The opening of this bar in the 1970s drew other gay businesses to the area. The district (known as the Kuhio District) was redeveloped in the late 1990s, with one developer noting that the removal of the area's "alternative-type places" would improve the economic viability of the area. Hula's moved to the Waikiki Grand Hotel.

<sup>112</sup> Chasin, *Selling Out*; Boyd, "San Francisco's Castro District."

<sup>113</sup> Giovanni's Room is located at 345 South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

<sup>114</sup> Michael Brown, "Thinking beyond Homonormativity: Performative Explorations of Diverse Gay Economies," *Environment and Planning A* 41, no. 6 (2009): 1496–1510.

<sup>115</sup> License: CC BY-SA 4.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gay\\_Liberation\\_Monument.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gay_Liberation_Monument.jpg)

<sup>116</sup> Elwood, *From Nowhere to Everywhere*; Lynda Johnston and Gill Valentine, "Wherever I Lay My Girlfriend, That's My Home: The Performance and Surveillance of Lesbian Identities in Domestic Environments," in *Mapping Desire*, 66–74.



what were called “Boston marriages.” Whether these women were physically intimate together is often unknown, but their relationships were described as “romantic friendships.”<sup>117</sup> Meanwhile, gay men in the late twentieth century redefined gender stereotypes while claiming spaces of domesticity.<sup>118</sup> Home ownership—a key component of the American dream—is an unreachable goal for many LGBTQ people. In general, women earn less money than men; people of color earn less and have higher unemployment rates than whites; and transgender people are disproportionately out of work.<sup>119</sup> It is, therefore, important to consider an individual’s identity as well as their geography, education, and occupation when considering the possibilities of their access to different types of spaces.

Spaces of sex and sexuality are not limited to public places like parks or to private residences, but also include those associated with the study of sexuality at places like the Kinsey Institute in Indiana; performances of drag shows and burlesque; and private or semi-private places for sex like sex parties, dark rooms, peep booths, and backrooms.<sup>120</sup> Public displays of affection, like kissing and hand-holding, still mark LGBTQ places, and in many areas are still perceived as acts of resistance.<sup>121</sup>

Preservation, memorialization, and monumentalization are more unusual than common in LGBTQ spaces and history. Only recently are LGBTQ histories, spaces, and places being honored and remembered

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<sup>117</sup> Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*.

<sup>118</sup> Andrew Gorman-Murray, “Reconciling Self: Gay Men and Lesbians Using Domestic Materiality for Identity Management,” *Social & Cultural Geography* 9, no. 3 (May 2008): 283–301.

<sup>119</sup> Adler and Brenner, “Gender and Space”; and Desiree Fields and Sabina Uffer, “The Financialisation of Rental Housing: A Comparative Analysis of New York City and Berlin,” *Urban Studies*, July 31, 2014, 0042098014543704.

<sup>120</sup> Karen Winkler, “Kinsey, Sex Research, and the Body of Knowledge: Let’s Talk About Sex,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3/4 (October 1, 2005): 285–313; Jose Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: NYU Press, 2009); Martin J. Downing, “Perceptions of Risk, Sexual Behaviors, and HIV Prevention in Commercial and Public Sex Venues: A Study of MSM Venue Attendees,” PhD diss., The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2010; and Margot Weiss, *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2011). The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction is located at the University of Indiana, Morrison Hall, 1165 East Third Street, Bloomington, Indiana.

<sup>121</sup> Phil Hubbard, “Kissing Is Not a Universal Right: Sexuality, Law and the Scales of Citizenship,” *Geoforum* 49 (October 2013): 224–232.

rather than attacked or excluded (Figure 11).<sup>122</sup> One powerful example is the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt. Conceived of and first housed at the Jose Theater Building in San Francisco, the quilt was first displayed in its entirety in October 1987 on the National Mall in Washington, DC.<sup>123</sup> Now too large to be seen at once, with over 48,000 panels and 94,000 names, the quilt tours in parts throughout the United States. While not a specifically LGBTQ space, the State of Pennsylvania commemorates the Annual Reminders at Independence Hall, indicating that many key spaces of preservation are not wholly permanent.<sup>124</sup> LGBTQ people often recall and share their history with walking tours, which can be found in places including Washington, DC, San Francisco and Los Angeles, California, and New York City.

We cannot talk about LGBTQ spaces and places without noting their absence. Scholars suggest that LGBTQ people also experience a sense of placelessness that occurs when they feel intense pressures and expectations to disavow their true selves.<sup>125</sup> Some placelessness is rooted in larger patterns of inequality; some in isolation; and some in a mismatch between personal and official identity. For example, both gay men and lesbians often experience an “absence” of more permanent physical places.<sup>126</sup> Isolated queer white men in the mid-twentieth century in the Midwest required and were able to make use of their mobility and travel to

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<sup>122</sup> Stonewall Inn and the Henry Gerber House are the only NHLs at the time of writing this chapter.

<sup>123</sup> Peter S. Hawkins, “Naming Names: The Art of Memory and the NAMES Project AIDS Quilt,” *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 4 (July 1, 1993): 752–779. The Jose Theater Building is located at 2362 Market Street, San Francisco, California. The National Mall in Washington, DC was listed on the NRHP on October 15, 1966; it was incorporated into the NPS’s National Mall and Memorial Parks Unit in 1965.

<sup>124</sup> Independence Hall in Philadelphia is part of Independence National Historical Park, a unit of the NPS created on June 28, 1948. The park, including Independence Hall, was designated an NHL District on October 15, 1966.

<sup>125</sup> Lawrence Knopp, “Ontologies of Place, Placelessness, and Movement: Queer Quests for Identity and Their Impacts on Contemporary Geographic Thought,” *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 11, no. 1 (March 2004): 121–134.

<sup>126</sup> Rothenberg, “‘And She Told Two Friends’: Lesbians Creating Urban Social Space”; Knopp, “Ontologies of Place, Placelessness, and Movement”; and Gieseeking, “Queering the Meaning of ‘Neighbourhood’”.







Figure 11: Memorial to Mark Carson, a 32-year old black gay man murdered in a hate crime in New York City's Greenwich Village, May 2013. Photo by David Shankbone, May 2013.<sup>127</sup>

find one another.<sup>128</sup> In situations ranging from natural disasters to everyday bathroom usage or crossing borders or boarding planes, LGBTQ people often have no place to turn, particularly transgender people whose identification documents may not “match” their gender presentation.<sup>129</sup> The difficulty in memorializing such absences speaks to the challenge of preserving and commemorating LGBTQ spaces. Further, while there is an excitement to marking history, preservation efforts may also lead to the unintentional and problematic effects of increasing gentrification and tourism that have eaten away at LGBTQ neighborhoods. The work toward

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<sup>127</sup> License: CC BY 3.0.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mark\\_Carson\\_Gay\\_Murder\\_New\\_York\\_Memorial\\_West\\_Village\\_2013\\_Shankbone.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mark_Carson_Gay_Murder_New_York_Memorial_West_Village_2013_Shankbone.JPG)

<sup>128</sup> Nicholas L. Syrett, “Mobility, Circulation, and Correspondence Queer White Men in the Midcentury Midwest,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2014): 75–94.

<sup>129</sup> Andrew Gorman-Murray, Scott McKinnon, and Dale Dominey-Howes, “Queer Domicide: LGBT Displacement and Home Loss in Natural Disaster Impact, Response, and Recovery,” *Home Cultures* 11, no. 2 (July 2014): 237–261; Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of Law* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

preserving LGBTQ history requires recognition of all of these peoples, places, and spaces.

## Summary

The invisibilization of LGBTQ spaces and places has often required workarounds to laws, policies, mores, and attitudes that would otherwise restrict their behavior and identity. By addressing LGBTQ people through the lens of the geographic scale of their spaces and places—area, neighborhood, place—this document provides a working document with which to understand the range and import of LGBTQ spaces and places.