Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review

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Aims and scope

The Review is a peer-reviewed publication that is available online through the Australian Psychological Society website. Its remit is to encourage research that challenges the stereotypes and assumptions of pathology that have often inhered to research on lesbians and gay men (amongst others). The aim of the Review is thus to facilitate discussion over the direction of lesbian and gay psychology in Australia, and to provide a forum within which academics, practitioners and lay people may publish.

The Review is open to a broad range of material, and especially welcomes research, commentary and reviews that critically evaluate the status quo in regards to lesbian and gay issues. The Review also seeks papers that redress the imbalance that has thus far focused on the issues facing white lesbians and gay men, to the exclusion of other sexual and racial groups.

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Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review

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EDITORIAL: QUEER CULTURAL PRODUCERS

DAMIEN W. RIGGS & VICKI CROWLEY

This issue of the *Review* takes as its starting place a forum that was convened as part of the 2006 Adelaide Feast Festival, a yearly cultural programme featuring local and international LGBTIQ events. The forum marked a second collaboration between the Cultures of the Body Research Group from the University of South Australia and was convened by the outgoing Feast director Fanny Jacobson. It provided an important venue for LGBTIQ issues from within both the academy and community to come together in one place. Speakers presented theoretical analyses, shared personal narratives, screened performance pieces, read poetry and presented artworks for display. What came out of the event was a sense that theory, art and activism are often intimately interwoven in the lives of LGBTIQ people, and that paying attention to just one aspect could result in a failure to understand the breadth and diversity that exists within LGBTIQ communities.

The forum took as its starting place the notion of 'queer cultural producers', and the presenters examined, in varying ways, the ways in which queer cultures are produced, how queer cultures destabilise or challenge mainstream cultures, and importantly, how queer cultures destabilise themselves – how the diversity within LGBTIQ communities presents a radical challenge to notions of coalitionism. Nonetheless, the overall message from the forum was that links and supportive frameworks can be developed through a shared commitment to examining and challenging cultural production, in its normative and queer forms.

The papers presented in this issue of the *Review* demonstrate the breadth of the forum and its attention to cultural production across a range of spaces, both public and intimate. All of the authors call into question the ways in which cultural norms function to produce particular bodies, and importantly the authors turn this critical gaze upon LGBTIQ communities as well as the broader Australian and international community. Covering issues from 'same-sex marriage' to representations of gay men in comics, from creative industries and queer cultures in Singapore to narratives of lesbian embodiment, the authors contribute to an understanding of the complex ways in which cultural production takes place, and the multiple ways in which cultures themselves can be read.

In the first paper Audrey Yue, the keynote speaker at the forum, examines how the development of creative industries within Singapore represents an 'illiberal pragmatics', whereby queer people are included in some respects and excluded in others. Questioning the hegemony of the 'post-Stonewall' logic of queer liberation, Yue asserts the specificities of queer cultural production in Singapore, and its role in the queering of Singapore itself.

Barbara Baird takes up the issue of post-Stonewall politics in her insightful paper on 'gay marriage'. Baird places this term under question in order to examine how calls for 'same-sex marriage rights' may be understood as an aspect of the normalisation of queer rights that have persisted in varying forms in the Western world since Stonewall. Baird challenges us to consider how the 'sex' in 'same-sex' disappears when marriage becomes all about the 'respectable same-sex couple'. Baird's paper is a salient reminder of the complexities of debates over queer rights and their location within broader political and personal economies whereby the 'pink dollar' plays a significant role in the production of particular (dominant) queer cultures.

In her ficto-critical work, Ros Prosser provides a narrative of lesbian bodies that threads together the memories of bodies past with the experiences of bodies present. Prosser questions what it means to be a lesbian, and moreover a lesbian inhabiting a particular space and time

wherein certain bodies claim space over others, both within lesbian communities and with-out. Prosser speaks of lesbian cultural production, of resistance, of conformity, and most frequently of uncertainty. Prosser's work reminds us that the 'lesbian archive' is far more complex than it may often seem.

Shaun Filiault and Murray Drummond usefully extend previous work on the concept of hegemonic masculinity to examine its constitutive parts, and in particular they highlight the importance of examining the aspects of aesthetic that shape gay men's experiences of embodiment. By focusing on two markedly different forms of gay male embodiment, they emphasise how hegemonies shift and are reworked across gay and straight cultures.

Returning to the issue of same-sex marriage, Damien Riggs explores how the discipline of psychology engages with activism in regards to queer rights, and how this results in the cultural production of particular forms of rights deemed intelligible within a liberal framework. Riggs asks us to consider alternate ways of conceptualising the role of the state, and the implications of particular forms of sanction for a broad range of queer people. Rather than seeking 'equality with' the heterosexual majority, Riggs suggests that queer communities may instead question how sanction is accorded and at whose expense this comes.

Finally, the issue includes one commentary – a response to the paper on same-sex adoption and parenting in the last issue of the *Review* – and a book review, focusing on issues of cultural production within lesbian communities.

Together these papers are a reminder of the exciting and stimulating environment that can result from collaborations between arts and cultural festivals and the academy. Fanny Jacobson's commitment to challenging norms *within* queer communities and to foregrounding the frisson of ideas, intellectual and other creative production often put aspects of Feast at odds with those who sought a more 'acceptable face' for LGBTIQ communities. The 2006 collaboration is testament to a diverse range of cultural productions and continues to place Fanny at the forefront of innovation and as such in a unique position within LGBTIQ cultural spaces across Australia and abroad. Importantly it points academia towards community collaborations in which the boundaries of thinking can explore and express its leading creative edge.

These papers as a whole highlight the richness of queer cultural production both within Australia and internationally, and signal some of the sites where reclaimations, revisionings *and* reifications take place. 'Queer' cultural production is never outside of cultural norms by the very fact of its queerness. What makes a queer cultural event queer is its commitment to recognising the norms through which it is produced, the privileges it may grant, and the opportunities for challenging these. Queer cultural production never is (or should be) a complete event, with ongoing challenges to various hegemonies central not only to the works within this issue, but also to the broader practices of queer cultural production across LGBTIQ communities.

CREATIVE QUEER SINGAPORE: THE ILLIBERAL PRAGMATICS OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION

AUDREY YUE

Abstract

This paper examines how the cultural liberalisation of the creative industries in Singapore has enabled the emergence of a local queer culture characterised by the logic of illiberal pragmatics. It first introduces the concept of illiberal pragmatics and evaluates this logic in current discourses of homosexuality in the country. It further illustrates the characteristics of illiberal pragmatics in the creative industries of gay popular fiction, gay theatre and lesbian nightlife. It argues that illiberal pragmatics, rather than the post-Stonewall rights-based discourse of liberation, is the foundation for the emergence of queer Singapore. It extends pragmatism to show how it is a material force for local queer individuality and social action. These are evident in the disjunctive figures of the sister transsexual, the Asian Mardi Gras gay boy and the tomboy butch.

Introduction

In 2005, the National Arts Council (NAC) of Singapore conferred the country's most prestigious Cultural Medallion Music Award to pop singer, composer and playwright Dick Lee in recognition of his three-decade long contribution to the arts, theatre and music. Lee's repertoire includes multi-lingual albums and musical plays that parody regional folk songs with disco, hip hop and political mockery (Wee, 1996). His stage performances are noted for their flamboyant costumes, vernacular dialects and cross-dressing characters. He was most acclaimed for his 1989 *The Mad Chinaman* musical play as the lead protagonist with a heavily painted Beijing Opera face, not dissimilar to Chen Dieyi in the female role of *dan* played by the late gay icon Leslie Cheung, in *Farewell My Concubine* (1993), or gay Asian Australian filmmaker Tony Ayers's own masquerade in his semi-autobiographical documentary *China Dolls* (1997). In 1996, Lee won Taiwan's Golden Horse Award for the theme song to the Hong Kong gay and lesbian film classic *He's a Woman, She's a Man*, also starring the late Cheung. Lee's conferral raised controversy among the arts elite and the mainstream audience as this was the first time an NAC award was given to a popular cultural artist. Muted in this controversy, however, is the rumour of Lee's gay sexuality. Like the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy, Lee's speculative homosexuality, rife on the Internet, is public knowledge to those in the know, among the inner echelons of cultural and government elites, as well as in the gay subcultures (see for example, the jendyshop, 2006). That a country would simultaneously continue to maintain its anachronistic British Penal Code prosecuting homosexuals, and recognise a gay pop icon at the same time, speaks volume about the changing cultural value accorded the arts in the current new era of the cultural economy and economic creativity.

Two years earlier, *15* (2003), a short film by emerging gay filmmaker Roystan Tan, was banned for its portrayal of homoerotic tension between two fifteen year-old school boys despite winning the Grand Fiction Award at the Tampere Film Festival. Tan circumvented the censorship and posted it online for free downloading. That year, more than ten thousand local gays and lesbians, as well as regional homo tourists, crowded the city-state for the annual gay and lesbian Nation Party. The Nation Party began three years earlier as a protest party, and by 2003 had become so successful that Singapore was dubbed by Agence France-Presse as 'Asia's new gay entertainment capital'. In the meanwhile, the entrepreneurial efforts of locally-owned Fridae.com had paid off and it has now become the main Internet portal to gay and lesbian Asia, with more than two hundred thousand members, out of which about one hundred and twenty thousand are estimated to be from the GLBTIQ community in the country. In an island size of six hundred and eighty-two square kilometres, and a population of four million, Singapore currently has nineteen bars and sixteen saunas catering to its ephemeral and subterranean yet visible GLBTIQ community. Operating on a daily basis, these have flourished as a result of rent subsidies in the creative riverside precinct of Chinatown.

These irrational developments, between cultural liberalisation and sexual surveillance, characterise what I critically describe as the illiberal logic underpinning the emergence of creative queer culture in Singapore. While homosexuality is still a criminal offence and gay Internet content subject to state censorship, gay artists and entrepreneurs, especially those setting up businesses to help cultivate a twenty-four seven night-time economy, are encouraged. Even gay filmmakers whose films are banned have also benefited from the nation-wide roll out of digital infrastructure supported by the state. This paper critically examines these discrepancies by evaluating the illiberal pragmatics of governance. I first introduce the concept of illiberal pragmatics and evaluate this logic in current theorisations of homosexuality in the country. I further illustrate the characteristics of illiberal pragmatics by providing a critical mapping of queer cultural productions in the new creative industries. I use queer in this paper with two intentions: first, as an umbrella category for GLTBIQs; and second, as a critical interrogation of colonial and postcolonial heteronormativity. I argue illiberal pragmatics, rather than the post-Stonewall rights-based discourse of liberation, is the foundation for the emergence of queer Singapore. I extend pragmatism to show how it is a material force for local queer individuality and social action.

Theorising Queer Singapore: Illiberal Pragmatics

Theorisations of GLBTIQ cultures in Singapore focus on human rights, social movement and spatial politics. Common to these studies is how the encounter with the state has produced different imaginations of homosexuality and sexual identity. Although these theorisations engage the governance of the civil society, they do not consider how Singapore is also governed by the logic of illiberal pragmatics. This section examines the concept of illiberal pragmatics, and demonstrates its logic in current discourses of homosexuality in the country.

Singapore sociologist Beng-Huat Chua has written extensively on the ideology of pragmatism as the conceptual structure of postcolonial governance in Singapore. He shows how pragmatism was conceived from the late 1960s to 1980s as "an ideology that embodies a vigorous economic development orientation that emphasises science and technology and centralised rational public administration as the fundamental basis for industralisation within a capitalist system, financed largely by multinational capital" (1995, p. 59). This conceptual structure is evident not only in making domestic conditions favourable to foreign investments, but in all aspects of social life including the promotion of education as human capital, meritocracy, population policy, language and multiracialism. Pragmatism rationalises policy implementations as 'natural', 'necessary' and 'realistic'. As an ideology, it has enabled popular legitimacy: "in everyday language, [pragmatism] translates simply into 'being practical' in the sense of earning a living" (1997, p. 131). Following Edgar Schein's development of "strategic pragmatism" in Singapore's cultural institutions (1997), political economist Linda Low (2001) also points to how pragmatism is the "singular prerequisite" to the "political will to implement the necessary changes…for continuous self-renewal to manage change and continuity" (p. 437). The marked improvement in the material life of the population and the economic ascendency of the country as a developing nation to a global post-industrial metropolis in the last forty years has made it difficult to argue against the success of pragmatism.

What is unique about Singapore's pragmatism is that governmental interventions are "contextual and instrumental" rather than "in principle" – that is, they are "discrete and discontinuous acts, in the sense that a particular intervention in a particular region of social life may radically alter the trajectory that an early intervention may have put in place" (Chua, 1995, p. 69), so that a rational intervention in one special area of social life may turn out to be quite irrational when the totality of social life is taken into question. These contradictions, evident and well-documented in the policy and everyday domains of marriage, reproduction, language and education, highlight the ambivalence of pragmatism. Chua locates such ambivalence in his formulation of a non-liberal democracy to describe a state where "the formal features of democratic electoral politics remain in place and intact" but is "thoroughly sceptical regarding the rationality of the ordinary citizen and unapologetically anti-liberal" (p. 185). Actions are rationalised as "pre-emptive interventions which 'ensure' the collective well-being, as measures of good government rather than abuses of individuals' rights" (p. 187). Central to pragmatism is thus the logic of illiberalism where

interventions and implementations are potentially always neo-liberal and non-liberal, rational and irrational. This ambivalence is, as I argue, the foundation for the emergence of a creative queer Singapore, not one based on the Western post-Stonewall emancipation discourse of rights, but through the illiberal pragmatics of survival. In the following, I demonstrate how this logic is evident in current discourses of homosexuality. I examine these discourses at some length because they present an account of the cultural and legal histories, practices and events that have shaped the current contexts of oppositional queer activism, and gay and lesbian lifestyle consumption. My aim here is to critically contextualise this milieu and show how these theorisations point to, yet fail to acknowledge, the illiberal pragmatics of governance.

The (Il)Legality of Contemporary Homosexuality

Laurence Leong (1997) provides a sustained study on the British colonial legacy that prohibits homosexuality in Singapore. He examines criminal law to show how sodomitical acts are charged under the Section 377 (Unnatural Offences) and Section 377A (Outrages on Decency) of the Penal Code. Singapore, he argues, lacks human rights and "appears to be the last frontier in the Asian region for positive gay and lesbian developments" (p. 142). Replicating the teleology of European Enlightenment, Leong's framework is insufficient to account for the gender variance of transsexuality and the intimacy of same-sex co-habitation that are legalised and subsidised in the country. Since 1974, the country has led the region in gender reassignment surgery and conducted more than five hundred operations in government-funded hospitals. Transgenders can legally change their gender identity, and in 1996, were permitted to legally marry. The logic of illiberal pragmatics shows how the institutionalisation of transgenderism does not reflect the recognition of a tradition of indigenous transsexualism or the progressive claims of sexual minorities, but the governance of gender transgression as a disease that can be medically corrected and socially heteronormalised. Although Leong highlights these developments, he does not consider how they paradoxically allow for the opening up of an alternative expression of gender variance in a country that does not recognise homosexuality. This anomaly in the governance of sexuality is also evident in property law where same-sex couples were also recently permitted to co-purchase the cheaper, government-subsidised public housing. Again, rather than legitimating the interdependency of same-sex relationships, same-sex co-homeownership is another rational instrument to alleviate the over-supply of public housing. Although same-sex relationships are not legally recognised, same-sex couples are also able to make claims to the everyday intimacies of living together, domesticity and home ownership. These two developments show the anachronism of the laws that regulate homosexuality and the irrational logic by which homosexuality is governed.

Russell Heng (2001) examines the emergence of a gay political movement from his experiences as an activist. He traces the beginnings of a gay scene in the 1950s with the 'ah qua', a local nativist transsexual who used to ply the sex trade in Bugis Street, an area in Chinatown that was an icon of the exotic Far East. In the 1970s the figure of the Westernised and English-language speaking 'Orchard Road queen' emerged when gay-friendly bars and discos opened in downtown Orchard Road and were frequented by Caucasian tourists. Heng categorises these figures as belonging to an emergent gay "scene" (p. 83). He shows how the gay community came about in the 1980s with economic affluence and societal liberalisation, and maps the rise of cruising against the increasing surveillance, entrapment and prosecution of homosexuality. In the late 1980s, the globalisation of AIDS, which led to the development of the non-governmental organisation *Action for AIDS* provided a platform for gay activists to organise and mobilise. He provides a sustained examination of the 1990s activism of a local gay group *People Like Us* (PLU) and traces their unsuccessful efforts to gain official group registration and attain political legitimacy. Heng warns of "coming out of the closet" in a country where "the relationship between homosexuals and the state will continue to have its share of suspicion and uncertainty" (p. 95). His self-reflexive account follows the progressive logic of Western gay liberation that traces the movement from scene to community towards an end-point of decriminalisation and recognition. By describing the two earlier figures as belonging to just "a gay scene which served their entertainment needs" and comparing them with "a (later) community with an identified purpose of improving the status and welfare of gay people", he enforces his own hierarchical moral

judgements on the two different practices that are equally as sustaining to the vibrancy of gay lives (p. 90). His trajectory follows the rights-based discourse cautioned by Michael Warner (1999) and Steven Seidman (2005) as normalising and assimilationist. By focusing on the fight for equal rights based on reforming the stigma of minority discrimination, Heng's account has inadvertently delegitimised the indigeneity of local gay sexuality; heteronormativity, and the effects of colonial and developmental capitalism on homosexuality, remain unchallenged. Although he acknowledges the territorialisation of homosexuality in the social and cultural spheres, he fails to locate these practices within the illiberal pragmatics of governance.

These irrational logics are evident in how the subterranean geography of homosexuality is produced in heternormative spaces in Singapore. Kean Fan Lim (2004) examines the construction of homosexual practices through interventions in public debates, Internet publishing and public dance parties. Using interviews with gay activists and gay entrepreneurs, and juxtaposing these against print media debates on homosexuality, he argues: "the overt spatial expressions of homosexuality may be occurring, but that does not necessarily mean that homosexuals are accepted as part of 'mainstream' society…, they are merely *tolerated*" (p. 1778, emphasis in original.). Although he points to creative strategies of resistance, it is unclear what these strategies are and how exactly spatial tactics of resistances are enacted. What is clear in his analysis however, is the illiberal logic that underlies the production of subcultural homosexual spaces. While gay activists are not allowed to officially register gay and lesbian organisations, and gay Internet content is subjected to censorship, GLBTIQs can freely publish and access a global audience online, and organise carnivalesque public parties in real life. These contradictions between law and lore show how emergent GLBTIQ expression is shaped by the neo-liberal push towards entrepreneurship and digital literacy on the one hand, and non-liberal media surveillance and social control on the other.

Such illiberalisms are further explored by Kenneth Paul Tan (2006) in his study of how the 'gay community' has been imagined. Using two events – the first, in 2000, regarding the church's claim that "homosexuals can change", and the second, in 2003, regarding a former prime minister's published comments endorsing the employment of openly gay civil servants, he shows how the gay community has been imagined through the views of the conservative majority that support the ideologies of family values, heterosexual social cohesion and neo-liberal economic growth: "Through complex and dynamic ideological negotiations that take place within the broader and inherently contradictory trend of political and economic liberalization, homosexuals are 'tentatively' interpellated as gay Singapore subjects who are part of a community that is rejected by an imaginary mainstream and yet grudgingly relied upon by a state anxious to appear sufficiently open-minded in order to attract global capital and talent" (p. 184). He further examines the reactions to these events by the gay community on online forums and shows how a "siege mentality greatly helps in the processes of imagining this community into being" (p. 188). He criticises gay activists, in their strife for equal rights, for portraying gay Singaporeans as civic minded and nationally patriotic, and colluding with the neo-liberal discourse of economic creativity. He argues gay identities are formed not through the ideologies of social structures but "imaginatively formulated with strategic purpose within evolving discursive contexts" (p. 197). Tan's account clearly highlights the contradictions between the continued policing of homosexuality on the one hand, and economically-driven social liberalisation on the other. These discourses discussed above provide a contemporary backdrop to the (il)legality of homosexuality by inscribing an indigenous tradition of same-sex eroticism, accounting for the emergence of a rights-based social movement, and gesturing towards a neo-liberal agenda of economic reform and queer inclusion. Although they do not focus on the central role illiberal pragmatism plays in these transformations, these accounts highlight the country's irrational and ambivalent modes of governance. In the following, I introduce the critical role of creative industries in augmenting the logic of illiberal pragmatism. Using gay literature, gay theatre and lesbian nightlife, I show how illiberal pragmatism is characterised by a disjunctive mode of displacement that has enabled the flourishing of local queer cultural production.

Creative Queer Cultural Productions

In the wake of the financial crisis in 1997, countries in Asia have sought to remake their industries through economic reforms that would

ensure the transition of their predominantly traditional manufacturing economies to technologically-enhanced knowledge-based creative economies. Creative industries sell the business of the arts and culture by transforming arts and culture into services and commodities that add value to the economy. In 2002 Singapore published its policy blueprint, *Creative Industries Development Strategy*, for the new economy that detailed reforms in the clusters of arts and culture, media and design (Media Development Authority, 2002). This followed Japan's *Copyright White Paper* developed to strengthen its intellectual property infrastructure (Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, 2001). Since then, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Korea have also implemented policies to pursue their creative industries of copyright, cinema and information technology. These reforms are characterised by their sectoral approach of cultural mapping (Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity 2006, p. 6). Framed by the 'catch-up' thesis, this approach follows sectors identified in Western economies, uses universal statistics from global reports such as world and competitiveness yearbooks, and models industries after influential studies by Richard Florida (2002) and John Howkins (2002). The normative use of these universal frameworks and empirical data, argue Chris Gibson and Lily Kong, "make[s] generalizations about the cultural economy…where meaning[s]…coalesce around singular, definitive interpretations" (2005, p. 549). In 2005, UNESCO introduced the second approach of 'cultural indigenisation' to frame the development of Asian creative industries by emphasising how local communities are created through the new networks of cultural industries that focus on participation and community-based development: "The industries in general are smaller and mobilize communities at a level that is closer to the grassroots than more traditional industry development" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 1). The 'cultural indigenisation' thesis incorporates culture into national development plans for the purpose of achieving "sustainable development" (p. 1).

While these two approaches support the economic rationale behind cultural liberalisation and queer inclusion, they are inadequate to account for the local specificities of creative queer cultural productions. The discourse of 'catch up' is problematic if it simply rehearses the post-Stonewall Enlightenment logic of

progress and liberation; similarly, the discourse of 'sustainability' is also problematic if it is simply a nativist reaction to protect local cultures from global erosion. Catching up, as a process of belatedly speeding up, is also a process of what Derrida has called tele-technic dislocation (cited in Bhabha, 1999, p. ix). Catching up is thus a process that at once provides access to and disrupts the essential temporality of the West. It unsettles the ontology of the native and its organic being-and-belonging of the nation. It entails "the move from organic temporality to disjunctive, displaced *acceleration*" (Bhabha, 1999, p. x, emphasis in original). This mode of disjunctive, displaced acceleration is evident in the queer productions of the recent creative and cultural industries. In the following, I use the industries of literature, theatre and entertainment to focus on the figures of the transsexual, the gay man and the butch as exemplary tropes for demonstrating this mode of displaced acceleration.

Disjunctive Acceleration: The Sister Transsexual and the Glocal Gay

Popular fiction has been one of the earliest cultural industries to examine homosexuality. More than ten novels have been locally published since the 1990s that examine the various themes of transsexuality, coming out, and living with HIV/AIDS. In 1990, Joash Moo published *Sisterhood: The Untold Story* based on his interviews with local transsexuals and transvestites. 'The sisterhood' is a collective term for local transgenders who call themselves 'sisters'. In the preface, Moo explains: "They are defined as 'transsexuals' or 'transvestites'. Transsexuals undergo surgery to change their gender. Transvestites dress up superficially to look like members of the opposite sex. They are not just 'gays'. Physically, they *are* men and women; psychologically they *are not*" (p. vii, emphases in original.). The book traces the experiences of thirteen transgenders through the characters of lascivious prostitutes, effeminate soldiers and dandy undergraduate students. It details their ordeals of adolescent same-sex attraction, the shock of their sexual desire, the trauma of sex-change operations and the joys of marriage. The sequel, *Sisterhood: New Moons in San Francisco* (1993), is book-ended with an endorsement by Professor S.S. Ratnam, the surgeon and gynaecologist who performed the first sex-change operation in Singapore, and an acclaim by the local entertainment magazine guide, *8 Days*, claiming

the book as the "First in local literary history to deal with the social phenomenon" (n.p.). These collections, published by Times Book International, a subsidiary of the conglomerate Fraser and Neave (and partially owned by the Singapore government's Temasek Holdings company), present personal portraits and inscribe an indigenous tradition of transsexuality that has only begun to be 'made present' as a result of the legality of gender reassignment surgery and the official support given to local writers to publish local stories. Here, the instrumental rationality of heteronormative incorporation that has endorsed and facilitated the medicalisation of gender reassignment has been disrupted by the rise and recognition of the transsexual as a gender deviant figure of 'both and not man and woman'. In doing so, the illiberal pragmatics of medical and literary modernisation have inadvertently produced the transsexual as a figure that negotiates not only the indigenous pre-gay and the Eurocentric post-queer (Jackson, 2001), but also the local modern. As a trope of disjunctive acceleration, the sister transsexual exemplifies this mode of displacement.

Two other seminal 'coming out' novels, Johann S. Lee's *Peculiar Chris* (1992) and Andrew Koh's *Glass Cathedral* (1995), further show how the gay man has emerged as a critical site to challenge colonial heteronormativity. *Peculiar Chris* is the first novel to deal with the theme of coming out. The author wrote the book when he was nineteen and in the army doing 'National Service' (NS). NS is a two-year compulsory government project aimed at training young men to fit the standards of national masculinity. *Glass Cathedral*, commended in the 1994 Singapore Literature Awards, centers around Collin's association with James, whose father is the director of a multi-national company. It explores Colin's initial infatuation with James's rebellious and alternative arts lifestyle, and his relationship with Norbet, a gay priest who encourages him to reconcile his sexuality with faith. Colin refuses the material trappings of James's gay lifestyle and chooses, instead, to work with street kids and prostitutes.

Paul Yeoh (2006) examines these two novels against the genre of gay protest literature and within the contexts of national patriotism and the globalisation of queer. In particular, he focuses on how these texts offer queer subjects avenues to challenge and revise locally, nationally and globally endorsed models of

masculinity. In *Peculiar Chris*, the gay characters exploit the physical rigour and surveillance of the army into "a means of queer networking": "In aesthetic terms, the physical rigors of NS produced masculine bodies in sync with global gay fashions" (p. 123). He further examines how the central protagonist, Chris, comes to terms with his sexual identity by comparing his different sexual encounters at underground beats, and with middle-class and straight-acting lovers, and shows how Chris's choice of the latter points to an imagined gay ideal that is similar to the dominant ideology of the nation. The worlds of gay domestic bliss, economic privilege, monogamy and family ties, compared to the underbelly of degeneracy, secrecy and guilt, have left "largely intact" the dominant Singapore values of "(r)ationality, order, meritocracy, elitism, family values and material comfort" (p. 127). In *Glass Cathedral*, Yeoh further shows how the novel "reinvigorate(s) the queer by insisting on a queer which is firmly embedded within the particulars of Singapore culture" (p. 130). Yeoh argues these two books display a "transgressive hybridity" where "the capacity of a hybrid, localized queer" can "trouble normative social categories" (p. 131).

Yeoh's transgressive hybridity highlights how the gay man has emerged in the logic of illiberalism as an effect of pragmatic complicity and performing conformity. Pragmatic complicity is the process of complying, in the sense of being practical, with the norms in order to 'fit in' and 'pass'. Performing conformity is also a similar process of enacting socially approved models so as to suit the norms of the hegemonic culture. While the rituals of both are similar, performing conformity points more specifically to the types of everyday rehearsals that are based on the assumption that the norms of the status quo are maintained through repetitions. Pragmatic complicity, on the other hand, does not emphasise the repetition of everyday rituals; rather, it singles out how forms of conduct are self-consciously altered by groups and/or individuals in order to accord with existing and/or new modes of governance. Colin's work ethic, together with Chris's choice of economic privilege, domesticity, monogamy and family ties, resonate with the Asian values of communitarianism and neo-Confucianism. These signifiers show how the pragmatism of Singapore's performance principle has irrationally also created an environment where the non-liberal local gay discourse of catch-up has emerged to replicate the homonormative

values of neo-liberalism in the West. In this artifice, the logics of temporal and spatial progress that characterise queer liberation in the West are out of joint, unsettling the teleology of rights, recognition and liberation.

These modes of disjunctive acceleration and displacement are further evident in theatre. Theatre has the longest history of GLBTIQ representations dating back to the 1980s. It is also the site where politics are explicitly contested, especially through censorship (Chua, 2004). In spite of these, theatre continues to receive the highest percentage of funding from the National Arts Council, over and above music, visual arts, dance, arts administration and literature (Chong, 2005). Non-profit companies such as The Necessary Stage, Action Theatre and Wild Rice are renowned for staging gay and lesbian themed plays, and playwrights such as Eleanor Wong, Ivan Heng and Alfian Sa'at have become local queer icons. Terence Chong criticises how the government predominantly funds English-language plays as a strategy for asserting the country's global consciousness (2005, p. 562).

Eng-Beng Lim (2005a), on the other hand, argues that the use of English-language cannot simply be viewed as following the universalising strategies of Western culture. Lim examines the groundbreaking 2000 gay male theatrical production, *Asian Boys Vol. 1*, and shows how the colonial legacy of the figure of the Orientalist gay boy is recuperated and re-imagined through the diasporic and inter-Asian circuits of "Indian gods, Japanese pop icons, Chinese rickshawmen, samsui women, and Malay online chat addicts" (2005a, p. 403). These different modalities of queer production highlight what Lim suggests as the tactics of "glocalqueering", a process of revealing the "complex circuits of mobility that follow neither a model of bilateral cultural transmission (West to East and vice versa) nor a contextual study of national productions that attempts to locate a quintessential Singaporean queerness" (p. 387). Although Lim calls these tactics "a set of pragmatic homoerotic practices with many inter-Asian and diasporic resonances" (p. 404), he does not elaborate how pragmatism works as an instrumental logic for understanding this optic. Cornel West's philosophy of pragmatism is insightful here.

Redefining Pragmatism: Doing Gay, Doing Butch

West's pragmatism differs from Chua's commonplace conception of pragmatism. The commonplace conception of pragmatism is evident from *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary,* where pragmatism is defined as "the truth of any assertion is to be evaluated from its practical consequences and its bearing on human interests" (1993, vol. 2, p. 2319). This popular definition emphasises 'getting things done or tackling difficulties in the most practical way', or a 'can do and whatever works' attitude. Robert Westbrook (2005) cautions against this apparent conjunction between commonplace and philosophical pragmatism. He criticises the popular currency of the commonplace definition as "pragmatism at its worst" (p. x). West's pragmatism extends such commonplace definitions with a focus on social action and creative democracy. Arising out of American philosophy following the writings Ralph W. Emerson, Charles S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey and Richard Rorty, pragmatism is a method that advocates how ideas are connected to action, theory and practice, and challenges the traditional belief that action comes after knowledge (De Waal, 2005, p. 4). Peirce's anti-Cartesianism and Dewey's engaged instrumentalism, for example, emphasise how experimentalism and experience constitute knowledge as a product of a situation that requires resolution.

In *The American Evasion of Philosophy*, West (1989) highlights the radical potentials of pragmatism through its focus on "future-oriented instrumentalism" (p. 5), preoccupation with the "materiality of language" (p. 4) and the evasion of an epistemology-centered philosophy. West points to how these distinctions have contemporary appeal because it shares with postmodernism the scepticism on the fixity of truth. Their critical, destabilising and creative drives also have a moral and ethical emphasis on how power and social hierarchy can be transformed: "Its basic impulse is a plebian radicalism that fuels an antipatrician rebelliousness for the moral aim of enriching individuals and expanding democracy" (p. 5). Influenced by Marxism, Black social thought and liberation theology, he shares with Dewey a pragmatism that promotes "creative democracy by means of critical action and social action" (p. 212). West's pragmatism is less a philosophical inquiry concerned with the nature of knowledge

and the fallibility of truth, and more about knowledge as a form of cultural criticism where meanings and solutions are put forward as a response to social crisis and problems. His pragmatism is 'prophetic' because he draws upon his Christian background to express the problems about black nihilism in America (West, 1993). Religion, however, is not a requisite for prophetic pragmatism:

> I have dubbed it 'prophetic' in that it harks back to Jewish and Christian tradition of prophets who brought urgent and compassionate critique to beat on the evils of their day. The mark of the prophet is to speak the truth in love with courage – come what may. Prophetic pragmatism proceeds from this impulse. It neither requires a religious foundation nor entails a religious perspective, yet prophetic pragmatism is compatible with certain religious outlooks (p. 233).

Charles W. Mills criticises the casual synthesis between pragmatism and religion. He puts forth two interpretive solutions to understand this synthesis; the first comprising a thin "(theologically neutral kind) having universalist aspirations" and; the second, a thick "(religiously committed kind)" (2001, p. 198). "For prophetic pragmatism to be taken as an interesting and viable contender," he suggests, "it must be taken in the religious sense" (p. 199). Mark Wood argues this synthesis is not at all casual, but critical; it represents "the existentialist issues of dread, despair, and death and the political concerns of democracy, equality, and justice" (2000, p. 8). Hilary Putnam succinctly calls this synthesis of empowerment and engagement a form of "democratic faith" (2001, p. 35). Putnam's useful departure point is also echoed by Westbrook who describes West's prophetic pragmatism as a "reappropriation of pragmatism" (2006, p. 202) that reconceptualises philosophy as a politically-engaged attempt to "transform linguistic, social, cultural, and political traditions for the purposes of increasing the scope of individual development and democratic operations" (West, 1989, p. 230). West's prophetic pragmatism is thus located "in the everyday life experiences of ordinary people" and shares not only with Marxism's critique of class, but also Gramsci's praxis of the common sense and Foucault's operations of power (1989, p. 213). Rosemary Cowan elegantly summarises it as "a practical, engaged philosophy and a cultural commentary that attempts to explain America to itself" (2003, p. 55). Central here is its status as a "material force" for individuality and democracy, "a

practice that has some potency and effect that makes a difference in the world" (West, 1989, p. 232).

These characteristics of pragmatism as a form of democratic faith that is action oriented, concerned with consequences, and possessing a dynamic position of social and cultural critique, is significant to extend the relevance of pragmatism to Singapore's creative queer cultural productions. Positioned in this context, the glocalqueering optic offered by Lim's gay boys can be further conceptualised not simply as a commonplace set of pragmatic moves under the governance of cultural liberalisation or the alliances created by the shared histories of cultural proximity and diasporic homelands, but a conscious mode of 'doing gay' that bears a commitment to challenging the shame of gay sex. Gary Dowsett (2003) uses the term 'doing gay' to differentiate it from 'being gay'. 'Being gay' refers to the rights-based politics of fighting stigma and discrimination while 'doing gay' refers to fighting the shame that comes with gay sex. Following Warner's (1999) thesis that identity politics have resulted in the normalisation of gay men into mainstream culture through the erasure of sex, Dowsett argues identity politics can still be meaningful if it focuses on 'doing gay'. In Lim's accounts, the spectacle of the boys can be argued as potentially demonstrating this practice of 'doing gay'. Lim points to how these men follow the "global gay worlds featuring the homoerotic cult of male youth and urban male practices…(They) wear muscle tank tops with feather boas, use skincare and cosmetic products, work out at trendy gyms, and attend pride parades and circuit dance parties" (2005b, p. 296). Although Lim contends they exploit the global gay aesthetic, depoliticise a homoerotic aesthetic, and share no affiliation with the local grassroots or a radical politics of sexuality, I would like to critically suggest here that these men, in their visible sexualised body aesthetics, embody the self-fashioning ethics of 'doing gay'. By going to the gyms, dance clubs, and saunas, and participating in body cultivation, cruising and public sex, they reappropriate what have been shamed in the post-AIDS West as the decadent places and practices of gay sex. In the pre-AIDS era, these practices formed some of the central tenets of radical GLBTIQ activism in the West. From the psychedelic trance of dance parties, the rites of cruising to the obsession with body building, they described the faith-like rituals of prophetic pragmatism by actualising the material

practices of everyday life that connected faith to politics, art, literacy and economic production. Queer activism in this context exemplified the rhetorical performance and social action of liberation theology (Herndl and Bauer 2003). Warner shows how, in the post-AIDS West, these practices have been disavowed by the rights-based discourse through embracing the stigma of being gay but not the shame of gay sex (1999, p. 33). For the gay men in Singapore, these reappropriated practices embody the most abject and the least reputable acts of 'doing gay', and in doing so, resonate with what Warner has described as the ethics of a queer life, as a "special kind of sociability that holds queer culture together" and a "relation to others" that begins by acknowledging the shame of gay sex (p. 33). They also recall Foucault's ethics of care as a set of self-fashioning practices designed to empower the self and engage the self through knowledge in its conduct with others (1997). The ethics of 'doing gay' in this manner exposes the shame used by both the straight and gay mainstream to repress gay identity; it focuses on the materiality of everyday life experiences to emphasise how the self is governed through individual cultivation, group management and official representation. As pragmatism, it recognises the agency, choices and constraints by which groups construct their self-presence and self-autonomy. This befits a consensual society like Singapore that prides itself on the successful interpellation of its communitarian ideology to socially discipline its population and self-cultivate the individual so that he/she knows the ethics of her/his conduct in its relationship to others. My final example of creative entertainment will further demonstrate such pragmatics of 'doing butch' in the lesbian nightlife of Singapore.

Since 2001, Singapore's annual popular Butch Hunt competition has instituted a new sensibility of 'doing butch'. Organised by Club Herstory, a lesbian-owned events management company and an online lesbian portal, these competitions have drawn hundreds of butches out of the closet and legitimated 'doing butch' as an embodied way of everyday life in the country. One thousand six hundred people attended the first finals at Zouk, a well-known dance club located at the Chinatown creative precinct. During the event contestants parade in a pageant, field questions on dating and romance, and pass a skills test ranging from singing, kung fu, dancing to stand-up comedy. The average age of the contestants is between 19 and 22.

Not all of them are outwardly 'masculine'. Some refer to themselves as pretty boys, most spot the trendy Asian bishonen long hair, and very few flex their pectoral muscles. They don hip hop gear, smart suits and ties, leather shoes, cowboy shirts or just plain street wear. They come from all walks of life; university students, sales assistants, chefs, teachers and graphic designers. Common to all is the breast binder. The breast binder is made out of DIY elastic bands, bandages, duct tape or clear wraps, or professionally manufactured spandex and Velcro-adjusted sports bras and tee-shirts in assorted colours purchased on the Herstory website or at the events. The breast binder is not only *di rigeur* among the contestants, but all young butches on the streets, in the clubs and at the bars. Unlike the older generation of butches who may wear a normal bra with a tee-shirt under a baggy shirt, these young butches flaunt the flat chest at every opportunity, with sleeveless tank tops or tight-fitting shirts. The competition has popularised the breast binder as the technology par excellence in the practice of 'doing butch' in Singapore. It has liberated the sexual shame associated with being butch.

Where 'doing gay' is directly related to the shame of gay sex, 'doing butch' is also directly related to the most abject and debased of lesbian gender, what Sally Munt has theorised as the shame experienced by the butch (1998). Munt describes such sexual shame through the butch's experience of her body, breasts, genitals and sexual behaviour, as well as her male impersonation as a "failed copy" (p. 5). She also locates the butch's fantasy of impermeability as a sad and brave act expended to fight the toil of maintaining her masculine body. Shame, Munt argues, "is the foundational moment in lesbian identity,… (in) butch/femme identity" (p. 7). Unlike the macho bulldagger or stone butches in the West, the musculature of the Asian or Singaporean butch is more lithe and less slight. Breasts, rather than womanly hips, are the first external physiological signs of the butch's failure to pass and the beginning of her internalisation of shame. In these competitions and in the materiality of everyday life among the young butches, the spectre of the breast is reconstituted through the explicit use of the breast binder as a new signifier of 'doing butch'. 'Doing butch' revisions shames with a new agency, making it a source of empowerment and engagement, and a new material force for individuality and sexual democracy. As Gea Swee Jean reports on the 2006 competition, "On

pageant nights, the sheer amount of lesbian visibility creates a palpable sense of excitement. One can almost sense a proud, unspoken declaration among the women who attend — a declaration along the lines of, 'I'm lesbian and proud of it!'" (2006).

Conclusion

This paper has critically discussed how the cultural liberalisation of the creative economy has enabled the emergence of a uniquely local Singapore queer culture characterised by the logic of illiberal pragmatics. It has also extended this logic with the philosophy of pragmatics as a method for critically instrumentalising creative democracy and social action. I began by introducing the specificity of illiberal pragmatics within the developmental and postcolonial capitalist logic of Singapore. Illiberal pragmatism is characterised by the ambivalence between non-liberalism and neo-liberalism, rationalism and irrationalism. I pointed to how this logic is evident in the contemporary (il)legal discourses of homosexuality in the country. I further showed how the new creative industries provided a fertile arena to consolidate this logic as central to the production of GLBTIQ cultures in Singapore. I argued how a local Singaporean queer culture has been constituted, not as a result of the recognition of rights and liberation, but through the disjunctive acceleration caused by economic and cultural reforms. In the popular cultures of contemporary gay fiction, gay theatre and lesbian nightlife, the sister transsexual, the Asian Margi Gras gay boy, and the tomboy butch have emerged as exemplary figures of this creative queer culture. In their reconstitution of pragmatism with democratic faith, cultural critique and social action, they have reclaimed the shame of their deviant homosexualities and localised new embodiments of doing queer.

As I write reminiscing my last visit in 2006 to a Club Herstory event surrounded by a sea of breast-binding young baby butches, I can't help but refrain from the emboldened grin I usually cast upon the sign of lesbian pride. In recent months, the gay debate has sparked another round of recriminations in the public media. Spurred by Minister Mentor Lee Kwan Yew's 23 April 2007 speech to Reuters about the inevitability of legalising homosexuality, the government has, yet again, irrationally clamped down on gay activities in the country. During the recent annual 2007 IndigNation queer pride event staged as a protest during the National Day celebrations in August, my colleague was refused a conference visa to speak on sexual orientation and the law, my queer friends were banned from gathering in the park for a pride fun run, and gay teachers have had their blogs removed or their teaching registration revoked. While MM Lee's speech was motivated by the pragmatism of cultural liberalisation, these prohibitions were also motivated by a pragmatic appeal to appease the conservative majority. Rather than relying on commonplace pragmatism, Singapore's logic of pragmatism, in its desire to 'catch up' with the West, should take its cue from the radical potentials of philosophical pragmatism as a moral platform that encourages civic participation and social engagement, for it is through this optic that democratic (and even nationalist and patriotic) faith can be sustained through the ethics of actions and consequences.

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'GAY MARRIAGE', LESBIAN WEDDING

BARBARA BAIRD

Abstract

This paper juxtaposes analysis of the current prominence of the debate over 'gay marriage' with a story of one lesbian wedding. It contextualises non-heterosexual marriages with an historical account of female-female marriages suggesting that they both are part of a long history and *an entirely new phenomenon. In particular the paper draws on Canadian sociologist Mariana Valverde's (2006) claim that we are seeing a historically unique sexual object/subject - 'the respectable same sex couple'. It suggests that the conditions for the emergence of this new entity lie in neo-liberal economics and politics, the practices of identity-conferring consumption in particular, as well as in the efforts of gay and lesbian and other activists and those keen to live the life of 'the respectable same sex couple'. The paper draws on Judith Butler's analysis of 'gay marriage' to urge caution and critical thinking in relation to the state, the site to which most campaigning on gay marriage is directed, and draws attention in particular to the racialised nature of the state in Australia. It concludes, however, with a return to the singular lesbian wedding to argue that the effects of any one embodiment of new or transitional social and cultural forms cannot be contained by any one categorisation.*

Introduction: The Wedding

One weekend in June 1999, at home in Hobart, my nephew Stuart and I were visited by two lesbian friends of his (and acquaintances of mine) who were visiting from Sydney. Lucy and Dare announced over afternoon tea that they had decided to get married at the end of the year at Lucy's parents' rural home in the north of Tasmania. I was completely taken aback when Lucy and Dare asked me if I would be their marriage celebrant ... and I eventually said 'yes'. Specially printed invitations to 'a wedding' went out in good time. Guests were referred to a gift registry at *Peters of Kensington*.[1] I visited

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[1] *Peters of Kensington* is a nationally known Sydney retail outlet that specialises in handling wedding gift registers.

Dare and Lucy in Sydney on one occasion before the wedding and, with a few drinks, we had a great time laughing and working out a plan for the wedding ceremony (they had done lots of research and thinking). It wasn't until I visited them the day before the wedding, and saw *the marquee* on the back lawn behind Lucy's parents' home, in front of her father's vineyard, that it sunk in that this was for real: *this was a wedding.*

The guests were composed in roughly equal numbers of Lucy's family, incorporating four generations, and old family friends, and friends of Lucy's and Dare's, mostly thirty-something dykes from Sydney, who were camping around the vineyard. Dare's sister had flown from Canada to represent her family at the ceremony. We were a mostly white, mostly middle class group of people of a wide age range. I was accompanied by my girlfriend Vicki and our friend Kate, a Christmas visitor from Adelaide, who Lucy and Dare had graciously invited to the wedding. The three of us had all performed as drag kings at Feast, Adelaide's queer cultural festival, and Kate and Vicki attended the wedding in drag. I chose a more sedate costume, in keeping with my role and need not to upstage the brides.

The afternoon wedding ceremony was a mixture of traditions. The weather was perfect. After drinks in the house guests were asked to move out to the marquee. Dare had stayed the night some distance away and we waited for her to arrive. She and Lucy had not seen each other's outfits. Dare's floor-length dress was red and purple with gold trim; Lucy's waistcoat, made by her mother and finished only the day before, was of similar colours and was worn over a t-shirt and pants. The dress and the waistcoat were both made from Asian garments recut to be western formal wear, symbolising for them the combination of tradition and current location. When Dare arrived the two women walked through an archway, which had been constructed by Stuart and another friend, to join the rest of us inside the marquee. The ceremony was loosely constructed around the elements of a (European, Christian) traditional wedding as described in a wedding book that Dare had

purchased from a Sydney newsagent but also drew from second-wave feminist spiritual practises and included an acknowledgment of the Aboriginal ownership of the land where we gathered. Lucy's sister and others lead us in song, including a song by Tiddas,[2] and different friends had different speaking roles. Lucy and Dare exchanged vows and the final act of the wedding involved everyone coming to the stage at the front of the marquee where the proceedings were conducted and choosing a pebble to place in a spiral pattern on the wedding table. My role was minimal. I did not pronounce the couple married, but rather deferred to their own authority to declare themselves married to each other.

Lucy and Dare had engaged a local caterer for the wedding reception, also held in the marquee, and Lucy's father provided the wines. Speeches were made by Lucy's father and brother, Dare's sister, a friend, and the two brides. Lucy and Dare had handmade all the dinner plates from which we ate at a commercial workshop near their home in Sydney and everyone left with a plate with 'Dare and Lucy, December 1999' inscribed on the back as a memento.

I want to use this story of queer cultural production to reflect historically on the contemporary phenomenon of the lesbian or gay wedding, and the political issue of 'gay marriage'. I introduce these reflections with a story of a specific wedding in order to juxtapose some general comments I make about the issue of 'gay marriage', and the possible exclusions and foreclosures in the cultural and political realm that debate around the issue enacts, with attention to one particular wedding and the multiple and contradictory meanings that it both constructed and deconstructed.

A History

Let me begin by stating that the wedding I describe is part of a long history of marriages between women. In an article published in 2005 (Baird, 2005) I traced the available history of female-female relationships as they have been documented in the small but growing body of lesbian history in Australia. Early female

anthropologists documented relationships between Aboriginal women in several locations. The historiography of non-Aboriginal women's relationships begins with attention to documents from the convict period that show sexual and emotional relationships between women that included gender diversity among the partners and fierce determination on the part of women who wanted to be together. Many of the stories of relationships between women that have been excavated indicate relationships that have been lived as marriages. Doubtless there have also been women who shared sexual and emotional intimacy, and economic and other practical support, who did not experience themselves as married, but many have described themselves through the classic trope of marriage - *union*. The historiography of marriages and other relationships divides into accounts of relationships between women, and those between men with female bodies and women, the latter often living openly as man and wife.[3] Conventionally gendered women living in relationships with other women have generally not publicly identified themselves as married couples until very recently but autobiographical accounts from women living in the 1950s and since tell of private marriage ceremonies and rituals that included the exchange of rings and change of name by one or both women among other practices.

In my discussion of this history (Baird, 2005) I made the point that the exclusive reservation of the legal status of marriage for relationships between men and women has been based on the repeated exclusion from cultural legitimacy of marriages between women (and no doubt between men). In several cases from the lesbian historiography it was not just that marriages between women were judged to be not legitimate. Often the authority and status of heterosexual marriage, and the authority and conjugal rights of a male husband, were built on the delegitimation of the relationship between the women and the delegitimation of female claims to gender or sexual authority (e.g., Ford, 1995). Building on this account of the reliance of the superior identity of heterosexual marriage on the exclusion of lesbian and other queer

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[2] Tiddas were a threepiece band made up of two Aboriginal women and one non-Aboriginal woman who played around Australia and recorded music through the 1990s.

[3] This broad brush divide is overly simplistic and collapses a wide variety of female bodied people and relationships among them and significant historiographical debates about the importance of these categorisations. For example see Halberstam 1998.

marriages, I used Judith Butler's (1991) clever deconstruction of the hegemonic binary relationship between heterosexuality and homosexuality, where heterosexuality is the original and homosexuality is the copy, to make two other points. First, that we should not see marriages between women as simply mimicry or appropriation of the heterosexual form. It is not that they are something else entirely, nor that they are not in some ways influenced by the forms of (legal) heterosexual marriage but, to borrow from Butler, they are not *determined* by them (pp. 313-4). Further, we must reject the superior value given to heterosexual marriage forms.

With respect to my claiming of a long history of female-female marriages (and I assume of male-male marriage) it is, however, notable that lesbian and gay couples are almost entirely absent in the history of the post-Stonewall gay and lesbian rights movements in Australia. In the historical accounts of the gay and lesbian movements (e.g., Willett, 2000) couples hardly figure at all and it was not until the early-mid 1990s that the legal recognition of lesbian and gay relationships became part of the political agenda of the various lesbian and gay activist groups. While the emergence of the Gay Liberation movement ushered in an un-precedented visibility for homosexuality, and the 'reverse discourse' of homosexuality (Foucault, 1990) took on a new cultural confidence as well as a new style of political resistance, couples have not been at the forefront of the representation of the movement, in its own materials or in its representation in popular media. I have argued (Baird, 2005, p. 256) that, at least in the early days of gay and lesbian movements in Australia, homosexual partnerships were too shameful for the more conservative liberal reform organisations of the movement and too respectable for the gay liberation and radical lesbian groups.

Gay Marriage and 'the Respectable Same-Sex Couple'

The article that I wrote three years ago pivoted on the national publicity achieved by prominent media medico Kerryn Phelps and teacher Jackie Stricker when they married in 1997. Their marriage was celebrated first by a liberal rabbi in New York and then later confirmed at a lavish wedding party in Sydney, making headlines in

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both the mainstream and then the gay and lesbian press (Mitchell, 2002). While the demand for the legal recognition of 'same sex relationships' at the state level had been the key issue for lesbian and gay politics in Australia since the mid 1990s, (and has been largely successful), the demand to legalise gay marriage, a separate matter of federal jurisdiction, was not prominent in this period. Gay marriage leap-frogged to the front of the political agenda only when, in the lead-up to the 2004 federal election, the incumbent Coalition government, with support from the Labor party, explicitly legislated against it.[4] The government was responding to legal action initiated by a small number of lesbian and gay couples who had married legally in Canada and were seeking legal status for their overseas marriages in Australia. It was also recognising an issue with potentially divisive election value. Kerryn and Jackie's marriage was not the first to feature prominently in the Australian media, although it did establish a new standard for the normalisation of lesbian (and gay) marriages. In the three years since the Australian government insisted that marriage was between a man and a women Sir Elton John has married his male partner of many years in the UK (in December 2005) and received the usual media attention that comes to celebrities of his stature; the US television series *Queer As Folk*, which screens in Australia, has featured two marriages involving lead characters in its last two series which screened in 2004 and 2005; and, locally, the marriage of Adelaide gay activist Ian Purcell to his long-time partner Stephen Leahy in Canada in July 2006 featured prominently in the Adelaide press on their return (Wheatley, 2006). Gay marriage is now a political issue on which mainstream politicians comment as a matter of course (e.g., Anon.).

I have found a brief article by Canadian scholar Mariana Valverde (2006) extraordinarily helpful in understanding the normalisation of gay and lesbian couples and the recent prominence of gay marriage as a political issue. While my 2005 article placed contemporary gay and lesbian couples in a historically continuous tradition, Valverde takes the opposite approach. She announces a *discontinuity*, indeed a new entity in the history of sexuality. Both following and superceding Michel Foucault's (1990) ground-

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[4] A brief but comprehensive overview of state and federal legislation, reformed and in need of reform, can be found in HREOC 2007.

breaking work in the history of sexuality, she claims that there is a new object (and so subject) emerging out of the space previously filled only by 'homosexuality'. She recalls a passage from a 1987 book by another French philosopher, Jean Baudrillard, which while admiring Foucault, predicted that the 'sexuality' that he so brilliantly identified for us was already then 'in the process of disappearing' (Baudrillard quoted in Valverde, p. 156). For Valverde the demise of 'sexuality' is signalled by the 'respectable same-sex couple'.

A brief rehearsal of her argument is needed for my purposes here. Valverde (2006) starts with the now widely-accepted Foucauldian account that asserts that 'homosexuality' (and indeed 'sexuality') is a historically recent invention. It has only been since the middle of the nineteenth century that sexual acts between men (the standard case) or between women have signified a deep-seated truth about those who participate in them. Before that time the acts were significant, primarily as sin, and might attract punishment, but they did not reveal an essential truth about those who did them. Valverde writes that 'sexuality – in the West but not in the East – came to be regarded as that which is most secret and therefore most authentic about "the self", the key, in other words, to personal identity' (p. 155). The era, up to the 1970s at least, where "the homosexual" was probably the most successful of all deviant identities' (p. 156) was characterised by attempts to identify and classify this person, through a variety of disciplinary gazes, medicine and the psy disciplines prominent among them. An early effect of the Gay Liberation movements that appeared in many Western countries in the early 1970s was the growth of identity based politics where gay men and lesbians themselves fortified this discourse of 'the homosexual', embracing this identity with pride rather than being tormented and shamed by it.

Valverde (2006) identifies three historically recent phenomena that challenge this identity based model of sexuality in general, and 'the homosexual' in particular. First, she refers to the refusal of identity categories by those, often homosexually active individuals, who choose the amorphous and fluid label 'queer' over identity labels that tend to narrow or specify (like 'gay' or 'lesbian'). Second, she points to the invention in AIDS discourse of the category 'men who

have sex with men'. She claims that AIDS experts are disinterested in these men's identities. They are, through a public health framework, concerned only with their behaviours. The centrepiece of her argument is that we are witnessing a post homosexual era is the 'respectable same-sex couple'. She observes that this couple is not understood with reference to truths about their inner selves. Nor are they understood, interestingly, with reference to sex. They are *not* 'two homosexuals added together' (p. 156). They are something quite new.

It is relevant to note that Valverde writes from Canada, where gay and lesbian marriage was legalised nationally in 2005 and where gay and lesbian couples come from all around the world to marry. She is thus also in close proximity to the USA where gay marriage has achieved prominence as a political issue in the 2000s and where several state or municipal jurisdictions have legalised gay marriage – although only in Massachusetts has the legislation which enables legal marriage for lesbian and gay couples remained. She makes her argument about the arrival of the 'respectable same-sex couple' through consideration of legal rulings concerning lesbian and gay couples in Canada's Supreme Court and media representations and her own observations of gay and lesbian wedding couples. What she finds is gay and lesbian couples defined not as 'homosexuals', those deviants identified through their sexual practices and understood to be essentially different to those who occupy the unmarked category of the normal. Rather she finds 'respectable same sex couples' defined through financial concerns, consumption and wedding plans.

> Nobody cares about their sexuality – including, apparently, the parties involved. The nonsexual transactions that make up the everyday fabric of coupledom are what the [legal and media] texts find worth recounting. In the *Star* [Canada's largest circulation daily] one finds that the narrative of the happy Toronto couple is wholly made up of florists' bills and plane tickets for relatives. The narrative of the divorcing couple of the M and H Supreme Court decision, for its part, is made up of joint tenancy agreements and bank loan documents (2006, p. 162).

Valverde does not mention 'love' among the defining features of the 'respectable same sex couple'. In my observations 'love' is apparent in many popular representations of lesbian and gay weddings and marriages, and in the demands

for legal gay marriage. The website for Australian Marriage Equality, the national group focused solely on the legalisation of gay marriage, begins 'For many Australians marriage is a profoundly meaningful way to demonstrate love and commitment.' (Australian Marriage Equality). Carl and Andrew, the two men who star in 'Just Married', the Australian documentary made in response to the Australian federal government's move against gay marriage in 2004 (Jones, 2005), repeatedly profess their love for each other, and members of both men's biological families repeatedly testify to this love. References to sex are muted. Love has historically been opposed to sex in discourses of sexuality, with heterosexuality signifying the former and homosexuality the latter. Love thus helps to broaden the distance between 'the homosexual' and 'respectable same sex couples' even further. Damien Riggs (2006) argues that the invocation of 'love' plays a similar role in campaigns for the rights of gay and lesbian parents. It does so, however, by aligning them with 'the forms of national love that are currently sanctioned, which are founded upon both the disavowal of Indigenous sovereignty and the construction of other groups of people as enemies of the nation' (p. 82).

Valverde's (2006) argument – cheeky as it is – is highly appealing. It is not inconsistent with other accounts of historical change in the lives of gay and lesbian people in the post-Stonewall, post second wave feminism, era. Sociologist Steven Seidman and his colleagues (1999), for example, have argued that 'the closet', the hinge that divides "a private life where homosexuality can be expressed and a public life where one passes as heterosexual" (p. 19), is declining in social significance in the USA. Their research, based in interviews conducted in the mid 1990s, finds that many gay and lesbian individuals have subjectively 'normalized' and socially 'routinized' their homosexuality. They locate the closet, and the practice of coming out, as emblematic of a pre-Stonewall period, where secrecy-disclosure and private-public were binaries that created the heightened self-consciousness of the homosexual. As these binary structures and the discourse of sexuality that produces them break down in contemporary social and cultural life (if not yet fully in social policy and the law) individuals are less likely to locate their homosexuality as the central element of their identities. This account is not inconsistent with

Valverde's analysis, but catching hold of her dramatic and prescient vision of an entirely new object/subject of history, and the shift in historical eras it announces, seems to me to promise more explanatory power than Seidman et al's relatively more measured identification of trends.

Valverde's (2006) argument explains why couples have been so absent, as publicly identified activist subjects and as objects of political debate, in Australian gay and lesbian activism until the last ten years, and in popular culture representations until even more recently. In a discursive field dominated by 'the homosexual', the couple in all its banality was not the point. Sex was. And it was sex, whether sinful, or pathological, or the site of difference and pride, that was the site of identity construction. But sex is not the ground for the construction of the 'respectable same sex couple'. Valverde's argument also explains what I have always regarded as the curious adoption, by lawmakers, politicians, and *gay and lesbian activists themselves*, of the term 'same sex couple'. The replacement of 'homosexual' or 'lesbian' and 'gay' with 'same sex' effects in this context what Valverde refers to as the 'desexualisation of gay rights' (p. 161). This shift not only turns away from sexuality in categorising these relationships, but arguably also from gender as it positions lesbian and gay relationships through an (essentialist) discourse of sex, an observation which requires more thought than I have space for here. Valverde's argument also explains why, in Australia, the public face of gay marriage campaigns is more often than not couples in their twenties and thirties. Those who have grown up in the wake of the social changes initiated by feminism and lesbian and gay activism but often with no cultural memory of the sexual past and its politics are most likely to locate themselves in a field marked by the 'respectable same sex couple'.

Her argument is speculative. It is also clearly political. Valverde (2006) makes little attempt to hide her derision of the wedding couples. She notes that the middle class soon-to-be-married male couple who feature in the Toronto *Star's* 2004 Pride Day special section are obsessed with "the color scheme, the food, the entertainment, and the guest list" and describes this as "a feminist nightmare" (p. 159). I can

only agree. (I can, however, also appreciate the politics and aesthetics of their camp hysteria). Her implied opposition is to their consumerism, their respectability and their foreshortened political horizon.

The Conditions for the New

Economics is one place to start to explain the conditions of this historical shift, and indeed economics has been identified elsewhere as the primary site of sexual citizenship for gay men and, secondarily, lesbians (Evans, 1993). In her contemporary Marxist critique of 'white weddings' in the USA published in 1999, Chrys Ingraham identifies what she brilliantly describes as 'the wedding-industrial complex'. This multibillion dollar transnational wedding industry includes "the sale of a diverse range of products, many of which are produced outside the US" (p. 28). The industrial complex in turn relies on what she calls the "wedding-ideological complex" (p. 82). Ingraham observes the ways that race and class structure both the industrial and ideological complexes. White middle class women are those with most power to consume wedding products (p. 31) and "the icon of the beautiful white bride" works to persuade us all that "what counts as beautiful and marriageable is white" (p. 97). Her main argument, however, locates the wedding as a lynchpin of the dominance of the institution of heterosexuality. Ingraham notes debates among gay and lesbian communities about the value of fighting for the right to legal marriage but, writing just before the turn of the century, she does not seem prepared for the gusto with which North American gay and lesbian communities have embraced the institution of marriage and the practice of weddings. Nor does she anticipate the degree to which the wedding industrial and ideological complexes have begun to embrace gay and lesbian communities, even if evidenced only in advertisements in the gay and lesbian press, including for the services of registered civil celebrants.

But consumption and a place within the wedding industrial and ideological complexes are not the only way that mainstream institutions and ideologies might provide the conditions for the 'respectable same sex couple'. In an article that discusses the place of the socially progressive relationship reform enacted in Tasmania in 2003 (Baird, 2006) I have argued that the comparative ease with which the legislation was passed was in part an effect of the discourse of 'the new Tasmania'. This term refers to an alleged economic and social rejuvenation in Tasmania and functions as a branding of the state which allows and demands progressive liberal signs of Tasmania's desirability in a global economy. 'The new Tasmania' makes legible gay tourism, gay home ownership, gay rights, gay investment and, since 2003, the legal recognition of lesbian and gay couples. While the reform would not have happened without the energies of gay and lesbian activists, it also falls firmly into the phenomenon that Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin Manalansan Jr (2002) describe as a rather sinister mode of globalization: "the appropriation and deployment of queer subjectivities, cultures and political agendas for the legitimation of hegemonic institutions presently in discursive crisis" (p. 5). This mode is also at work in the recent announcement by Telstra, Australia's leading telco, of an overhaul of staff policies to remove all discrimination against lesbian and gay employees. A critical account characterises Telstra's twenty-first century neo-liberal work culture by "the setting of ever-increasing performance targets and rigorous monitoring of individuals' time and movements" (McDermott, 2007, n.p.). Those employees in gay and lesbian relationships who work under these conditions will, however, no longer be denied the same entitlements as their heterosexual counterparts (Karvelas 2007). Whether as consumers or employees, investors, tourists or home owners, gay and lesbian couples have a place in global neo-liberal futures.

It is not my argument that new historical objects/subjects are simply the creation of the unstoppable forces of consumerism and capitalism or the neo-liberal re-ordering of all kinds of citizenship. And, of course, neither 'gay' and 'global' nor 'gay' and 'capitalism' are necessarily opposing terms. In a searing critique of global trends geographer Heidi Nast (2002) argues that "certain EuroWhite-identified gay men – relatively youthful, of some means, and typically childless – are well positioned to take advantage of key avenues of exploitation and profiteering in postindustrial world orders" (p. 890). She writes of "the coming political and economic age of gay white men" (p. 899). But even without the political power of wealthy white gay men the 'respectable same sex couple'

is a product of the desires and actions of not only those lesbian and gay activists and their supporters who fight for relationship law reform but all those lesbian and gay couples who live through the increasingly available subject position that this term describes. In the socially conservative climate that has dominated Australia for at least the last decade it is no wonder that respectability is an attractive position to inhabit for all those who have the economic and cultural capital to do so.

Of course Mariana Valverde's (2006) account of the emergence of 'the respectable same sex couple' is a broad brush account. It identifies a new object/subject that is not yet fully formed, and certainly not yet fully welcomed around the world. At the moment it is only South Africa, Canada, Spain, Netherlands, Belgium and the US state of Massachusetts that offer equal marriage rights to same sex couples (Australian Marriage Equality). While I have a sense that legal same sex marriage is inevitable in Australia, it is currently not supported by either major political party in this country and is actively opposed by the organised and influential Christian Right (Maddox, 2005). Concomitantly, the discourse of sexuality that Foucault claims emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century is still apparent in many sectors of contemporary society. Institutional discrimination, harassment and homophobia-related violence, the more subtle and omnipresent signs of heteronormativity and the marginalised subjectivities that these practices generate, are all still with us. It is likely that even the most successfully respectable same-sex couples still negotiate the closet in some aspects of their lives. But 'the sexual self-management practices' that are the hallmark of the formation of 'the homosexual' are these days, according to Seidman et al (1999), "more situation-specific than patterning of a whole way of life" (p. 11). It is also the case that respectable same sex couples are not un-marked by the queer politics and aesthetics that Valverde (2006) claims are co-emergent with 'the respectable same sex couple'.

Valverde (2006) herself captures the historically transitional nature of lesbian wedding couples in San Francisco when she comments on the number of lesbian brides dressed in conventional white wedding dresses. "It was very difficult to tell whether the wedding dresses were being worn in straight-up imitation of marriage or in

playful parody", she writes. "It is quite possible, given the mixed feelings gays and lesbians have about marriage, that the wearers were not themselves very clear about their intentions" (p. 158). The arrival of 'the respectable same sex couple' that she locates in these possibly semiotically confused lesbians contrasts, however, with a queer cultural production performed ten years earlier in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. In 1994 a group of women participated in the parade dressed as brides. They were clearly not embodying, nor were they seeking, respectability or legal legitimation. Their costumes consisted of white bra tops and white tulle mid-length skirts; some carried riding crops, some wore white top hats. They were not organised in couples. Sarah Zetlein's discussion (1995) of the brides claims them for a playful queer politics. The Mardi Gras bride, she claims, "incorporates a self-conscious awareness of the law's legitimising and illegitimising effects, and plays them accordingly" (p. 56). Jump back to the present where brides, and grooms, feature in Adelaide's 2007 Feast festival, the theme for which is 'love'. The festival this year includes 'Loved Up – the Wedding of the Year' (Feast, p. 6) where 'many couples [will] publicly declare their love and commitment for each other' in a public park and then celebrate indoors with 'queered-up' traditional wedding practices. Feast 2007 also hosts the launch of 'Gay and Lesbian Celebrations', Australia's first online same-sex celebrations directory which will include "trends and tips from South Australia's industry experts" and guide consumers to "local gay friendly suppliers" (see www.gayandlesbiancelebrations.com.au).

The State

So where does this account of a transitional moment in the history of sexuality (which may be the demise of 'sexuality') leave me with respect to the political campaigns for legal gay marriage? My reluctance to support these campaigns stems primarily from their turn towards the state. Judith Butler's essay on gay marriage (2004; see also Brandzel, 2005) lays out many of my concerns. She cautions that pinning one's hopes on recognition by the state means being defined by the terms already set by the state. Further, such inclusion involves the creation of new lines of division, separating the legitimate and the about-to-be legitimate from

those relationships and sexual practices which become more intensively inscribed as illegible. The focus on gay marriage thus involves a foreclosure of the political field. It is worth remembering in this context that while we may desire the state's recognition the state desires our recognition and validation in return. States can use their liberal reforms to demonstrate their commitment to human rights to international bodies or to attract tourists or to smooth over internal dissent (Baird, 2006).

My reservations are particularly sharp in relation to the racialised nature of the state in Australia. It has not only been non-heterosexual relationships that have been excluded from legal definitions of marriage The 'white Australian' state has also defined legal marriage by excluding Indigenous forms and by actively preventing and undermining marriages involving Indigenous people. The marriages and family relationships of non-Anglo migrants and refugees have also been treated in discriminatory fashion. (Baird, 2005; see also Brook, 1997; Ganter, 1998; Haskins & Maynard, 2005; Kunek, 1993). I do not have the space here to elaborate these histories but suffice to say the racist history that underpins past disrespect for Aboriginal and many migrant marriages and families has not been accounted for and the state from which we seek the legal recognition of gay marriage is a state based on 'patriarchal white sovereignty' and the concomitant denial of the sovereignty of Aboriginal peoples (Moreton-Robinson, 2004).

Conclusion: The Wedding

Those of us who urge a critical relation to campaigns for state recognition of gay marriage do not, however, always consider the new forms of resistance that will grow from the new regimes of regulation to which legally married gay and lesbian couples will be subjected. (One of the many fascinating elements of the wedding industrial complex as narrated by Chrys Ingraham (1999) is the emergence of wedding industry consumer advocates in the late 1990s). Resistance may be the most interesting aspect of the history to come of 'the respectable same sex couple'. Following Valverde (2006) it may also be fruitful to think more about how other regimes of social and cultural life may shift as the divide between hetero and homo*sexuality* as it has been solidified in marriage law, economics

and culture evaporates.

I wish to conclude with a return to the wedding in which I played a minor role. As I hope was clear in the telling of that particular story, Lucy and Dare's wedding was rich with multiple and contradictory meanings. The nuances of this singular event are not captured by any broad brush historical or political analysis. As Judith Halberstam (1998, pp. 75-110) has shown in her account of the formation of new female sexual and gender identities in the early decades of the twentieth century, the classificatory systems through which experts seek to understand new objects rarely do justice to the experience and discourse of those being classified. In this context the analysis proposed by Valverde, a feminist expert, is no different. The meaning of Lucy and Dare's wedding for the large group of people who participated cannot be pinned down to any one coherent set of meanings that belong only to one historical era. (No doubt this is true of all individual lesbian and gay weddings). Their wedding was marked by clear signs of feminism, anti-racism, lesbian and gay pride, a dash of queer, and clear respect for family and tradition and good hospitality. Conventional hierarchies between these terms were impossible to find. In fact the whole thing was a little queer. Pondering whether the dykes camped in the vineyard had appropriated the trappings of the middle class Tasmanian family, or whether the family had appropriated Sydney dyke culture, or whether this was simply white middle class liberalism and tolerance working overtime in all directions, were not productive calculations. Those who could not find a way to make comfortable sense of the mix had stayed away. Dare and Lucy's was no doubt one of many weddings in Tasmania that summer that made their small contribution to the local tourist industry (and to *Peters of Kensington*). They were simultaneously part of a long sub-cultural history, shaped by its post Stonewall and post Women's Liberation inflections, and the harbingers of a new historical entity.

My favourite story from the wedding came in its aftermath. A number of straight friends to whom I said 'I officiated at a lesbian wedding over Christmas' replied with 'I didn't know you were a wedding celebrant'. I am not and never have been. What was remarkable about these small amnesias about the legal status of lesbian marriages and those authorised to conduct them

was the performative power of my declaration, and the marriage between Lucy and Dare to which it testified, to create me as a wedding celebrant. I enjoyed the wedding and later being mistaken for a (legally certified) wedding celebrant. I enjoyed the way my confused listeners borrowed from the law yet without paying interest on the loan.

Acknowledgments

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RECOGNITION FACTORS

ROSSLYN PROSSER

In thinking about Australia as the background to this story, I see it as a place unfolding, in the creases and in the understory. Whilst some of its characteristics are known and accepted there are many stories and interpretations of this country. The lesbian is interested in the lesbian domestic archive as the place from which she speaks. The story must be backed up with the validity of an archive, even if fictional. Never take anything for granted, nor at face value. It is after all the construction of self that is at stake. There are many formations of lesbian and domestic arrangements and to come to some agreement on the archive will take some time, for the argument will rest with you accepting the importance of the informal, the unlisted, the personal and the observed, rather than the filed and the official, the archive that is. She reads this archive because it quickly fades and is shown little regard by the official machinery of preservation. I ask you to de-nature your surroundings. To see the clothes you wear, the markings on your body, the haircut and the shoes on your feet, as markers. As you wear these and enter into the house, the domestic sphere, which may be shared co-habiting couples or inhabited alone, of something outside of official discourses, ask yourself: how did you get counted in the census this year? In this de-naturing you will see that you are making your archive as you live in this very moment, not in some future unknown and uninhabited. It is accounting for the minutiae in the present that makes the archive visible. In charting the personal and the intimate what might the archive look like? Will it be filed away in some future, perfect? The small stories told through fragments, poetry and interruptions. A collection of signifying processes, novels, poems, photographs, songs, and stories could show you what this particular archive looks like. But it could come down to the use made of these objects. Sometimes they are small acts of memory making, of soldering onto the daily, another register, 'I remember that day', she said looking at the photograph. Or Patti Smith singing: 'Jesus died for somebody's sins but not mine'.

In the autograph book of my childhood someone writes:
2YSUR2YSUBICUR2YS4ME. It's plain to see, of course, to anyone who cares to look, that there is no simple cause and effect. Love many, trust few, always paddle your own canoe is written on the next page. What do they mean? Are they telling the truth? Watch their eyes, their teeth, the corners of the mouth, the truth will out. Not a drop, not an ounce, not a skerrick of truth. Here I am telling stories, truthful stories.

I drive across the landscape, it is a painting pressed flat on the floor of the car.
A dot painting, I see it as if from the air, but cannot sustain this viewing position. It is not mine. Directions dominated by roads, by signs. By pre-destined points. By maps previously thought wise and the only possible ways of seeing landscape. Detours, streets between blocks, urban sprawl.
Always something there, no clear spaces, more houses more cars, I drive across the landscape, urban and cluttered, the emptiness must be filled, the Indigenous replaced with deciduous, not one stone left unturned. So they think, so they think.

Negotiating the everyday with the memory of the body in water, floating, now there's a thing. Making stories that work to create a swoon. In one sentence she creates that. You wish for it. Writing that invests the everyday with body memory. Pages that speak like lips against skin. We watched our moon shadows in the still water, moon lit night. Calling back, dragging the moon back into it's phases, imagining that we had something to do with it.

Appropriating as many myths as we could for our own understanding, seeing ourselves as intellectual owners of global knowledge, understood intellectually but dispirited that we could not quite enter the embodied space where dust, blood, ritual and thought inhabited the occasion, where the myths ceased to explain the world. Now I explain the world through all of these stories and past meanings as if I have the right to assemble them in that way, to take a portion of explanation and reconstruct them as my own. The everyday is often a place of uncertainty and trepidation, it feels at times as though I am constructed in the waves, constantly changing, never the same.

Do lesbians inhabit this landscape? These spaces? Or as some suggest, is the landscape

woman/female? Mother nature and all that, is it female and always the other to machine? And how? Are they exempt from a colonial effect or part of the complete story? Some would say so at times, inhabiting landscape and country with ideas of connection to the earth.

Body encased in metal, chrome, glass and fuel. It is not natural but I have become this movement, this combination of movements, clutch, gear, brake, accelerator, completely naturalised. I barely think about it anymore. Body comfortable in the seat, the technique of driving and maneuvering second nature, second only to you. I drive across the landscape watching the sway of grasses. Leaning sheds and disappearing landmarks. The mud map you made me is crushed into a small wad on the back floor. I can no longer follow your direction. It is as if I am digging and digging and never getting to what I'm looking for, as though the red ribbon I'm following disappears into the dirt and I can't get to the end of it.

You surround yourself with objects of direction, in display cabinets of accumulated reason; money spent, presents given, small objects, glass ornaments, all for what? These are the things of definition and meaning, dust collectors. What is dust? Is it pre-dirt? Through the wall I experience the shift in my body. I disappear into the tongue and groove and see myself lying beside you. She takes your hand and kisses your fingertips. Seeks you out against the kitchen cupboards, up against the wall. Or is she your girl all soft and feminine and pink? Waiting for you in silence, words on the page, line after line of anticipation.

In the private histories of the family, where lives collide and circumstance is created, femininity becomes a zone of contestation. What kind of woman are you? In one she is simply fragmentary because evidence is the fragment, the corner piece of material left by the sewing machine, once operated by hand, now machine. She cuts her hair short but keeps the heavy ponytail, cut just above where it was gathered by the rubber band. She puts the hair in a leather suitcase, a distinct memorial to times past.

On being dislocated, outside the sound of rain on a tin roof, breeze against weatherboard she is filled with distinct possibilities, remaining inside she is calling and whispering. Never

comfortable, never relaxed, not even for a moment. Do you or don't you declare? Do you or don't you pass?
Do you or don't you have your hair short, long, short butch, short femme, soft waves of curl, number one and hard but fun. Do you or don't you shave, here, there, legs, underarms, moustache? Pluck: eyebrows, chin hair, moustache, what kind of woman are you anyway? Do you wait for the lesbian character on television? Do you care, do you or don't you care? Have you told: your mother, does your father know, what about your siblings, rest of the family, friends, family, doctor? Are you a category, a statistic, absent from the census? Are you breaking the law, which law is that? The law of the father, oh yes, the law of the land perhaps. Have you a tattoo across your forehead? It is not hard to just write LESBIAN. Or are you now - QUEER? It is not without a struggle, does it matter? I know how to perform in such a way that my existence is not an affront.

As a modern way of knowing the nation, the lesbian nation, such an idea was once an important part of being the politicised lesbian. What are the characteristics of the lesbian citizens of lesbian nation? Is it wearing purple, or is it being a drag king? This community is recognised by its initiates. It's a walk, some say swagger. A style. And then there is the outsider who stays inside, the unrecognisable. Those you would not know, who make their presence differently felt. All of the visible signs are missing but wouldn't you know it, she has a dog. Imagine a lesbian nation. I posit this only in remembrance of a dreamed possibility, before everything that exists now. Pauline Hanson puts this back on the map with her fears of an Asian cyborg lesbian president. Why not, that would be a healthy change?

What is an Australian lesbian? In the display case, the photo establishes that she is on the outside. She is memorialised now as her sexuality, not for any other reason do these images have meaning. I look and look for recognition, for affirmation. The photos don't sing to me, I wish they would, they don't pierce me, why not? The erotic of recognition passes and that is how she survives, calm and not aroused by community. The lesbian archives are real places in some cities. Here they are imaginative and exist in an abstract way as a memory archive – in this document it is the

ways that language can be used in the construction of a particular kind of subject, who is seemingly outside of dominant history, outside of the official archive, an opening to possibilities, not restricted to research and statistics.

It starts with a question. What is this place? I ride the love pony, caught in the love stirrup I cannot, won't, don't know how to dismount. Love pony tilts and dies a wooden roundabout death. You are my love pony. Love pony. Love. Love pony is the distant lesbian nation, a dreamed for place somewhere in New South Wales isn't it? A name, a minor signifier: Amazon Acres.

At the centre of the problem for some, for femininity, and might I say not just femininity, but for the whole sexuality, space, belonging, race, and class questions are the politics of love. No love. Pony. The pony grows old. Give to good home, healthy old mare 14 hh. Suit companion horse or trail riding.

'Export Romance not Live Sheep' appears alongside 'Social Needs Before Private Profits' on the stone wall across the road from the lesbian feminist communal household, back then, back then. 'Women hold up half the sky'.
Is that the marker and the memorial? A memory? A memory archive.
At the core of me, of you? Some story of other impacts, where is that Mills and Boon lesbian love affair. She stands outside of the cinema, waiting for you to walk by.

The archive is in all of these things, the moments of cruising, of knowledge not recorded, of informal trainings in love. The first book you read, was it Ruby Fruit Jungle? Once when it was sex, not love-making and the paths of emotional pain were greater than the sum of their parts all the ponies released at once, gathering like brumbies at watering holes, frisky and delighted. Write with champagne fingers along your neck, taking your ear in their mouth, all the women, all the women and some, more like boys. We like them as boys, hard boned definitions filling the space, button up is best but then she shocks in her skirt or purple tutu. She has a tattoo 'Steve' on her right buttock and it's not for a boy. The girl is catching flesh and lips, counting the air between their bodies.

How do they walk? They walk with an effort made against femininity, a walk gives away everything, it is the butch cruising walk, jeans slung low on hips, a tight-chested, Bonds t-shirt walk. Or it is a beyond being lesbian walk, where the definition is ridiculous, impossible, finished. She is female masculinity, feminine voluptuousness, she is.

A few friends, you see here is the photo memo. On the beach, in the restaurant, at the campsite, on the island naked. And at other times it is the moment of remembering what a repressed and closet history can do.
It is the feminist symbol with a fist inside the circle painted black on the back of a motorbike helmet. What does it mean to have lived like this?
With your own codes and rules and ways of being. Not knowing how it all works, how it all fits together can make for confusion and delight. Does it matter? It does if it can become part of the story, a small piece of being Australian. Who are you, walking across the horizon? Shape distorted by the background, sun as it sinks, slow then fast, an orange ball distorted into the ocean.

Who are you walking? I write of now and the notion of the everyday lesbian. Inhabiting the shadows of the writing is a colonial past, a history I seek to bring to the surface. In this story of the post-colonial subject, the human post-colonial subject, the female post-colonial product of feminism and gay liberation and environmentalism subject. Not all subjects are created this way. In attempting to spell out the problem of writing the lesbian body and a particular archive I make a small corner of remembrance. And here I find myself falling back on some essential notion of the lesbian body. Variously portrayed and recognised as shifting and situational, historically constructed, as lingering taste of secrecy and hatred, as passing and being feared, of fearing being outed, of being thought of as non-existent, of chic now, and of male to female bodily re-orientation and becoming lesbian minus penis.
What then is the lesbian? The markers have become distorted, possible to question identity now, something strange in the fruit.

Writing teachers in their wisdom say 'write what you know'. But you see I know as you do, in the template of knowledge, that this lesbian body is always negotiated and aware of the various forms and structures and the range of possibilities open to it. For now, for this week, or

month, or for today, I am the domestic surgeon of love, excising from the banal and the mundane, the average weekly income, the structure of 'Australian society', the gold medal sporting achievement, the preamble, the guarded apology, never one really, the ship stuck on the Barrier Reef, coral bleaching, this is where I write from today.

Does this contribute to the lesbian body of knowledge? Through the attempt at placing myself as a body structured in part through being lesbian, alongside all of the other points of identity, I am acknowledging that which is often absent but integral. This I part of how I know. Am I sounding like identity politics gone berserk? Once I wrote that she is ordinary, however she drives a Toyota Hi-lux dual cab with drop side tray wears Blundstones and an Akubra hat. She is ordinary, eating organic vegetables, brown rice, tempeh and vegetables, she is ordinary, no make up, no high heels. This is the matter of the archive, sign of a different kind of woman in this place.

We grew to be like men in this sun bright country, dressed like men, hard lines and short hair. A break, a shift, a movement away from femininity, sad love song plays out on tinny speakers of a car stereo and Gloria Gaynor sings 'I will survive'. The scene, where you are now, describe the room. In the background you will hear land clearing in progress.

Her body on the back seat. Tattooed forearm, a cross and one word.
A name, a love. Her body works mine, you know the clichés but do you know the way that she works out, into the endorphin state, no chocolate as replacement here, stuck to the roof of your mouth as you fall asleep, cocoa sliding down the back of your throat. She slides, she makes wide, she coils, she springs, the desert hears her cries, night in the riverbed, moon on the horizon, smell of red gums. She works me, she takes my hand and that is the end of me, it's a shopping centre romance, it's that ordinary and it's that normal, an aisle awaits you, your name is on the shelving, but you won't find me there.
We dressed like men. Witnessing ourselves as portrayal of a hardened place.Stretched across the desert lines of bitumen. Take you to here, take you to there, your soundtrack will be distances covered, loads carried, sounds heard and repeated. While you drive singing to the country.

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THE HEGEMONIC AESTHETIC

SHAUN M. FILIAULT & MURRAY J.N. DRUMMOND

Abstract

A psycho-historical exploration of gay men's body image in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is a story of change. As demonstrated in academic narratives of idealised bodies in those periods, and demonstrated in the popular art of those times, the 'perfect' gay body of the 1960s to 1980s is strikingly different from the body many young gay men of the late 1990s and early 2000s find most attractive. Moreover, this shift has had implications across sexual orientations. While the gay ideal of the 1970s might be best described as a 'straight body' the ideal straight body of today may actually coincide with the new gay ideal.

Stemming from Connell's (1995) application of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and a sensibility toward the queerness inherent to discussions of bodies and sex, this article will examine the concept of body image and its historical shift across time and sexual orientations. Ultimately, we hope to demonstrate that a body type can become hegemonic in a given historical moment, as witnessed by that body type's prevalence in both actual persons and in art. We call this hegemony of body image the 'hegemonic aesthetic' of the period.

Hegemonic Masculinity: Homophobia in Hard Bodies

Masculinity, and, in particular, the notion of multiple 'masculinities', has emerged as an area of increased research attention over the past twenty years. Though a number of accounts of masculinity exist, Connell's (1995) "hegemonic masculinity" has become one of the most commonly used in the academic press.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity draws upon and extends Gramsci's notion of hegemony. Simply put, hegemony theory suggests that within any power system, one class of individuals will be held in highest regard and, accordingly, wield power and control. The capacity for the dominant class to maintain control is enabled by that group's ability to dictate the terms and ideals by which lower classes interpret power and the broader world. This dominance is accomplished by controlling the social institutions, particularly the media, which disseminate ideals and knowledge. Accordingly, the marginalised classes come to see the ruling group's domination as 'natural', and believe in the natural right of the upper class to wield power. Donaldson (1993, p. 645) summarises hegemony by saying it "involves persuasion of the greater part of the population, particularly through the media, and the organisation of social institutions in ways that appear 'natural', 'ordinary', 'normal'". Through this persuasion of the lower classes as to the upper class' natural right to rule, marginalised segments of society actually become complicit in their own marginalisation by believing there is no other way. Hegemony thus imposes power without the use of brute force.

Although Gramsci's model was originally used to model economic class (and has accordingly influenced neo-Marxist ideology), Connell (1992; 1995) extended the theory to interpret gender relations. She suggests that at any one time multiple masculinities are in competition with one another, but only one is held in highest regard, and that dominant position is discursively enabled by reference to 'nature'. At the time of Connell's writing, and the publication of a plethora of subsequent analyses and critiques, the dominant form of masculinity within Western society included a number of mental characteristics. These traits included mental resiliency and stoicism, control of one's self and others, a lack of concern for appearances, daring and risk taking, as well as aggression (Connell, 1995; Donaldson, 1993; Kimmel, 1994).[1]

Central to the mental attributes of the described hegemonic masculinity is a repudiation of femininity. Indeed, this form of masculinity may be thought of as a flight from being seen as feminine and a constant struggle for a man to re-enforce and constantly demonstrate his rejection of femininity (Kimmel, 1994; Curry, 1991). This rejection is accomplished in two fashions. One such method is the sexual

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[1] It may also be the case that hegemonic masculinity depends on a number of demographic traits, such as race and age. However, less research has been conducted in those areas than on sexual orientation and the body, signaling an important gap in the current state of research knowledge surrounding hegemony and masculinity.

objectification of women, and the attitude that women exist solely for men's erotic pleasure (Donaldson, 1993; Pharr, 1988).

The other method by which men who occupy hegemonic positions can demonstrate their lack of femininity is through homophobia (Curry, 1991; Donaldson, 1993; Lehne, 1998; Pharr, 1988). Kimmel (1994) asserts "homoerotic desire is cast as feminine desire, desire for other men. Homophobia is the effort to suppress that desire, to purify all relationships with other men, with women, with children of its taint, and to ensure that no one could possibly ever mistake one for a homosexual" (p. 130). Through the inclusion of homophobia as integral to hegemonic masculinity, a gay masculinity is established as a marginalised form of masculinity, and gay men are *a priori* excluded from the hegemony. Indeed, Donaldson (1993) Kimmel (1993) and Lehne (1998) all assert that homophobia is the defining characteristic of a hegemonically masculine man.

In addition to the attitudinal – and especially homophobic – basis of hegemonic masculinity, various somatic characteristics also factor into a man's embodiment of the hegemonic ideals. Indeed, Connell (1995) asserts the body is an integral part of the masculine hegemony. A growing research literature demonstrates that Western men perceive a large, muscular body as being emblematic of masculinity (Bordo, 1999; Drummond, 2002; Grogan & Richards, 2002). Drummond (1996) suggests that men are culturally expected to be muscular and have bodies that occupy space. Not surprisingly, then, many men express a desire to be more muscular (e.g. Thompson & Cafri, 2007) a trend coined "The Adonis Complex" (Pope, Phillips, & Olivardia, 2000). Thus, hegemonic masculinity, as envisioned by Connell, includes both attitude and somatotype. Possession of both the right frame of mind, and the right body, enables a man to access power and privilege. Lack of either trait subsequently places the man in a marginalised position, without access to power, and without a privileged position within the society.

Hegemonic Masculinity and the (Queer) Phenomenology of Men: Toward the Hegemonic Aesthetic

Based on Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity, only men who possess both the right attitude and the right 'look' have access to power. Those men who are found to be lacking in either dimension are therefore thought to be marginalised. If that preposition is accurate, then it should be that some men – those in power – are hegemonic in that they have both the look and the attitude.

Yet, it appears as though few men, in lived experience, actually possess the right combination of attitude and aesthetic so as to be considered hegemonic. Indeed, Donaldson (1993) and Kimmel (1994) both question if any men actually possess the special combination indicative of hegemonic masculinity. This reality of hegemonic masculinity proves problematic from a variety of standpoints. From a practical perspective, the utility of a social theory that describes the social reality of, potentially, nobody, seems futile. Moreover, the seeming inability of hegemonic masculinity to describe the lives of real men is awkward from a phenomenological vantage point.

Phenomenology is the study of lived experiences. It seeks to understand the essence of meaning people make of their lives, so as to understand what their lives are like (Seidman, 1998). Accordingly, from a phenomenological perspective, good social theory should attempt to capture the lived experience of individuals. If, however, Donaldson and Kimmel are right, and no men fully exhibit the complete collection of hegemonic traits, then it may be the case, at least for phenomenological researchers, that hegemonic masculinity, as an umbrella concept, should be deconstructed to components that actually *do* reflect the essence of individuals' experiences.

The most obvious way to deconstruct hegemonic masculinity may be to break it down to its two component parts described above: attitude and somatotype. A man may gain prestige and power by exhibiting either the right kind of attitudes – namely, a stoic homophobia (however paradoxical that may seem), or by having the right kind of body – big, hard, and muscular. Thus, there is both a hegemonic attitude and a hegemonic somatotype.

This de-construction of hegemonic masculinity is essentially queer in nature, with particular relevance to Ahmed's (2006; 2007) concept of 'queer phenomenology'. To borrow from Ahmed's lexicon, if we consider the hegemonic

attitude and the hegemonic somatotype as 'lines' on which one navigates gender, body, and sexuality, then hegemonic masculinity is the special case (or non-existent case) when the hegemonic attitude and hegemonic somatotype overlap – that is, both the stoic, misogynistic homophobia of the attitude, and the bulky muscularity of the somatotype are present in the same person. In contrast, it is possible that a person's life 'line' may not be congruent with the hegemonic attitude, but still in line with the hegemonic aesthetic. Thus, on the surface, an individual may appear to be in accord with hegemonic masculinity, when, in reality, he is not. It is these instances when lines that are supposed to travel in the same direction actually veer from each other that a situation is rendered queer.

This deconstruction of hegemonic masculinity, via the hegemonic somatotype, and the essential queerness of that distinction, is critical for the study of men's lives and men's body image. Much research on male body image has assumed a 1-to-1 relationship between body type and one's construction of gender and sexuality (e.g. Andersen, Cohn, & Holbrook, 2000). In other words, it has mistakenly assumed that the hegemonic attitude always lines up with the hegemonic somatotype, and accordingly, has not allowed room for the queer. Within the realm of a phenomenological analysis of body image, this de-queering of body image, via the meshing of attitude and somatotype, essentially flattens the phenomenological meaning of the body to the individual by not leaving room for an appreciation of the moments when lines go astray. It is, as suggested above, a phenomenologically flawed concept.

Therefore, we suggest that an examination of men's lives and men's bodies may be best studied under the rubric of a hegemonic masculinity that recognises how power and privilege can be attained not only in the special case of lines overlapping, but in the more tangible cases in which one navigates the line either of attitude or somatotype successfully. In that sense, the word somatotype may not even be the most accurate term to describe this concept. From anthropometry, somatotype refers simply to the ratio of an individual's body measurements. It is a rather medical term. Instead, the word *aesthetic* may be more useful, as an aesthetic can be thought of as a body with meaning. Certainly, the somatotype is important,

in that it must be mesomorphic to be hegemonic. But on top of that mesomorphic build is inscribed the social attribute of power and control that comes from being hegemonic. It is when meaning is traced on to a body, due to the body's build, that somatotype becomes an aesthetic. From this it may be suggested that there exists a hegemonic aesthetic, and it is described as being big and muscular (e.g. Drummond, 1996, 2002; Grogan & Richards, 2002).

Exampling the Hegemonic Aesthetic

Donaldson (1993) notes that a critical aspect to a hegemony is that its ideal type should be glorified in media, and demonstrated as superior to marginalised groups in that media. Therefore, if a hegemonic aesthetic exists, it should be exampled in media. For a demonstration of a hegemonic aesthetic, three traits should be evident in that media: (1) a male body type is idealised; (2) if other body types are presented in the media, they are marginalised; (3) aesthetic and attitude do not necessarily need to overlap, but those with the correct attitude or aesthetic are demonstrated as being powerful.

A particularly potent form of media that can be used in such an investigation are comics, drawings, and cartoons. Indeed, Padva (2005) argues those texts, including erotic comics, can be useful in discerning social values and attitudes, as "erotic gay comic strips are concerned with a wide spectrum of social, cultural, *and* political issues" (p. 588, emphasis in original). Padva also asserts that comics are ideal for examining true fantasies and ideals, as they are not bound by physical reality. That facet of comics is particularly important for an investigation of ideal bodies: If an artist's pen, and not physiology, is the limit, then in what manner will an ideal body be portrayed? What is the nature of our somatic ideal? Comics can provide the answers to those questions.

In addition to using media to demonstrate the concept of a hegemonic aesthetic, phenomenology would argue that the break between aesthetic and attitude needs to be present in the lives of individuals. Therefore, accounts of men's lives must also demonstrate not only an idealised body type, but the break between aesthetic and attitude.

Given the centrality of the media in evidencing/supporting a hegemony, and the unique nature of comics in representing bodies, we now examine two sets of comics from two epochs of contemporary gay history: Those of Tom of Finland and those of Joe Phillips. In so doing, we will attempt to address the three aspects of the hegemonic aesthetic that should be present in media. Furthermore, we hope to demonstrate the existence of a hegemonic aesthetic, and its lack of connection to attitude, in the lives of men.

Circuit Clones

The Macho Man Look

As suggested earlier, an historical shift can be noted in the idealised gay bodies of the 1960s to those revered today, and this dichotomy is evident both in academic narratives and in gay erotic comics from both periods.

In the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in post-Stonewall United States, the 'gay ghettos' of many major cities began to flourish, with the creation of extensive circles of cafes, bookshops, night clubs, bars, and sex clubs available for gay men to frequent, collectively called 'The Circuit' (Levine, 1997; Marcus, 2002; Scagliotti, 1999; Tattleman, 2005).

Appearances mattered in gaining entry to Circuit locales; failure to look the right way would result in denied entry (Tattleman, 2005). Therefore, access to gay sex depended upon achieving and maintaining the proper 'look'; that is, achievement of the 'ideal body' for this sub-culture served as an entry mechanism to the spaces and places of the Circuit. Indeed, this specific look was so ubiquitous as to become known as 'The Clone' (Levine, 1997; Levine & Kimmel, 1998; Cole, 2000). Specifically, Clone men needed to look masculine and play up their masculinity and appear butch (Cole, 2000; Levine, 1997; Tattleman, 2005)

Central to the Clone look and masculine appearance was a mesomorphic body type, with V-shaped torso with noticeable pectoral muscles and defined arms (Levine, 1997; Levine & Kimmel, 1998; Tattleman, 2005). Body hair was accepted, and indeed expected as part of this look – a fuzzy chest, abdominal muscles, and facial hair were the look *du jour.* Likewise, penis size was emphasised, as men with large genitals

('hung') were put on a pedestal. This sense of raw masculinitiy was demonstrated not only in the body, but in how these men adorned their body. Cole (2000) describes Clone fashion as reflecting a working class, rugged, masculine sensibility. Denim, leather, flannel and work books were the vogue; further, clothing was tight fitting so as to accentuate the (hopefully muscular and hung) body beneath.

Clones in Pop Culture

While the Clones were on the dance floors of the 1970s, the artwork of Tom of Finland would likely have been on the coffee tables of these men. 'Tom' was a Finnish cartoonist whose artwork openly depicted homosexuality and men's bodies; his work featured men enjoying their sexuality and the bodies of other men. In that sense, Tom's canon of work was groundbreaking as it was some of the first overt, positive imagery of male homosexuality post-Stonewall.

Tom of Finland's work depicts the Clone look. Accordingly, as suggested above, the erotic cartoons of an era demonstrate the ideal body of that time. Furthermore, the cartoons represent fantastic (that is, of fantasy) Clone bodies. The men in his cartoons are hyper-muscular, have massive pelvic bulges, wear working class clothes (at least, when they are wearing their clothes), and demonstrate a raw, rough sense of sexuality.
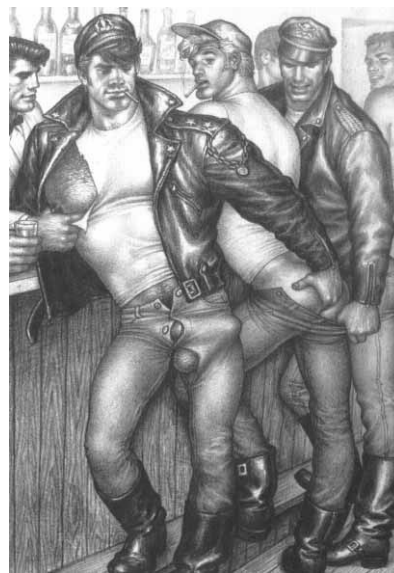

Figure 1

Figure 1 depicts one of Tom of Finland's cartoons.[2] These men *are* Clones. In the comic the men are drawn as extremely muscular, with large shoulders, enormous arms, toned pecs, and big biceps. In that sense, these men are emblematic of the ideal body type described in the academic literature: large, muscular, and taking up space. Furthermore, there is a sense of power evident in this comic, as demonstrated not only by the men groping one of the other men, but also by the fact that only Clones are shown at this bar. Those without the right body were, presumably, denied access. In having the right body, the Clones are able to access gay sex and control the gay scene.

A superficial interpretation of this comic would suggest a gay complicity with hegemonic masculinity. These images celebrate male strength and muscularity, un-restrained sexual prowess, body hair, and working class symbols such as work boots. If it were a woman that was being groped in figure one, it may be argued that Tom of Finland's cartoons are representative of 'full' or 'mainstream' hegemonic masculinity. Yet, what is troublesome for the hegemony is that it is a *man* whose backside is being pinched. These men, who on the surface seem in accord with the tenets of the hegemonic masculinity, are gay, and thus simultaneously in contrast with the hegemony at the same time they are upholding it. Remembering that these images are reflective of the actual gender/sexual milieu of many gay men of the period, it becomes evident that a number of gay men lived in a manner teetering between hegemony and anti-hegemony by meshing the exalted hegemonic masculinity with the marginalised gay masculinity. In that sense, the Clones represent a queer challenge to hegemonic masculinity by meshing the aesthetic aspects of hegemonic masculinity with man-on-man sex. That challenge is overcome, however, if we are to suggest that these men's bodies were hegemonic, and, therefore, powerful, while their attitudes, through same-sex sex, were marginalised.

It may be argued, as does Bersani (1983), that despite having gay erotic attractions, Clones were still misogynistic, and therefore emblematic of what is now termed hegemonic masculinity. That stance, however, elides the point that

within the attitudinal portion of hegemonic masculinity, homophobia and misogyny are inextricably linked (Kimmel, 1993; Pharr, 1988). Even if Clones held negative views of women, the Clones still could not access full hegemonic masculinity because *gay men, by definition, are excluded from hegemonic masculinity,* especially since *homophobia is the watermark of hegemonically masculine attitudes.* No matter what their attitude, Clones could not access hegemonic power via attitudes due to their sexuality.

These men could, however, access power via their bodies. Indeed, Cole (2000) Levine (1997), and Tattleman (1995) all suggest Clones' hyper-muscular body types were an attempt to *look* masculine. In other words, the Clones had an appreciation that if their bodies appeared the right way, they may still be able to access the power and privilege of masculinity, even though they were gay. If nothing else, this desire to appear the right way, even in the absence of the right attitude, suggests power may be attained through having the hegemonic aesthetic of a given period.

Rise of the Twinks

Since the 1980s, the ideal gay body has moved on from the Clones. Levine (1997) and Cole (2000) attribute this change to the impact of HIV and AIDS on Western gay society. Simply, not only did many Clone men fall ill, but the appearance of a Clone was associated with illness itself. Not surprisingly then, the Clone appearance lost its appeal within the gay world as those who were Clones were no longer on the scene, and younger generations were tentative to emulate a body type that was seen as indicative of illness. Quite simply, the Clone look lost its appeal. More so, through illness, the Clones lost whatever power they may have had within the gay world.

By the late 1990s and early 2000s, a new body type was idealised by Western gay men. In qualitative interviews with young gay men Drummond (2005) and Bergling (2007) found that a thin, yet slightly muscled body type was revered; those findings are supported by quantitative research (Yelland & Tiggemann, 2004). Further, a smooth body, with little to no body hair, is thought to be most attractive (Bergling, 2007; Drummond, 2005) and the importance of penis size is less explicit for

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[2] Images are courtesy of the Tom of Finland Foundation, www.tomoffinlandfoundation.org

younger gay men (Drummond & Filiault, 2007). The importance of clothing has shifted, from the working class sensibility of the Clones, to a high fashion sensibility of the Twinks, who tend to be 'label conscious'. Furthermore, youth is emphasised in this context, as aging is seen to not only be related to the deterioration of the body, but perhaps also with the HIV epidemic itself (Berling, 2007; Drummond, 2006; Levine, 1997). In sum, this new, youthful, smooth, toned gay male was termed the 'Twink' look. In a sense, Twinks are the contemporary counterpart of the Clones, in that the Twink look is omni-present within many Westernised gay social circles.

Joe Bois

Just as Tom of Finland captured the Clone look within his art, Joe Phillips has done the same for the Twinks. Phillips is a California-based cartoonist whose colorful, playful rendering of contemporary gay life has made his cartoons – often referred to as 'Joe Bois' – iconic within mainstream gay culture.

Figure 2 (below) depicts one of Phillip's comics and, simultaneously, the Twink body.[3] The young man in the comic has clear muscular definition and little noticeable body fat, clearly embodying the gay somatic ideals described in the interviews conducted by Drummond (2005) and Bergling (2007). While the Clone image also placed importance on muscularity, there is a discernable difference between the level of musculature depicted in figure 1 and that in figure 2. In figure 1, the level of musculature is bulging, with massive shoulders, biceps, and pectoral muscles; the entire physique suggests use of supplements or steroids. By contrast, the musculature of figure 2, while certainly present, is not as defined as the Clone image; it may be better termed as 'toned' than 'bulging'. It is a subdued muscularity, indicative more of a swimmer's type of body than a weight lifter's physique. Keeping in mind that comics represent the limits of fantasy, it becomes apparent that while the Clone image desired an over-the-top level of muscularity, the Twink image idealises a much smaller frame. In that sense, the idealised masculine form for contemporary gay men features a still-muscular, though not massive,

male body. The Twink image hence represents a clean break from their Clone forefathers.

Figure 2

This break, and indeed seeming outright rejection, is made evident in figure 3 (below), which is the final panel of one of Phillip's comics entitled 'emale'. In the cartoon, the two young men set up blind dates online; they agree to wear a black tank top in one case, and a white t-shirt with a blue overshirt in the other case. The two men arrive, and meet each other, before realising that they are not each other's dates – it is merely a coincidence they are in the right clothing. Instead, their dates are the older men in the window: a hairy, muscular individual in black, and a chubby man in blue. The two younger men see their correct dates, and find more interest in each other, and while they recognise their body-based rejection is 'shallow', that shallowness is acceptable to them. Their rejection of the two men in the window is a symbolic rejection of not only age, but also of the hyper-muscular, hairy bodies of Clones, and the rotund bodies of those with excess body fat. Instead, there is only one sort of acceptable body in the contemporary Twink world: Young, toned, and smooth. Such bodies are hegemonic; all others are marginalised, and the object of Twink ridicule and laughter.

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[3] Images used with permission from Joe Phillips, and accessed from www.joephillips.com

Figure 3

Straight Joe Bois?

The Twink image, as demonstrated both through interviews (Bergling, 2007; Drummond, 2005; Drummond & Filiault, 2007) and the exposition above, emphasises muscle, but it also emphasises thinness. Indeed, none of the Joe Bois are large men, as was the case for the Clones.

Traditionally, straight men's body image coincided more with the Clone image than the Twink image. Past research (Pope, Phillips & Olivardia, 2000; Thompson & Cafri, 2007) has demonstrated straight men traditionally are concerned with overall muscle mass, and desire large, muscular bodies that occupy space (Drummond, 1996). Thinness was not a concern commonly mentioned by straight men, and muscle was seen as the normative discontent within that community. Recent research challenges that notion. In quantitative work with straight men, using the Somatomorphic Matrix (Filiault, 2007), results demonstrated not only a sizable number of men who wished they were thinner, regardless of BMI, but that discontent

with body fat was related to dampened self esteem. Those findings were groundbreaking, in that they challenged the traditional notion that straight men simply desire large muscular bodies. Other recent publications (Frederick, et al., 2007) have corroborated Filiault's findings, as undergraduate men routinely expressed a desire for a thinner body, as assessed by the Fat Silhouette Measure (FSM). Thus, not only have different research teams found a male desire for thinness, but those similar findings were attained using different instrumentation. Clearly, times are changing in terms of both heterosexual and gay men's body image.

These findings lead to a truly ironic, and strikingly queer conclusion: Ideal body image has reversed. The Clones of decades past emulated a 'straight' body image by idealising large, muscular bodies that occupied space. It was a hegemonic way of being gay, 'a very straight gay' to use Connell's (1992, 1995) terminology. By contrast, straight men of today seem to be turning in the direction of the Twink, by desiring muscular, yet thin bodies. If the Clones were a 'straight gay', we would argue that contemporary straight men are going in the opposite direction - 'a very gay straight' - through their emulation of the Twink body type. Moreover, this aesthetic is gaining power within the straight world. Football players – traditionally the archetype of masculinity – are demonstrating a break from the hegemonic masculinity described by Connell, as evidenced by stars like Beckham (Cashmore & Parker, 2003), Henson (Harris & Clayton, 2007) and Ljungberg (Coad, 2005) who espouse a toned, smooth, fashion-conscious aesthetics. Furthermore, articles in the popular (Hill, 2003) and academic (Olivardia, Pope, Borowiecki, & Cohane, 2004) presses suggest many heterosexual women are finding this toned, smooth male body type as being more sexually attractive than an overly-muscled man.

Implications of A Very Gay Straight: A New Hegemonic Aesthetic

Within contemporary gay culture, embodying the Twink aesthetic is viewed as important for accessing gay clubs and being accepted within many gay social networks. Social isolation awaits those who do not maintain the look (Atkins, 1997; Bergling, 2007; Dotson, 1999). Similarly, the Twink aesthetic has gained in-roads with many straight men, as powerfully exampled by

Beckham, Henson, and Ljungberg. Accordingly, it can be argued that within gay culture the Twink look has come into a position of power, and is hegemonic; the body expectations for straight men does not seem far behind. The Twink body is the hegemonic aesthetic for many gay men, and increasing numbers of straight men.

Yet, there is little evidence for a change in hegemonic attitudes, such as strength, stoicism, misogyny, and homophobia within most straight men (c.f. Anderson, 2004). Accordingly, another mis-match is occurring. In the same vein that the Clones emulated the hegemonic aesthetic, but not the hegemonic attitude, contemporary straight men may be emulating the new hegemonic (Twink) aesthetic, without concomitant changes in the old hegemonic attitude. A disconnect exists between body and behavior, and this disconnect is not one that can be adequately discussed or theorised under the umbrella of hegemonic masculinity, without making changes to that concept.

Connell (1995) notes that hegemonic masculinity evolves in response to new social ideals and situations; that which was hegemonic in generations past may fall behind a new hegemonic ideal. If we break hegemonic masculinity into two components, attitude and aesthetic, then the same may be true. Historical shifts can change the aesthetics that are hegemonic, without changing the attitudes, and vice versa. As demonstrated, an historical change has occurred in regard to the body – from Clone to Twink – though attitudes remain largely the same.

Truly, then, in heterosexual men appearing as 'a very gay straight' we are reminded that the phenomenological lines we navigate are not always easy to discern. Appearance and behavior are separate lines, and should be not be conflated with one another. It is only through this separate consideration of lives and lines that the essential queerness of gender, sexuality, and the body is able to be recognised, and the phenomenological complexity of those entities is truly appreciated on its own terms.

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PSYCHOLOGY, LIBERALISM, AND ACTIVISM: CHALLENGING DISCOURSES OF 'EQUALITY WITH' IN THE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE DEBATE

DAMIEN W. RIGGS

Abstract

Current activism within the discipline of psychology, particularly with regard to the same-sex marriage debate, has at times been limited by the reliance upon liberal individualism. More specifically, the liberal assumption of 'equality with' may be seen to produce a number of negative outcomes that result from a focus upon singular axes of identity. In contrast to an understanding of activism that focuses on equality, this paper provides an examination of the American Psychological Association's resolution on same-sex marriage, and proposes that activists (both within the discipline and beyond) may benefit from engaging in analyses of how state sanction serves to 'domesticate' same-sex attracted individuals. By elaborating the notion of 'state moral minimalism', it is proposed that future resolutions may move away from a simplistic reliance upon the concept of 'equality', and may instead move towards an acknowledgment of the multiple ways in which oppression and privilege intersect.

Introduction

The discipline of psychology has two quite distinct, and indeed paradoxical histories. The first history tells of a discipline "that would make a difference": that would not only "describe reality but [also] change it, and for the better" (Bradley & Selby, 2001, p. 84). The second history is of a discipline that "always serves to obscure larger social and political issues (sexism, heterosexism, racism, classism), converting them into individual pathologies by an insistent focus on the personal" (Kitzinger & Perkins, 1993, p. 6). In regards to the first history, Bradley and Selby suggest that psychology was originally conceived as a means to promoting social welfare, one that would necessarily start from a critique of the status quo. They propose that in moving away from these aims, the discipline at large has failed to take account of how individual oppression occurs in a broader social context. This point also informs Kitzinger and Perkins' critique of the discipline. They propose that the shift towards an individualised,

acontextual approach to psychological research means on the whole that psychology is inherently unable to explore political issues, other than through an individualised lens.

In regards to the view of psychology held by Kitzinger and Perkins (1993), it is important to clarify that there are of course a wide range of psychological approaches that are indeed critical of mainstream psychology's focus on the individual (these include critical psychology: Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997, community psychology: Watts & Serrano-García, 2003, and feminist psychology: Burman, 1998). Kitzinger and Perkins focus specifically on how psychology has often been complicit with the oppression of lesbians. My focus within this paper takes their critique as a starting place, but offers a more optimistic view of psychology's role in activism or advocacy (as does Kitzinger in her more recent work, such as Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2005). My aim is therefore not to paint a view of psychology that ignores the vast differences that exist within the discipline, but rather to draw attention to the limitations that arise from employing an individualised approach to activism within the discipline of psychology, and the attendant problems that result from focusing primarily on single-issue identity politics. In other words, I seek to question some of the implications that might arise from the two competing understandings of the discipline of psychology as described above, and to investigate how the discipline of psychology on the whole is both a part of, and potentially an effective counter to, the ways in which individualisation can negatively impact upon particular marginalised groups. In order to do so, I focus on the example of same-sex marriage, and explore the ways in which debates over marriage rights have been taken up by the American Psychological Association (APA).

At the same time as I seek to explore the issues that may arise from any use of an individualised approach to activism in regards to same-sex marriage rights, I also wish to examine how the promotion of such rights within the framework

of identity politics can work to further exclude or oppress certain groups of people. By examining the racialised and sexualised assumptions that frame both the discipline of psychology and the claims of those who advocate for marriage rights, I seek to demonstrate how efforts to gain sanction within the law and through the state may only serve to further marginalise certain groups of people. In this sense, I explore the limitations of activism as it is often configured within the context of liberalism, and I thus question whose purposes are served by enshrining the rights of particular same-sex attracted individuals within the law.

As a response to the critiques that I provide of individualism and identity politics, I explore one possible avenue for activism within the discipline of psychology. Drawing on the notion of 'state moral minimalism' (Halle, 2001), and Fox (1985; 1993) and Butler's (2002) work on legal sanction, I propose that activists may benefit from considering approaches that seek to challenge the status of the law as *the* site of recognition, and to explore some possible approaches for securing legal recognition that may not necessarily be dependent upon the forms of recognition currently afforded to same-sex attracted individuals.

Liberalism and 'Equality With'

As Bradley and Selby (2001) suggest, the discipline of psychology was founded in part upon a desire to challenge oppression. Whilst this may have historically been the case, and whilst organisations such as the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Australian Psychological Society continue to engage in social action (e.g., in the form of press releases in support of minority group rights) and advocacy (e.g., within courtrooms and at legislative hearings), such actions are typically done within a framework of liberalism (Terry, 1999).

A liberal framework is most often one that presupposes that 'equality for all' is both a possible and desirable goal. Liberalism is thus about promoting a vision of human rights that is seen to be generalisable or universal, and therefore applicable to all people. The upshot of a liberal understanding of oppression is the suggestion that those who are marginalised need to be included or provided space within

existing legal, political and social frameworks, rather than necessarily changing such frameworks themselves (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Wright, 2001). What this approach to activism fails to recognise, however, is that within societies where racialised and sexualised differences (amongst others) are foundational to rights, equality can only ever refer to 'equality with' (Riggs, 2004). In other words, liberal notions of equality are always implicitly about oppressed or marginalised groups gaining equality *with* the dominant group. As a result, equality remains defined on the terms of the dominant group, thus promoting assimilation as the best way to gaining rights, rather than representing a challenge to the values that predominate in Western societies (Hage, 1998). Of course, 'equality with' may indeed be an important goal for activism, as many groups of people living in Western nations continue to experience extreme hardship as a result of unequal social relations. Yet at the same time it is important to further explore this point about 'equality with', and the implications for this approach in regards to activism within the discipline of psychology.

One particular place where we may see examples of this discourse of 'equality with' is in the APA's resolution on same-sex marriage. It is of course important to clarify here that the resolution was aimed at achieving particular goals: it was intended as a counter to the (then) proposed Defence of Marriage Act, and as such was written in accordance with both the legal context by which it was framed, and as a means to informing members of the APA more broadly as to the importance of speaking out on this issue. However, whilst these points are important, my focus in this paper is on how the liberal framework of mainstream psychology (as it is represented at its broadest in the US by the APA) can work to promote the notion that what is required in regards to heterosexism in the US is for lesbians and gay men to gain equality with heterosexual men and women. Thus whilst it may be suggested that the APA resolution could never have been a forum within which to critique notions of equality, I do believe that it still behoves us as psychologists to examine some of the implications of framing such resolutions in liberal terms, and to explore how resolutions by the APS could be otherwise framed.

In the following two extracts from the APA resolution on same-sex marriage, we can see how the framework of liberalism implicitly positions 'equality with' as the primary motivation for social justice:

> That the APA believes that it is unfair and discriminatory to deny same-sex couples legal access to civil marriage and to all its attendant benefits, rights, and privileges

> That APA shall take a leadership role in opposing all discrimination in legal benefits, rights, and privileges against same-sex couples.

These two examples, whilst obviously demonstrating the APA's commitment to social justice, continue to promote a particular vision of justice, wherein the rights of the heterosexual majority continue to go unmarked as such (there is no mention in either of these extracts that existing legislation discriminates *in favour of* heterosexual couples). Access to civil marriage is thus seen as something that must be granted to same-sex couples as it would be 'unfair and discriminatory' not to do so. As a result, the framing of same-sex attracted people's entitlement to rights in this way reinforces the liberal framework of 'equality with' by failing to present any challenge to (or even mention of) the heterosexual majority. This failure to challenge the normative status of heterosexuality is also evident in the statement that:

> The APA shall provide scientific and educational resources that inform public discussion and public policy development regarding sexual orientation and marriage

The suggestion that the APA will provide resources on 'sexual orientation and marriage' (which is the title of the document itself) implicitly perpetuates an understanding of sexual orientation as referring solely to same-sex attraction. This is due to the fact that the document itself does not explicitly examine sexual orientation and marriage other than in relation to same-sex marriage. Thus, whilst the normative status of heterosexuality, and indeed heterosexual rights themselves, are the flipside of the coin implicitly presented within the APA resolution on same-sex marriage, the failure to explicitly refer to heterosexuality as a sexual orientation maintains the primary relationship between the category of 'sexual orientation' and same-sex attraction (Riggs & Choi, 2006). Such

an approach thus does very little to encourage a critical examination of heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1993). Whilst the APA resolution promotes the liberal notion of 'equality with', it fails to clearly spell out and examine who same-sex attracted individuals would actually gain equality with. Though it is obvious that the resolution is positing that a marginalised group (same-sex attracted individuals) should have equal rights with a dominant group (heterosexual individuals), the lack of recognition of these particular terms (marginalised vs dominant) may be seen as doing very little to challenge how marginalisation or dominance actually occurs (Sedgwick, 2005).

This point about the terms of reference employed within the resolution holds important implications for the efficacy of activism on the part of the APA. In other words, whilst for those to whom the resolution was directed, any form of critique of heterosexual privilege may been considered to be too confrontational, there still exists a need to raise awareness of how existing laws are shaped around heterosexual norms; norms that automatically exclude same-sex attracted individuals. Using words such as 'dominance' or referring to a 'heterosexual norm' may be one way of encouraging people to think about how marginalisation occurs within a relationship to dominance (Riggs & Choi, 2006).

In regards to the use of particular terms, the liberal framework of the APA resolution thus results in an understanding of discrimination that prioritises individual oppression. Such an approach understands oppression as something that either 'naturally happens', or as something that must be addressed at an individual, rather than institutional, level (Clarke, 2003). For example, the resolution states that:

> Discrimination and prejudice based on sexual orientation detrimentally affects psychological, physical, social, and economic well-being.

Whilst there is no doubt that all of these outcomes are true, this particular construction of discrimination does not challenge the corollary of such discrimination: that it gives rise to (or indeed makes possible) the privileges that heterosexually identified individuals experience. Discrimination is thus seen as impacting upon individual factors such as those relating to the 'psychological, physical, social and economic'.

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What is not represented is the fact that heteronormativity results in many heterosexual individuals experiencing privilege in relation to these factors, nor does it depict institutions (such as psychology) as structured upon the normative assumption of heterosexuality. In other words, discrimination remains the problem of the individual experiencing discrimination, rather than being seen as something that continues to shape social relations nation-wide (Clarke, 2000).

The notion of 'equality with', as I have discussed in this section, promotes the idea that the gaining of equality will automatically translate into improved circumstances for same-sex attracted individuals. Whilst this may well be the case for some such individuals, we cannot automatically assume that an approach to activism that merely incorporates marginalised individuals (rather than actually addressing how oppression operates in regards to the current status quo) will do anything to radically improve the ways in which same-sex attracted people are represented or treated (Phelan, 2001). As I will discuss in the next section, the APA resolution on same-sex marriage also draws upon a liberal framework where it utilises the notion of identity politics.

Identity Politics and Law Reform

The aforementioned focus on 'psychological effects' in relation to the denial of marriage to same-sex attracted individuals demonstrates the type of political activism that appears to inform the resolution. Whilst I would again here reiterate the limitations that were placed upon the APA in developing the resolution as a response to a congressional hearing, I still believe it is important to look at what it means to frame the resolution on such terms. One implication is that the identities of same-sex attracted individuals are depicted as focused solely around sexuality, rather than as shaped through a range of identity positions. This leads to statements within the resolution such as:

> People who also experience discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, disability, gender and gender identity, religion, and socioeconomic status may especially benefit from access to marriage for same-sex couples.

The particular understanding of identity promoted in this statement presumes an additive model, whereby individual people are presumed to experience discrimination based on sexuality *plus* discrimination based on race *plus* discrimination based on age, etcetera. This understanding of identity promotes a form of essentialism that fails to understand how these 'axes' are interrelated, and correspondingly, how they may intersect in granting privilege. This approach is common to what has been termed 'identity politics', where rights movements are organised around a singular aspect of identity (e.g., lesbian/gay rights). Whilst such approaches to activism have achieved a great deal over recent decades, they may ultimately fall short of examining how systemic oppression operates, and may do little to explore alternate ways of claiming rights or identities. In this regard, Harris (1995) proposes that:

> The result of essentialism is to reduce the lives of people who experience multiple forms of oppression to addition problems: 'racism + sexism = straight black women's experience', or 'racism + sexism + homophobia = black lesbian experience'. Thus, in an essentialist world, black women's experiences will always be forcibly fragmented before being subjected to analysis, as those who are 'only interested in race' and those who are 'only interested in gender' take their separate slices of our lives (p. 255).

Barnard (2003) provides an excellent elaboration of Harris' point about understanding identities as simultaneous sites of difference, rather than as mere 'problems of addition', where he suggests that:

> In the United States… many contemporary political and theoretical formulations of communitarian subjectivity assume that every identity is merely the accretion of so many other base identities (thus, in popular liberal parlance, a Chicana lesbian is said to be triply oppressed as a women, a Chicana, and a lesbian), a paradigm that denies the specificity of identity and the inseparability of the supposed constituents of a particular identity (Chicana lesbian might be an identity in itself, rather than a conglomeration of other identities). Consequently, this paradigm normalizes the modes of subjectivity privileged by material power relations in a particular cultural-historical moment (to compute Chicana lesbian as the sum of Chicana, women, and lesbian, it to establish heterosexual male Chicanoness, white heterosexual femaleness, and white male gayness as the central identities from which the Chicana lesbian draws her constituent parts) and thus erases the experience of those

who occupy more than one of the canonized subject positions (p. 3).

This quote from Barnard highlights how a compartmentalised understanding of identity (particularly as interpreted within a framework of identity politics) can in effect result in the perpetuation of particular forms of marginalisation. In this respect the APA resolution on same-sex marriage fails to explore multiple *concurrent* points of identification when it represents race, age, gender, etcetera, as isolated from one another. Not only does this fragment the experiences of particular same-sex attracted individuals (as Harris, 1995, suggests), but it also fails to adequately explore how some same-sex attracted individuals (namely those of us who identify as white and middle-class) may experience considerable privilege at the same time as we experience oppression (Riggs, 2006). These would of course be difficult points to address in a resolution aimed at a generalist audience, and for inclusion in congressional hearings. However, I do believe that a shift in focus away from 'equality with', and towards an understanding of the structural disadvantage that currently shapes the lives of same-sex attracted individuals, could have directed the target audience's focus towards these key issues without alienating them.

Finally, the APA resolution does not take heed of a wide range of literature that suggests that concerns about same-sex marriage may actually not be of central importance to same-sex attracted people who experience on a daily basis the oppression that arises from racism or classism (Ahmed, 2004; Weston, 1991). As I will discuss later in the paper, the push for same-sex marriage rights is often the province of white, middle-class lesbians and gay men, a factor that requires considerable attention in relation to its implications for activism (Bernstein, 2001; Riggs, 2005). What I will signal here, however, is that it is important to think about what we are trying to gain by seeking state sanction in the form of marriage rights. Whilst many advocacy groups have drawn attention to the considerable gains that may result from accessing marriage rights, it may also be the case that there are other ways of achieving such gains. Indeed, for many same-sex attracted individuals, using state sanction of our relationships as a means to gaining rights may be quite antithetical to our own politics or family forms (Riggs, 2006; Weston, 1991).

In both this section and the previous one, I have briefly outlined some of the ways in which a reliance upon a liberal framework within the APA resolution on same-sex marriage fails to adequately address 1) heterosexual privilege and the normative status of heterosexuality, 2) the intersections of multiple identifications that shape how we are positioned within society, and 3) the systemic, institutional nature of racism and (hetero)sexism, and the implications of these for changes to the law. In the following section I will further elaborate how issues of privilege and oppression inform debates over same-sex marriage.

Privilege, Oppression and the Same-Sex Marriage Debate

In an early paper on the same-sex marriage debate, Ettelbrick (1989) suggested that whilst for many same-sex attracted people access to marriage may represent a significant gain in regards to rights, there is little possibility that gaining such access will actually change the institution of marriage in any significant way. It is most likely that heterosexual marriage will continue to be held up as the gold standard against which all relationships are measured, the outcome being that certain individuals and relationships will still be denied state sanction (for example, those in polyamorous relationships; see Barker, 2004). The problem that arises, then, from an approach to activism that accepts the terms for belonging as defined in relation to particular norms (especially those surrounding liberal individualism), is that lesbians and gay men (and in particular, white, middle-class lesbians and gay men) are encouraged to accept the incursion of the state upon our lives. Furthermore, those of us who identify as white, middle-class lesbians or gay men may well earn rights to marriage that potentially come at the expense of groups of people who are differentially disenfranchised from state sanction.

For example, and as I alluded to in the previous section, the push for same-sex marriage rights is more often than not an issue that is of primary concern to white lesbians and gay men (see also Bernstein, 2001; Ettelbrick, 1998; Riggs, 2006). Whilst marriage rights may also be of concern to lesbians and gay men who do not identify as white, other intersecting concerns about state racism and its connection to the sanction of

particular bodies may mediate how institutions such as marriage are understood (Weston, 1991). In other words, for those of us who are white, our race privilege may afford us the luxury of focusing primarily on our sexual identities and our rights in regards to sexuality: our race privilege allows us this space.

This point about privilege demonstrates how the category 'lesbian and gay' may itself be seen as exclusionary. In her work on the cultural politics of emotion, Ahmed (2004, p. 148) utilises the metaphor of "sinking into a comfortable chair" to illustrate how the normative status of heterosexuality operates. She suggests that cultural spaces are shaped around heterosexuality, so that, for example, we see billboards featuring heterosexual couples; we see heterosexual couples walking down the street together holding hands, and we hear music and see movies that depict heterosexual lives. This results in public spaces being 'comfortable' for heterosexual individuals.

However, it is important to note that public spaces continue to be 'heterosexualised': lesbian and gay rights campaigns have promoted visibility and awareness, the result being that certain public spaces are 'queered' – they are reshaped to represent the experiences and values of (particular) lesbians and gay men (for example, think of the large gay communities in San Francisco, Pride events and marches that 'reclaim the streets', alongside representations of lesbian and gay identities in television programmes). Yet, whilst such reshapings continue to create a public space for (some) lesbians and gay men, they may also unintentionally perpetuate the exclusion of other groups of people who are not accorded space (e.g., transgender or intersex individuals, those who identify as bisexual or polyamorous etc.). Certain 'queer identities' thus gain privileges that may well come at the expense of others, or which may curtail the rights claims of other groups of people (Riggs, 2006). This point about privilege holds particular implications for the brief analysis of the APA resolution on same-sex marriage that I provided above. The resolution, whilst informed by a particular legal and political context, is nonetheless potentially a tool for oppression as well as liberation. In other words, whilst such resolutions may hold the potential for assisting same-sex attracted individuals in securing rights, they may also ensure the exclusion of certain same-sex attracted individuals from rights. The framework of liberalism (seeking as it does 'equality for all') thus does not necessarily lend itself to actually understanding or valuing the specificities of individual people's experiences: it is instead reduces a broad range of experiences down to a particular dominant narrative of experience. As a result, only certain groups of people are recognised as entitled to rights and privileges; privileges that may come at the expense of others (Phelan, 2001).

These issues of privilege and recognition draw attention again to the problems that often inhere to single-axis identity politics. As I have outlined elsewhere (Riggs, 2005; 2006; Riggs & Riggs, 2004), engaging in forms of activism that privilege any singular form of oppression (e.g., sexuality) may well fail to adequately explore how ongoing histories of oppression shape the ways we conceptualise rights. For example, lesbian and gay rights activism has often failed to engage with sexuality on any terms other than the homo-hetero binary.[1] One example of this is in relation to the rights claims of individuals who identify as transgendered, and the overlaps and disjunctures with lesbian and gay rights claims. Coombs (2001) suggests that the conflation of 'same-sex attraction' with the category 'gay' (for example) can effectively exclude the experiences of individuals who identify as transgendered (see also Hegarty & Chase, 2005, in regards to intersex activism). The challenge that transgenderism presents to the law (in regards to post-operative legal identification and its relationship to marriage) unsettles the homo-hetero binary in ways that lesbian or gay marriage may not. Thus the push for same-sex marriage rights, primarily by white lesbians and gay men, must necessarily engage with these disparities, and the challenges that they present to identity politics. These intersections of privilege and oppression, and their implications for lesbian and gay activism, thus warrant further attention. Exploring the conjunctions of race, gender, sexuality and class may be one strategy for examining how privilege often operates at the expense of oppression,

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[1] Of course this is not to ignore work in the area of queer theory, which takes as its starting place the need to challenge this binary. However, it is also important to recognise that queer theory or activism is often quite different from, or separate to, lesbian/gay law reform.

and what this might mean for same-sex attracted individuals who desire state sanction. In the final section of the paper I elaborate an alternate approach to how activism may look.

Resisting Domestication

Butler's (2002) work on legal sanction, alongside Fox's (1985, 1993) on anarchism, psychology and the law, are incisive for understanding how debates over same-sex marriage may work to 'domesticate' same-sex attracted people. Robson (1992) uses the term 'domesticate' to describe how the experiences of lesbians are made to appear as if they are 'just like' the experiences of heterosexual women. She suggests that domestication can occur when same-sex attracted people accept the terms for belonging offered to us by the state. These terms for belonging often involve a) accepting heterosexual norms, b) marginalising the specific or unique experiences that same-sex attracted individuals may have, and thus c) being willing to accept 'equality with', rather than pushing for fundamental system change. In her work on same-sex marriage, Butler (2002) suggests that:

> The petition for marriage rights seeks to solicit state recognition for nonheterosexual unions, and so configures the state as withholding an entitlement that it really should distribute in a nondiscriminatory way, regardless of sexual orientation. That the state's offer might result in the intensification of normalization is not widely recognized as a problem within the mainstream lesbian and gay movement (p. 16).

Whilst acknowledging the value that access to marriage may hold for some people, Butler is critical of the risk for 'normalisation' (or 'domestication', as Robson would label it), particularly as it may do little to actually destabilise the institution of marriage as one of the foundations of heteronormativity (see also Ettelbrick, 1989). Similarly, Fox (1993) suggests that:

> A radical critique of psychology's links to the status quo, departing from the assumption that law is inherently advantageous, directs our attention to how the law hinders fundamental social change even as it allows more modest liberal reform (p. 237).

Together these two interpretations of state sanction under the law demonstrate how a desire for sanction *on the terms set by the state*

may ultimately serve to further enshrine the existing forms of kinship that are available (and recognised) under heteropatriarchy, rather than creating a space for new ways of understanding ourselves and our relationships with other people (see also Weston, 1991).

In contrast to equal rights approaches to marriage, which accept the framework of liberalism, we may instead focus our attention on reconfiguring how activism may constitute a critique of the very notion of state sanction itself. In his work on marriage and civil rights, Halle (2001) proposes that the work of the Cambridge Lavender Alliance[2] (CLA) may be instructive for understanding how state sanction may be reconfigured in terms that are more conducive to prioritising alternate kinship forms. Halle suggests that the concept of 'state moral minimalism' may be a useful way of both exposing the biases that are inherent to the law (and, I would suggest, to psychology), and for negotiating forms of state-based support that do not require the current high level of state control over family forms. Thus he reports that the CLA resolution on marriage "made no mention of marriage at all; rather, it… required of the state that it withdraw from the regulation of marriage, thereby allowing for a de facto expansion of the parameters of civil society" (p. 388). Such an approach draws attention to the moral judgements that inhere to the law, whilst also suggesting that morality should not be something that is arbitrated by the state.

Such an approach to activism may assist same-sex attracted individuals in refusing the terms set by the state for debates over same-sex marriage. Likewise, to some degree the notion of state moral minimalism may sidestep the problems that arise from further promoting a particular form of marriage-based relationality that will potentially exclude many people and relationships. To return to the APA resolution, then, I would propose that such a resolution need not take a position that involves accepting the terms for recognition set by the state.

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[2] The Cambridge Lavender Alliance (CLA) is the key queer political organisation in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It has a long history of queer activism, and has recently endorsed candidates for election within the US. The CLA has often been particularly forward thinking in its approach to queer politics, as was highlighted in its early position on the push for marriage rights.

Instead, the APA could develop resolutions that start by highlighting the role that both psychology and the state have played in oppressing same-sex attracted individuals. This would allow not only for some reflection on why law reform is needed (i.e., not to gain 'equality with', but because the law is founded upon heterosexual norms that are discriminatory), but would also provide a space within which multiple forms of oppression could be examined in the context of marriage and family law. Such a resolution could, for example, highlight how notions of miscegenation have historically informed marriage laws, and the implications of this for how the law is racialised (Moreton-Robinson, 2004). By starting from a focus on how social norms are produced, and how they exclude or oppress certain groups of people, it may be possible to develop a position on same-sex marriage that need not reinforce liberal notions of 'equality with'.

Likewise, a focus on the multiple effects of the law upon the lives of those who experience oppression may enable white, middle-class lesbians and gay men (amongst others) to explore not only how we experience oppression, but also how we stand to benefit from racialised norms. A resolution framed in this way may focus on how rights are often founded upon the exclusion of certain groups, an approach that would encourage critical examination of how complicity or domestication operate (Riggs, 2006). By understanding rights in a relational (rather than individual) way, it may be easier to conceptualise how privilege is made possible through oppression, and how rights claims represent not the *a priori* entitlements of individuals, but are rather framed by our belonging to particular marginalised or dominant groups (Moane, 2003). Finally, a focus on state moral minimalism may be useful for challenging not only how we see the rights of same-sex attracted individuals, but how we understand the rights of all people: state mandated rights are imposed not only upon same-sex attracted people, but upon all citizens. Rather than focusing on how we can engage with the state in order to gain sanction, we may instead focus on the limitations of state sanction (as it is currently configured) for all people. This may help to challenge the stranglehold that liberal politics hold over how we understand rights. Engaging in analyses of state-based oppression thus need not be considered either a waste of

time, nor the naïve luxury of those who benefit from privilege. Instead, as per Freire's (1972; 1973) seminal work on social activism, we may understand such analyses as central to challenging the heteronormative assumptions surrounding rights that often lead people to petition for rights in ways that may at times do more harm than good.

Conclusions

Throughout this paper I have drawn attention to some of the complex ways in which experiences of privilege intersect with experiences of oppression, and how a desire for state sanction on the terms of liberal individualism can render some same-sex attracted individuals complicit with particular social norms. My brief examination of the American Psychological Association's resolution on same-sex marriage highlights some of the ways in which notions of 'equality with', and their relation to identity politics, may do very little to shift the power bases of white heterosexual dominance. Whilst I have acknowledged the limitations that existed for those who developed the APA resolution, I have also suggested some alternate approaches for formulating such resolutions. The concept of 'state moral minimalism' may be one way of exploring a more limited role for the state in our lives – a role that rather than representing a diminishing of social support, may instead engender supportive communities based on the valuing of difference, rather than the further marginalisation of those who differ from the white, middle-class, heterosexual norm.

The potential for activism within the discipline of psychology is significant, but in my opinion must be informed by a critique of the status quo *from its very foundatio*ns, rather than simply attempting to amend specific laws or advocating for inclusion. Whilst this will be no easy task, and whilst it is no doubt the case that liberal individualism holds considerable sway within psychology, there does nonetheless exist great potential within the discipline for system change, and for radical challenges to be made to how we understand ourselves and our relations to others. Rather than working on the terms set by the state, I would suggest that it is important that the discipline of psychology starts from the terms set by those who experience oppression. Whilst it is of course important that dominant group members challenge their/our privilege, it

is also important that significant space is accorded to examining the biases that inhere to the discipline itself.

To return to Bradley and Selby's (2001) points about the aims of the discipline, then, it may be timely to remember that social change is both always possible, yet always under threat as a result of cooption or domestication. Examining psychology's role in both challenging and perpetuating oppression is an important opportunity for activism within the discipline, and one that may give rise to far more wide-reaching changes than simply gaining 'equality with'.

Acknowledgements

Author Note

Damien Riggs is the Editor of the Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review. He has published two books on queer issue: Priscilla, (white) queen of the desert (Peter Lang, 2006), and Becoming parent: Lesbians, gay men, and family (Post Pressed, 2007). He is currently working on a textbook on LGBTQ psychologies for Cambridge University Press with Victoria Clarke, Elizabeth Peel and Sonja Ellis.

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COMMENT ON DUFFY (2007)

SOPHIE POINTER

The article by Duffey (2007) provides a comprehensive review of Australian adoption and family law as it relates to the needs of same-sex parents. However, I believe the author has underplayed the advances in the recognition of 'homo-nuclear' families by the Family Court in the last 5 years. The author suggests that the Family Court views a same-sex attracted parent "as a risk to a child" (p. 91). Perhaps in the early 90's, and before, this was the prevailing view. However, recent judgements by the Family Court, although few and far between, suggest otherwise. In a recent decision (R & J and Anor (2006) FamCA 1398) Justice Guest again stressed the validity of the homo-nuclear family. In his judgement Justice Guest referred extensively to the findings of *Re Patrick* and went on to say "The family in this case, in addition to A is comprised of the mother and the co-parent whose relationship, now tested with time, sits seamlessly with what I had to say in *Re Patrick*" (R & J and Anor (2006) FamCA 1398 at 14).

While Justice Guest appears to be a lone voice in the wilderness I contend that this has more to do with the extremely low number of same-sex family cases coming before the courts than an example of a single dissenting voice. Other recent cases before the Family Court have upheld the notion that a homo-nuclear family can be in the best interests of a child. For example in *Re Mark* (Re Mark: an application relating to parental responsibilities (2003) FamCA 822) Justice Brown granted a parenting order for the child of two men and in the remarks he stated "I am satisfied it is in Mark's best interests for significant decisions relating to his welfare (for example, those relating to health, education and religion) to be made by both of the people who treat him as their son, and that he can only benefit from their informed involvement in all aspects of his life" (Re Mark: an application relating to parental responsibilities (2003) FamCA 822 at 101).

There is no doubt that Family Court justices and Registrars are subject to their own prejudices, and while they endeavour to provide fearless and frank judgements of the cases before them based on the laws available, the degree of latitude in the interpretation of those laws will always be subject to their own belief systems. In recent years the Family Court has signalled a change from past homophobic views. While it is unfortunate for any family to find themselves in a position of having to engage with the Family Court, same-sex families have a small number of strong supporting judgements recognising and celebrating the strength of the homo-nuclear family on which to base their case.

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BOOK REVIEW

REVIEWED BY SUE KENTLYN

Lesbian Norms: Intersex, Transgender, Intersectional and Queer Perspectives. Edited by Angela Pattatucci Aragón. Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 2006, 270pp., ISBN: 1-56023-645-0.

The Sydney Morning Herald last week reported a case before the South Australian Equal Opportunity Tribunal, in which Tracie O'Keefe, a transgender psychotherapist, lodged a complaint against a lesbian support group called 'Sappho's Party'. She wanted to attend an event in the Adelaide Hills in 2006, but the group has a policy of excluding transgender people because it only supports lesbians who were raised as females from birth. Ms O'Keefe, the paper says, wants an apology. She started living as a woman 35 years ago, at the age of 15, and has had gender reassignment surgery. "I've lived in a lesbian relationship for 14 years with the same woman", Ms O'Keefe said. "I don't get discriminated against in any other part of the gay community" (Price 2007).

The relationship of the T, T and Is[1] with the GLBs[2] has always been complex and contested. The conflation of gender with sexuality issues strikes some as neither logical nor politically expedient. This often rocky relationship has been especially fraught amongst some lesbian groups, especially those with a radical feminist philosophy. Female to Male trans people (F2M) have sometimes been portrayed as traitors to their (female) gender, and Male to Female trans folks (M2F) have been viewed with suspicion, and even outright hostility, as men 'colonising' women's bodies. This attitude was most dramatically expressed in Raymond's notorious statement that "All transsexuals rape women's bodies" (1979), and is perhaps best represented in Australia by the work of Sheila Jeffreys.

This collection of papers arose out of editor Aragón's personal experience of coming out as an intersex person to her lesbian community, and the silencing, marginalisation, and hostility she experienced. Her agenda, however, is not simply to denounce and criticise the lesbian community, but rather to enter into a dialogue

about difference that could serve as grounds for healing and the development of new alliances. The scope and analytic depth of these essays from an impressive range of scholars, researchers, students, activists, and service providers, with diverse perspectives including public health, science and technology, cultural studies, sociology, women's, sexuality, and critical whiteness studies, social work, English, political science, and even the wonderfully-named 'social corporeality', make an insightful and valuable contribution to her project.

The basic premise on which the book is built is that both 'lesbianism' and 'feminism' depend for their legibility and viability on the stable and discrete concept 'woman' as a fundamental identity. This concept is problematised, challenged, and disrupted, both ontologically and experientially, by Intersexed and Trans people, and it is this perceived lack of congruence that underlies the rejection, exclusion, and harassment many such people experience in their efforts to integrate into 'the lesbian community'. The different essays then analyse these themes from a number of standpoints. All are engaging and thought-provoking; a few stood out for me. Coogan looks at the 'specificities in the flesh' and their role in identity, and the border wars involved in policing the boundaries of community in light of this. VanNewkirk interrogates the concept of the 'authentic lesbian' by examining the metanarratives within gay and lesbian community, and the poststructuralist challenge to constricting labels and stable identities. Robinson's meditation on the role of quantifiable identities in the construction of community is very nuanced, and he attempts to construct a new model on the understanding that even the corporeality of the body is dynamic, and *all* identities are a kind of dynamic social discourse. In saying that "no two womyn-born womyn can have the same life experience", he problematises the idea of community as based on fundamental commonalities and acknowledges that increasing human diversity demands new sets of discourses.

The politics of naming is much in evidence. I was struck both by how each writer felt the need to define what they mean by terms like

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[1] Transgender, Transsexual and Intersex
[2] Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual

'transgender', 'transsexual', 'FTM' etc., and the considerable variations in those definitions. This illustrates the problem that the idea of identity as fluid and negotiated poses for language, which may inhere in the nature of language itself. The process of naming seems to foreclose on continuing change; it reifies or fixes whatever is named. I use the term 'politics' advisedly; what challenges me personally the most, as a feminist who became a lesbian as a direct result of a feminist critique of sex and gender politics, is the conflicted and equivocal place I find myself in as a result of the very debates this book elucidates. Feminism taught me to examine myself for evidence of 'false consciousness' – as VanNewkirk says, "Ultimately, everything I do . . . is influenced by a feminist praxis that seeks to unveil and name power structures in order to resist them" (p.82). I am grateful that being a lesbian brought me to love my own body through loving the bodies of other women. Nevertheless, some of these essays challenged me to look honestly at my continuing discomfort with my body and my identity as a 'woman', and my desire to move beyond gender altogether; all of this feels like a betrayal of the very codes that 'liberated' me. The question for me remains, does wanting to change some aspects of your female embodiment necessarily mean a derogation or devaluation of your 'womyn-ness'? The desire that your gender not be readily legible to others, the hope of avoiding being stuck in their stereotypes and accompanying prejudices and preconceptions – are these a betrayal of feminism, a subversion of lesbianism?

My only real difficulty with many of the essays was their apparent assumptions of coherence, the failure to engage with the *existing* multiplicities and inconsistencies within identities and communities. I kept encountering generic terms like, 'lesbian identity', 'lesbian space', 'lesbian feminism', and 'the lesbian community', 'the transgender community', 'the GLBTQ community', and even, 'the feminist movement'! (I believe a more accurate term could be, 'the feminist mêlée'!). Even the title, "Challenging Lesbian Norms" suggests that there *are* lesbian norms – I'd like to ask - Which lesbians? Whose norms? Lesbians who are womyn-born womyn, even, or perhaps especially feminist ones, can experience similar problems in establishing their legitimacy, of exclusion, marginalisation, and prejudice, as transwomen. Essentialist/constructionist; kids/no kids; butch-femme/androgynous;monogamous/polyamorous ;vanilla/bdsm; 2nd wave/3rd wave; urban/suburban; political/apolitical; separatist/inclusionist; christian/pagan/atheist/secular; the fault lines are beyond enumeration. Even the taken-for-granted quality of the inherent conflict between lesbian feminism and trans is problematic. We've all heard the stories such as the one I opened with. However, interviewing thirteen Australian MTF trans lesbians, McDonald found that most of them were welcomed into *lesbian* communities but were grappling with feelings of not belonging to, or alienation from, local *trans* communities. Also noticeably absent were the voices of 'feminist lesbians' who could explain their opposition to trans inclusivity. As Stuart remarks about the movie *Better Than Chocolate*, "there are no characters who voice affection and support for Judy [the M2F character], but would prefer she not participate in particular events" (p. 225). While claiming that "homonormativity acts to fragment lesbian communities into hierarchies of worthiness" (p. 9), Aragón and others have placed lesbians who belong to groups like 'Sappho's Party' at the bottom of the 'hierarchy of worthiness' without allowing them to plead their cause.

That criticism aside, I found the essays in this volume informative, respectful, and nuanced; both intellectually exciting and personally challenging. Anyone with an interest in gender and sexuality, and their role in creating, sustaining, and contesting 'community' will find this book a rich feast. I teach the sociology of gender and sexuality to first year University students, and often find myself distressed by their general level of ignorance and prejudice, but also very heartened by my students' interest, acceptance and sensitivity. This collection reminds me of my own ignorance and prejudices, and challenges me to new levels of awareness, understanding and engagement, with my *own* genders and sexualities, as well as those of others. I can offer no higher praise.

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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS
Special Issue of *Health Sociology Review*

Community, Family, Citizenship and the Health of LGBTIQ People

Guest Editors: Jane Edwards & Damien W. Riggs

Whilst lesbian women, gay men, and bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) people are typically excluded from normative forms of social order, they nonetheless continue to create their own forms of order. These intersections of exclusion and inclusion often result in complex health issues for LGBTIQ communities, particularly in relation to matters concerning families and citizenship. This special issue invites theoretical and empirical papers from across disciplines and theoretical perspectives addressing the following broad topics:

- **What influence do normative and/or re-negotiated understandings of community, family and citizenship have on the health of LGBTIQ people?**

- **How do communities, families and forms of citizenship influence access to health care services among LGBTIQ people?**

- **How are notions of community, family and citizenship deployed in health policy relevant to LGBTIQ health needs?**

- **How do new forms of order within LGBTIQ communities potentially affect health outcomes for marginalised members of such communities?**

Manuscripts should be submitted via email to both editors no later than **28th February, 2008**, and should be between 4000 and 6000 words in length. Enquires and/or manuscripts are encouraged from individuals marginalised by all forms of order, both normative and within LGBTIQ communities.

Authors are invited to contact the guest editors to discuss topics in advance of submission:

Jane.edwards@unisa.edu.au damien.riggs@adelaide.edu.au

Guidelines for preparation of manuscripts:

www.healthsociologyreview.com/author-guidelines.php

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Special Issue *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review*

Mental Health and LGBT Communities

Guest Editors: Lynne Hillier, Jane Edwards and Damien W. Riggs

One of the legacies of the well-known histories associated with the misuse of psychology within LGBT communities is a hesitancy in discussing the mental health of such communities. Such hesitancy is understandable not only in regards to the historical treatment of LGBT people by mental health professionals, but also in relation to ongoing attempts at pathologising same-sex attraction (e.g., in the instance of 'reparative therapies'). Nonetheless, there continues to be a pressing need to examine how issues of mental health shape the lives of members of LGBT communities. This involves examining not only how the mental health professions can support LGBT people experiencing poor mental health, but also how LGBT and heterosexual people/practitioners/communities may celebrate individual LGBT people's/ communities' experiences of positive mental health.

We seek full-length empirical and theoretical papers (5000 words max) and shorter commentary pieces (2000 words max) that address the following (and related) themes and questions:

*Research on the supportive role that LGBT communities play in promoting positive mental health
*Research on the ways in which communities may support individuals in accessing services to address poor mental health
*Accounts of mental health outcomes amongst LGBT people marginalised within LGBT communities around issues of race, class, ethnicity and religion
*Examples of successful community and individual interventions relating to LGBT people
*Research exploring how social norms continue to detrimentally affect LGBT communities and people
*Suggestions for ways to move forward in research on mental health and LGBT people
*Means of promoting mental health practice with and by LGBT people
*Clinical accounts of mental health practice as it is applied to and by LGBT people
*Accounts of mental health/well being amongst Indigenous LGBT communities

The deadline for submissions (maximum 6000 words) is **June 1st 2008** for publication in August 2008. Informal enquires and submissions should be sent to:

Dr Damien W. Riggs
Editor, GLIP Review
damien.riggs@adelaide.edu.au

Submission guidelines at: http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/glip/glip_review

Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review

Preparation, submission and publication guidelines

Types of articles that we typically consider:

A)
• Empirical articles (5000 word max)
• Theoretical pieces
• Commentary on LGBTI issues and psychology

• Research in brief: Reviews of a favourite or troublesome article/book chapter that you have read and would like to comment on

B)
• Conference reports/conference abstracts
• Practitioner's reports/field notes
• Political/media style reports of relevant issues

• Book reviews (please contact the Editor for a list of books available & review guidelines)
• Promotional material for LGBT relevant issues

The Review also welcomes proposals for special issues and guest Editors.

Each submission in section A should be prepared for blind peer-review if the author wishes. If not, submissions will still be reviewed, but the identity of the author may be known to the reviewer. Submissions for blind review should contain a title page that has all of the author(s) information, along with the title of the submission, a short author note (50 words or less), a word count and up to 5 key words. The remainder of the submission should not identify the author in any way, and should start on a new page with the submission title followed by an abstract and then the body of the text. Authors who do not require blind review should submit papers as per the above instructions, the difference being that the body text may start directly after the key words.

Each submission in section B should contain the author(s) information, title of submission (if relevant), a short author note (50 words or less) and a word count, but need not be prepared for blind review.

All submissions must adhere to the rules set out in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (fifth edition), and contributors are encouraged to contact the Editor should they have any concerns with this format as it relates to their submission. Spelling should be Australian (e.g., 'ise') rather than American ('ize'), and submissions should be accompanied with a letter stating any conflicts of interest in regards to publication or competing interests. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum. References should be listed alphabetically by author at the end of the paper. For example:

Journal Articles: Riggs, D.W. (2004). The politics of scientific knowledge: Constructions of sexuality and ethics in the conversion therapy literature. *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review*, 5, 16-24.
Books: Kitzinger, C. (1987). *The social construction of lesbianism.* London: Sage.
Edited Books: Coyle, A. & Kitzinger, C. (Eds.) (2002). *Lesbian & gay psychology: New perspectives*. Oxford: BPS Blackwell.
Book Chapters: MacBride-Stewart, S. (2004). Dental dams: A parody of straight expectations in the promotion of 'safer' lesbian sex. In D.W. Riggs & G.A. Walker (Eds.), *Out in the antipodes: Australian and New Zealand perspectives on gay and lesbian issue in psychology* (pp.393-416). Perth: Brightfire Press.

References within the text should be listed in alphabetical order separated by a semi-colon, page numbers following year. For example:

(Clarke, 2001; Peel, 2001; Riggs & Walker, 2004)
(Clarke, 2002a; b) (MacBride-Stewart, 2004, p. 398)

Authors should avoid the use of *sexist, racist* and *heterosexist language.* Authors should follow the guidelines for the use of non-sexist language provided by the American Psychological Society.

Papers should be submitted in Word format: title bold 14 points all caps left aligned, author 12 points all caps left aligned, abstract 10 points italics justified , article text 10 points justified, footnotes 9 points justified.

All submissions should be sent to the Editor, either via email (preferred): damien.riggs@adelaide.edu.au, or via post: School of Psychology, The University of Adelaide, South Australia, 5005.

Deadlines

January 30 for April edition   May 30 for August edition   September 30 for December edition