Gay but not queer: Toward a post-queer study of sexuality

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In recent years, in the wake of queer theory, the study of sexuality has undergone what some would call a paradigm shift. In disciplines as diverse as comparative literature, history, and Asian-American Studies, queer theory has spread like wildfire, catching the attention of some of the most esteemed scholars throughout the humanities and social sciences.[1] Sociologists, too, have taken notice of this "hot" paradigm, and have sought to integrate a queer critical perspective in social scientific texts, conferences, and research agendas.[2] While not all scholars of sexuality identify themselves as "queer theorists," queer theory exerts a formidable influence in the study of sexuality nonetheless,[3] powerfully reshaping the language, concepts and theoretical concerns of contemporary academic production.

On the whole, the surge of queer theoretical currents over the last decade represents an important turning point in the study of sexuality. Scholars of sexuality frustrated by the limitations of sexological reductionism have profited from the queer turn, gaining a new, fertile theoretical framework in which to reimagine the relationship of sexualities and societies. Sociology, in particular, has stood to benefit from queer theory by adopting a more critical application of conceptions of heterosexual and homosexual "identity" or "community." Rather than conceiving of these as monolithic empirical units of analysis – as points of arrival for our research agendas – sociologists have been challenged to sharpen their analytic lenses, to grow sensitized to the discursive production of sexual identities, and to be mindful of the insidious force of heteronormativity as a fundamental organizing principle throughout the social order.[4] Hence, Stein and Plummer observe four hallmarks of queer theory that echo these conceptual challenges:

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> 1) a conceptualization of sexuality which sees sexual power embodied in different levels of social life, expressed discursively and enforced through boundaries and binary divides; 2) the problematization of sexual and gender categories, and of identities in general. Identities are always on uncertain ground, entailing displacements of identification and knowing; 3) a rejection of civil-rights strategies in favor of a politics of carnival, transgression and parody which leads to deconstruction, decentering, revisionist readings and an anti-assimilationist politics; 4) a willingness to interrogate areas which normally would not seen as the terrain of sexuality, and to conduct "queer" readings of ostensibly heterosexual or non-sexualized texts.[5]

Taken together, these hallmarks represent a critical intervention in the study of sexuality. From the standpoint of a radical deconstructionism (hallmarks one and two) and a subversive sexual politics (hallmarks three and four), queer theorists set out to "interrogate" cultural production (e.g., cinema, photography, literature), social practices (e.g., public sex, promiscuity, S/M, identity politics) and public health policy (e.g., AIDS prevention). This "interrogation" contests the epistemological ground upon which sexology is based by politicizing discourses of "normality" and normative gender or sexuality throughout the social order. Turning the queer lens on texts, subjectivities, social practices, public policies, and moral panics, queer theorists complete their critical task, exposing "queer" cracks in the heteronormative façade (i.e., "queering"), and "decentering" those regimes of "normality" that bear on the sexual and gender status quo.

Yet, despite its laudable ambition and broad academic appeal, queer theory tends to lapse into a discursively burdened, textual idealism that glosses over the institutional character of sexual identity and the shared social roles that sexual actors occupy. This elision plagues the queer project by creating a theoretical cataract that permits only a dim view of the contribution of the "social" to the sexual. As a consequence, queer theory constructs an undersocialized "queer" subject with little connection to the empirical world and the sociohistorical forces that shape sexual practice and identity.

Applied to the study of sexuality, this theoretical shortcoming is particularly problematic in two ways. First, by rejecting categories of sexual orientation (i.e., gay and straight), queer theory obscures the ways in which sexological classifications are embodied in institutions and social roles – thereby underestimating straight and gay difference. Yet, secondly, by neglecting those social roles that both heterosexuals and homosexuals occupy, queer theory obscures processes of social-

ization that cut across sexual orientation – thereby overestimating straight and gay difference. In fact, an ample historical and sociological literature has documented the ways in which the sexological construction of heterosexuality and homosexuality has brought gays and lesbians together in shared communities and political struggles;[6] but also, the ways in which such categories mask social characteristics common to heterosexual and homosexual actors.[7]

Objections to queer theory are not wholly unknown in the social sciences.[8] Seidman, for instance, takes issue with the tendency of queer theorists to deteriorate into a vulgar anti-identity politics.[9] And Edwards uses the work of two queer theorists to highlight the limitations of textual analysis in the study of sexuality.[10] These essays provide critical insights on their respective topics, yet they tend to be metatheoretical in their orientation or analytically delimited to the political arena. Hence, a systematic examination of queer theory as it applies to concrete historical and empirical cases has yet to be performed.

In what follows, I identify two strains of queer theory and apply these to historically specific cases of homosexuality. I show that the first strain of queer theory – "*radical deconstructionism*" – superimposes a postmodern self-concept onto the homosexual subject, thereby glossing over the enduring institutional organization of sexuality; I show that the second strain of queer theory – "*radical subversion*" – superimposes a politically marginal self-concept onto the homosexual subject, thereby grossly oversimplifying complex developmental processes attendant to sexual identification. Taken together, these deficiencies have the ironic effect of erasing the homosexual actors in these studies, either by contesting the epistemological grounds upon which their sexual identities are formed (in the first strain), or by inventing a transcendental queer that exists outside of culture and social structure (in both strains). From this analysis, I propose a reenergized sociological presence in the study of sexuality that recognizes the limits of poststructuralism and makes central the role of institutions and socialization – i.e., the "social" – in shaping the "sexual."

Toward this end, I begin by distilling two strains of queer theory and defining their central tenets. I treat each strain individually in separate sections, comparing the claims of its most senior theorists against data from existing sociological and historical research. A discussion section explores the theoretical implications of this analysis and proposes a "post-queer" study of sexuality that incorporates the critical insights of

queer theory while maintaining the grounded footing of empirical sociology. I conclude by reiterating the pivotal theoretical problem that produces both flawed strains of queer theory, and underscore the necessity of a more effective sociological intervention in the study of sexuality. Ultimately, I argue, if scholars of sexuality are to account for erotic subjectivities, practices and communities, they must more fully engage the social landscape in which erotic actors are situated.

It should be noted that while not all texts circulating as "queer theory" will necessarily advance the same critical claims, I examine essays below that are consistent with the four hallmarks outlined by Stein and Plummer and are considered canonical work in queer theory. Hence, these essays should be seen as paradigmatic examples of queer theory; their shortcomings are not unique to this work, but rather represent systematic theoretical flaws at the core of the queer project.

Radical deconstructionism (strain 1)

In its current incarnation, queer theory is less a formal theory with falsifiable propositions than a somewhat loosely bound, critical standpoint. Defined against the grain of lesbian and gay studies, two interrelated strains of queer theory run through the contemporary sexuality literature. The predominant strain of queer theory – what I refer to as *radical deconstructionism* – embraces a social constructionist project seeded by French post-structuralism and Lacanian psychoanalysis. Scholars of this variety draw from Foucault,[11] challenge the scientific basis of sexual identity and reduce sexual classifications (e.g., heterosexuality, homosexuality) to the effects of discourse.[12] These sexological classifications are thought to constitute the foundation of a powerful and insidious "regime" of social control that disciplines the body and psyche. Taxonomies of sexual orientation – created by nineteenth- and twentieth-century psychiatry, psychoanalysis, sexology, and the criminal justice system – have been used in the service of oppression and social control. Indeed, the very concept of a lesbian or gay identity is understood to be a fictitious product of modern hegemonic forces. Moreover, sexual categories ignore the plasticity of eroticism and obscure erotic subjectivities that accrue by race, class and gender. For instance, Halperin writes that the category "homosexual" is a "discursive and homophobic construction that has come to be misrecognized as an object under the epistemological regime known as realism." [13] In this vein, queer theorists object to the use of sexual classifications as a

unit of analysis on epistemological and political grounds, and call for a shift in the study of homosexuality from an examination of lesbian and gay identities and communities to a deconstruction of unified concepts of sexual identity and subjectivity. Hence, radical deconstructionism pulls the "lesbian" and "gay" out of the study of lesbians and gays.

The rejection of classifications of sexual orientation pits queer theory against the core units of analysis in lesbian and gay studies, i.e., the lesbian and gay individual, history and community. Nowhere is this position more clearly stated (and in turn, cited) than in the work of Judith Butler, one of queer theory's most celebrated foremothers. Noting her objection to "lesbian" and "gay" designations, and "lesbian theories" and "gay theories," Butler writes that she is not at ease "with lesbian theories, gay theories, for ... identity categories tend to be instruments of regulatory regimes whether as the normalizing categories of oppressive structures or as the rallying points for a liberatory contestation of that very oppression." [14] Butler goes on to argue that heterosexuality itself is an impossible imitation – a compulsory performance that is doomed to failure. As a consequence of this ontological failure, Butler suggests that categories of sexuality and gender are merely the products of straight men and women "panicked" over the uncertainly of their heterosexuality.[15] She writes:

> ...(H)eterosexuality is always in the process of imitating and approximating its own phantasmatic idealization of itself – and failing. Precisely because it is bound to fail, and yet endeavors to succeed, the project of heterosexual identity is propelled into an endless repetition of itself. Indeed, in its efforts to naturalize itself as the original, heterosexuality must be understood as a compulsive and compulsory representation that can only produce the effects of its own originality; in other words, compulsory heterosexual identities, those ontologically consolidated phantasms of "man" and "woman," are theatrically produced effects that posture as grounds, origins, the normative measure of the real.[16]

Drawing from psychoanalytic discourse, Butler theorizes that gender and sexual identification are only provisional intrapsychic compromises or "melancholic incorporations" that result from a much earlier psychic loss or separation. Consequently, categories of sexuality grossly oversimplify the deep-seated ambivalence attendant to any form of sexual identification. Hence Butler deconstructs and dismisses "gay" and "lesbian" identity:

> Such a consideration of psychic identification would vitiate the possibility of any stable set of typologies that explain or describe something like gay or lesbian identities. And any efforts to supply one ... suffer from simplification, and conform, with alarming ease, to the regulatory requirements of diagnostic epistemic regimes.[17]

Butler is not content, however, with challenging the epistemic grounds upon which scholars of sexuality invoke categories of sexual orientation. Instead, Butler warns that the articulation of the concept of sexual orientation and its attachment to sexual practices serves to support compulsory systems of gender and sexuality, adding to their tenacity and regulatory capacities.

> If a regime of sexuality mandates a compulsory performance of sex, then it may be only through that performance that binary systems of gender and the binary system of sex come to have intelligibility at all. It may be that the very categories of sex, of sexual identity, of gender are produced or maintained in the effects of this compulsory performance, effects which are disingenuously renamed as causes, origins, disingenuously lined up within a causal or expressive sequence that the heterosexual norm produces to legitimate itself as the origin of all sex.[18]

Butler's objections to sexual classifications and to the academic field built upon them – lesbian and gay studies – are echoed throughout queer theory. These objections are crystallized in the term "queer," which signals a critical distance from sexual categories and identities. Extended to the political sphere, Halperin makes the following observations regarding the dissolution of identity politics and associated ethnic models of mobilization:

> ... I think what the shift away from a liberation model of gay politics reflects is a deepened understanding of the discursive structures and representational systems that determine the production of sexual meanings, and that micromanage individual perceptions, in such a way as to maintain and reproduce the underpinnings of heterosexual privilege.[19]

And Jagose punctuates this radical deconstructionist perspective when she writes: "Given the extent of its commitment to denaturalization, queer itself can have neither a foundational logic nor a consistent set of characteristics." [20]

Despite the intellectually seductive character of denaturalization, there exists a robust literature on lesbian and gay histories that cannot be captured, let alone understood, using this radical deconstructionist framework. For instance, Esther Newton's ethnography of lesbian

communities in Cherry Grove, Fire Island, makes a strong case for keeping categories of sexual orientation at the forefront of our analyses, even as her research complicates these same concepts. Examining lesbian summer migration to the Island over a period of sixty years, Newton outlines the futility of invoking monolithic notions of "*the* lesbian community."[21] Throughout its history, Cherry Grove was home to at least three distinct groups of lesbians. The "Ladies," "Dykes" and "Postfeminists" were distinguished by their generation, class and ethnic backgrounds. Whereas the Ladies were typically from the middle and upper-middle classes, with either highly lucrative professional careers or inherited wealth, the Dykes were decidedly less affluent, coming from mostly working class, Jewish and Italian neighborhoods. So too, whereas the Dykes identified first and foremost with the male homosexual community on the island, the Postfeminists had no such identification and more commonly engaged in heterosexual conventions, including donning makeup, stylish clothes, and in some cases, building families. Yet the variety of social cleavages that these women represent did not make the significance of their shared sexual orientation any less consequential. Quite the contrary, women who invested in and traveled to Cherry Grove were first and foremost responding to the sexual organization of their societies. It was only because lesbian sexuality would have marginalized the Ladies from their native WASP communities, or the Dykes from their native Jewish and Italian communities, that Cherry Grove exists. For these women, categories of sexual orientation were not simply floating discursive forms, but were concretely embodied in institutions (e.g., marriage and kinship) and informal structures of social control (e.g., daily interactions with their native heterosexual peers and coworkers) that compelled their sexual identification and their summer migration to the Island. Hence, despite their diversity, Fire Island lesbians developed a self-concept, and in turn, a community, congruent with classifications of sexual orientation. As Newton observes: "Since at least the turn of the century and perhaps earlier, women in Western cultures have formed named groups based on self-conscious, nominally exclusive sexual orientation..."[22]

Taken in this light, the deconstructionist vision set forth by Butler, Halperin, Jagose, and other prominent queer theorists poses serious problems for an academic study of sexuality, as it glosses over the enduring institutional character of sexual orientation. Epistemological regimes that map the sexual are not simply the isolated property of sexologists, but rather are fundamentally constitutive of the organiza-

tion of social life. This insight may lead logically to a particular set of *political* strategies – as in the staging of opposition to "normalizing" social forces and a transgressive, queer "politics of the disruptive gesture" [23] – but it fails as an adequate lens for understanding sexual identity. Even if we accept that categories of sexual orientation are invented, the fact of social construction by itself does not make a given cultural artifact (e.g., "gay," "masculinity") less salient in organizing self-understandings than a "natural" characteristic. On the contrary, social constructions, as that of gender or sexuality, may exhibit an extraordinary capacity to shape identities, sexual interactions, social movements and political histories as a whole. As Butler herself affirms, gender identity – if even a strategic fiction – is not simply taken up or discarded at will: "There is no volitional subject behind the mime who decides as it were, which gender it will be today." [24] Hence Butler's own analysis of gender provides a useful example of the way in which a socially constructed element may play a central role in structuring identity and social practice, even in spite of deconstructionist feminist analyses and one's own inevitable performative failings.

By analogy, the hetero/homo classificatory scheme, much like the binary gender system, operates as a ubiquitous and constitutive dimension of Western society embodied in institutions and social roles. This does not mean that sexual orientation – any more than gender identity – is necessarily rooted in biology or other transhistorical human processes. Rather, the implication is that categories of sexual orientation have material significance apart from their etiology. As David Greenberg notes,

> [T]he epistemological observation that alternative systems of classifying people are possible has little relevance to those who are now classified as homosexual.... The modern Western system of sexual classification is embodied in social identities, roles, institutions, and ways of life that can hardly be abolished by an arbitrary act of will.[25]

Drawing from sociological phenomenology, Greenberg recognizes the significance of classificatory paradigms while bracketing the issue of their "truth." [26] In this approach, the source of sexual orientation, be it discursive or organic, is irrelevant. Hence, Greenberg is able to map the social production of identity without getting lost in the Butlerian conundrum of "origins" verses "effects." Applied to the study of homosexuality, Greenberg's phenomenological social constructionism highlights the institutional and cultural contexts in which identities are constructed and experiences produced. His analysis makes it clear

that the hetero/homo classificatory system is not less important to our scholarship, *but more*, as we map the social mechanisms that produce the "modern sexual regime" and its effects in structuring identity and experience. To be sure, Butler is right in arguing that sexual categories cannot adequately capture erotic plasticity in the human species in any historical era, let alone our own – but to be a powerful organizing social force they do not need to. Labeling-interactionists recognized this general point decades ago in their work on a wide range of deviant phenomena. Schur, for instance, analyzed the inferior position of women using the labeling perspective, and demonstrated the ways in which classifications of gender were socially constructed and embodied in institutions and social roles that benefited men; and Goffman outlined processes of minstrelization that led the stigmatized to conform to their deviant identities.[27] This latter enterprise has a forty-year history in sociology, and its core tenets tend to reappear in this strain of queer theory with little reference to its scholarly past. Although surely it could be argued that the investigation of sexual categories as an axis of social organization represents a unique application of labeling-interactionist theory, its novelty would derive from the particularity of its focus rather than the substance of its theoretical insights.

In fact, we have good reason to keep the hetero/homo binary at the center of our research agendas, given the wide range of lesbian and gay identities, networks and communities that have been uncovered in the last three decades of sexuality scholarship. Like Newton's research, this body of historical and social scientific work makes it clear that sexual classifications have had an enormous impact on shaping the experience of homosexuals. In the twentieth and now twenty-first centuries, men and women of the Western world who feel sexual attraction for same-sex partners encounter a massive conceptual and institutional apparatus around which their social, sexual and political lives orbit. From childhood forward, local community attachments and informal structures of social control intervene in the project of becoming sexual, transmitting and enforcing classifications of sexual orientation across the life-course. In this context, homosexual actors have been and will continue to be influenced fundamentally by sexological classifications as they develop a self-concept,[28] engage in sexual practices,[29] maneuver in and out of the closet,[30] encounter homophobia,[31] negotiate stigma,[32] confront HIV/AIDS,[33] participate in and observe local and national political events and religious struggles,[34] and exist within or alongside gay communities.[35] Indeed, in the information age, we can expect the impact of categories of sexual orienta-

tion to be *ever more far reaching*, as various media transmit and reproduce the sexological epistemology that undergirds Western conceptions of the erotic across the globe.[36]

What's more, because the effects of classifications of sexual orientation are confined neither to sexological texts nor gay summer resorts, we deconstruct these at our peril. Regardless of how they self-identify, sexual actors know this intuitively every time they walk into or out of a gay bar, or hold hands with their same-sex partner in a public venue, or relay quietly details of the same-sex date they had the former evening to a friend in a restaurant flanked by heterosexual couples, families, or worse yet, teenage males. Indeed, even as an individual gay man will intellectually apprehend the epistemological limitations of sexological classifications and their central historical role as a disciplining apparatus, it will do him no good to cite Butler when confronted with a pack of gay bashers, (or a homophobic landlord or employer), and protest that his identity is multiple and unstable, thus exempting him from the ensuing beating (or discrimination).

Finally, though sexual orientation intersects with class, race, ethnic and gender standpoints, it does not follow that sexological categories are less *analytically* valuable in understanding the erotic lives and subjectivities of sexual actors. All social classifications by their nature are reifications that "force the flux of reality into schemata, overlooking or ignoring some perceivable differences."[37] Ironically, the same deconstructionist logic that would have sociologists do away with sexual classifications would also require the rejection of race, class, ethnic and gender categories – the very social contingencies that queer theory purports to foreground. Indeed, we can't have our analytic cake and eat it too. If we want to incorporate social contingency in the study of sexuality, we cannot selectively dismiss from the outset the salience of those categories that don't agree with our political sensibilities. Rather, we must capture contingency as it arises through the prism of distinct social standpoints.

In short, classifications of sexual orientation have been shown to possess an active, enduring, and consequential presence in contemporary Western societies that must be grappled with by scholars of sexuality. Theorizing transcendence from these may animate innovative political movements and inspire a heightened level of categorical scrutiny in lesbian and gay scholarship, but cannot replace social scientific projects that map the historical presence and experience of

gay identities and communities and the social forces that propel them into existence. As Esther Newton concludes, "No deconstructionist theory yet has persuaded me that what I see as an anthropologist and live as a human being – gay communities – don't or shouldn't exist." [38]

Radical subversion (strain 2)

A second, related strain of queer theory – what I refer to as *radical subversion* – targets homosexuality and other non-heteronormative practices, identities, and representations as sites of queer subversion. In this formulation, the very fact of non-heterosexual desire connotes transgression and rebellion. Doty, for instance, writes that "queer" is "a term which marks a flexible space for the expression of all aspects of non- (anti-, contra-) straight cultural production and reception." [39] Yet what is "queer" is not limited to the overtly marginal; indeed, queer theorists locate "queerness" throughout cultural production, and sometimes in places one would least likely suspect. Sedgwick, for instance – perhaps the most highly esteemed and widely recognized queer theorist – analyzes Henry James's *Notebooks* on the importance of memory for literary creation, and finds instead hidden themes of anality and fisting (i.e., rectal penetration by a fist).[40] Similarly, Doty examines the sitcom *Laverne and Shirley*, arguing that the show's central concern is with lesbianism.[41] In these "queer" readings, both queer theorists claim to have recovered repressed homoeroticism, thus bringing sexual marginality to the foreground.

In the spirit of subversion, this second strain of queer theory conceives of homosexuality as an open challenge to the normative sexual and gender order.[42] Because the sexuality of homosexuals is marginal, their erotic practices are disruptive to the social order. Hence Bronski conceives of gay men as sexual outlaws: "Gay men have learned how to use our sexuality as a social marker, as a disruption of the social and sexual status quo, and as a way to make our presence felt in the world".[43] In these cases, subversion of heterosexuality, gender identity and other "regimes of the normal" is thought to ensue from homosexuality, with far reaching consequences for the social order. In effect, queer theorists scratch a homosexual and find a disruptive queer.

While queer theorists are certainly right to suggest that homosexuals occupy a marginal location in the social order, social cleavages can hardly be captured by sexual dimensions alone. At the institutional

level, for instance, homosexuals encounter a wide range of social structures that incorporate them within various "regimes of the normal." Indeed, just as sexual categories will structure self-understandings and the formation of sexual communities, so they may also obfuscate social cleavages that cut across categories of sexual orientation. As Escoffier argues:

> (B)eing queer does not necessarily mean that one can escape other institutionalized social identities. The discursive formations that shape the queer, the homosexual, and the sexual perversions do not stand alone. They are embedded in a whole network of discursive processes that generate a spectrum of American social identities – racial, gendered, religious, regional, ethnic, and generational.[44]

In fact, the relationship between sexual identity and subjectivity is enormously complex and highly variable. Even as we recognize the structuring effects of sexual categories, we would be wrong to assume that homosexual desire by itself can be characterized as or representative of a "queer" identity. Yet this assumption is a common thread uniting much of what is called queer theory and is made literally evident by the use of "gay" and "queer," "gay culture" and "queer culture" as interchangeable signifiers in queer texts, conferences, and discourse.[45] While some queer theorists make an effort to distinguish "gay" and "queer,"[46] queer theorists more often treat "queer" as a subversive subject-position that all homosexuals may claim for themselves.

For instance, in the introduction to the seminal queer text, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, Michael Warner equates "queer" with "homosexual" and situates lesbian and gay identities in opposition to "regimes of the normal."[47] Warner then goes on to argue that queer, by definition, implies an articulated, self conscious challenge to "regimes of the normal." Warner's queer not only defies sexological classifications, but also exhibits an extraordinarily radical self-concept and a sweeping, synthetic political sensibility. He writes:

> Every person who comes to a queer self-understanding knows in one way or another that her stigmatization is connected with gender, the family, notions of individual freedom, the state, public speech, consumption and desire, nature and culture, maturation, reproductive politics, racial and national fantasy, class identity, truth and trust, censorship, intimate life and social display, terror and violence, health care, and deep cultural norms about the bearing of the body. Being queer means fighting about these issues all of the time, locally and piecemeal, but always with consequences. It means being

> able, more or less articulately, to challenge the common understanding of what gender difference means, or what the state is for, or what "health" entails, or what would define fairness, or what a good relation to the planet's environment would be. Queers do a kind of practical social reflection just in finding ways of being queer.[48]

Warner's invocation of "queer" is problematic in a number of ways, not least because it is uncertain exactly to whom or what his "queer" refers. In some instances, "queer" and "lesbians and gays" are invoked interchangeably,[49] while in other instances "queer" seems to represent a metaphoric epistemological position.[50] This muddy application of "queer" lets Warner in one moment move beyond theoretical abstraction to engage gay subjectivity, but in the next moment to retreat to a definition of "queer" that represents not an actual subject, but a theoretical location at the margins of the social order. Thus, in some instances "queer" is invoked as a discreet subject-position that describes and distinguishes a particular individual or group with empirically identifiable characteristics – not unlike race or gender – while in other instances "queer" is used to represent not a unit of analysis in the material world, but an analytic strategy or epistemological position. These protean uses of "queer" lend themselves to very different applications and lines of inquiry, and their conflation makes human action and order the concern of queer theory, while at the same time insulating it from social scientific accountability.

For the purpose of the present critique, I want to focus on the formulation that defines queer as a distinct subject-position (i.e., "gay," "lesbian," or marginal sexual actor). Using Warner's text as an example, queer is distilled from so many regimes of the normal – fossilizing these in a static opposition – that one wonders if such a subject exists at all, let alone with any great frequency. In fact, lesbians and gay men have been found to occupy nearly all social cleavages and to advocate a wide range of political positions (for instance, consider the now popular gay republicans, pro-life gays, or gays for Christ). No matter how much we might wish that sexual minorities would constitute a revolutionary vanguard – aligning their identities and erotic desires with the rarified considerations of queer and gay liberation discourse – there is little empirical evidence that sexual actors engage in sexual identification with such a savvy political sensibility or sophisticated self-concept.

Quite the contrary, scholars of sexuality have long documented the ways in which homosexual and heterosexual individuals draw from

similar social roles available to them in a given historical period.[51] In this literature, the development of homosexual identity is understood to emerge as an embedded social product bearing the mark of socialization processes. For instance, if we consider gender as an axis of social organization, it is not difficult to see that when gay men exhibit a highly gendered affect, or appropriate masculine iconography in their erotic fantasies, or develop a gendered self-concept, they actively draw from constructions of masculinity and femininity that hold currency in the course of local social exchange. Yet, so too, the violation of dominant social codes – as when homosexual men engage in practices deemed "unnatural" for their gender – is no more certainly indicative of subversion. As I show below, such practices can have a multitude of causes and effects that do not lend themselves so readily to the spectacular subversion promised by queer theory. Indeed, the theoretical notion that marries subversion to sexual marginality, either as an intentional component of gay subjectivity or as an unintended effect, may represent a gross oversimplification of more complex social processes.

Martin Levine's fascinating ethnography of the gay clone culture of Manhattan in the 1970s and 1980s makes clear the ways in which queer theory fails to capture the identities and developmental processes that accrue from sexual marginality.[52] His empirical research demonstrates the fluidity of gender constructions across sexual orientation and the ways in which heterosexual and homosexual eroticism can take similarly structured forms. "Clones" refer to gay male subjects within urban centers in the 1970s and 1980s who were characterized by a cookie-cutter masculine style and affect that earned them their title. The prevalence of the clone and his tenacious commitments to masculinity raised the question of gender identity development among members of nontraditional, sexually marginal communities. Building on Simon and Gagnon's social constructionist model, Levine set out to explain the clone phenomenon, and brought to the foreground the fact that preheterosexual and prehomosexual boys undergo the same ranges of gender socialization. This allowed Levine to make sense of patterns in the sexual strategies and practices of the clone by linking these with the larger universe of gendered meanings. Overall, Levine illuminated a process by which hegemonic constructions of masculinity are internalized in early phases of socialization that come to structure the erotic practices and ideation of straight *and* gay men. He writes:

> The lack of anticipatory socialization for male homosexuality in our culture signified that men who eventually became gay experienced essentially the

> same erotic socialization as men who grew up to be straight. Socialization agents taught both prehomosexual and preheterosexual youths the dictates of the male sexual script. Consequently, gay men acquired a recreational erotic code that held that sex was objectified, privatized, and phallocentric, and an arena for demonstrating manly prowess.[53]

As a consequence of masculine socialization, gay men were found to reproduce traditional gender norms and practices in the construction of masculine personas and presentational strategies.

> ...(T)hese men usually fashioned themselves after such archetypically masculine icons as body builders and blue collar workers, and commonly wore work boots, flannel shirts, and button-up Levis and had gym bodies, short haircuts, and mustaches or beards.[54]

Additionally, the clone would enact and perpetuate a hegemonic male sexual script through hyper-masculinized, anonymous, and objectified sexual repertoires.

> A rough uninhibited, phallocentric form of sexuality characterized tricking among clones. Tricking frequently involved... vigorously jamming the penis completely down the throat, which frequently caused gagging or choking. Anal intercourse usually entailed strenuously ramming the penis entirely up the anus while painfully slapping the buttocks.[55]

Thus, the social identities, sexual practices, and affective makeup of the clone served in many respects to reiterate and consolidate the gender system, and were constituted by dominant meanings of masculinity acquired within heteronormative communities. As faithful erotic missionaries of masculinity, the clone developed within and internalized the gendered semiotics of the heterosexual world, transposing and magnifying these in local interactions. As Kimmel has noted: "They [gay men] are not 'perverts' or 'deviants' who have strayed from the norms of masculinity.... They are, if anything, over-conformists to destructive norms of male behavior." [56] Hence, the gay clone has been said to be not less masculine, but perhaps, *more* masculine than his heterosexual counterparts – hardly the stuff of a transgressive queer.

Yet even when gay men or women appropriate overtly "deviant" presentational styles or gender identifications, this deviation does not by itself indicate subversion. Chauncey's turn-of-the-century New York fairy makes this point eminently clear.[57] The fairy was a working-class homosexual man who enjoyed sex with other, hyper-masculine, working-class men – i.e., "trade." As "inverts," the fairies displayed overtly

effeminate characteristics, including flamboyant dress and speech, rouged lips, bleached hair, and sexual receptivity during anal intercourse. While fairies represented a negative reference point against which "normal" men constructed masculine identities, they nonetheless came to their own self-identification through a process of assimilation. Becoming a fairy was marked by the adoption of prevailing constructions of gender that channeled working-class homosexual men into particular sexual roles and gender identifications consistent with late nineteenth century New York society. Chauncey writes:

> The prominence of the fairy in turn-of-the-century New York and his consistency with the hegemonic gender ideology of the era made him the dominant – and most plausible – role model available to boys and men trying to make sense of vague feelings of sexual and gender difference. *The model of the fairy offered many men a means of constructing public personas they considered more congruent with their "inner natures" than conventional masculine ones, but that were also consistent with the terms of the dominant gender culture in which they had been socialized and that had, therefore, helped constitute those 'inner natures.*" Taking on the role of the fairy, that is, allowed them to reject the kind of masculinity prescribed for them by the dominant culture, but to do so without rejecting the hegemonic tenets of their culture concerning the gender order.[58]

Chauncey's work suggests that even as the fairy was situated at the margins of the New York, turn-of-the-century social order, his identification as a gender invert and the affective and sexual practices that would follow were derivative of dominant gender ideologies. Moreover, "normal" men of the working classes used the body of the fairy (for anal intercourse) and his flamboyant affect as a reference point against which a stronger masculine identity was forged. Rather than disrupting the logic of gender and sexuality, the fairy demonstrates the mobility of hegemonic social roles and gender ideologies, and their subsequent impact in shaping the lives and sensibilities of homosexual men (and those around them). Then, the fairy did less to contest the terms of gendered "regimes of the normal" than to internalize and reproduce ideological constructions that linked homosexuality to gender inversion. Not only did fairies draw from the dominant culture in the invention of a homosexual self, but they did so in a manner that would consolidate rather than destabilize the gender identities of the "trade" with whom they had contact.

Chauncey's fairy, like Levine's clone, serves to illustrate the fluidity of boundaries between "straight" and "gay" realms and the inapplicability of notions of queer/dominant, and margin/center in capturing homo-

sexual identities and practices. Their work makes it clear that we cannot retrospectively assign to homosexual identities and practices a political intentionality, a radically marginal developmental process, or a disruptive effect, finding everything gay to be queer and subversive, and everything straight to be dominant and hegemonic. Unfortunately, despite the political appeal of locating subversive queers who defy "regimes of the normal" or upset their stability, such a project is likely to miss the complex developmental processes attendant to sexual marginality – processes that do not confound the logic of heteronormativity, but bear fundamentally its markings. Indeed, gay men are certainly not straight; but then, they are also not necessarily queer.

Toward a post-queer study of sexuality

To be sure, queer theory promises to enrich and build upon more traditional sociological scholarship as researchers of sexuality refine even further their analyses of the complex relationships between gender, sexuality, society and history. What's more, queer theorists are right when they level critical challenges to sociological discourse and its tendencies to employ crude, reductive conceptions of gay and lesbian "identity" or "community" as monolithic empirical units of analysis. Nonetheless, the queer project suffers from an underdeveloped analysis of the contribution of the social to the sexual. This theoretical shortcoming runs through both strains of queer theory, and cannot be rectified without a vigorous sociological intervention.

So what might a study of sexuality that incorporates the criticism of queer theory while maintaining the grounded footing of empirical sociology look like? Is queer theory too theoretically distanced in its focus, too utopian in its substance to be of much use in a scientific study of sexuality? Or, conversely, is the scientific study of sexuality too rigidly structured in reified social categories, too fixated on social reproduction rather than social change to be commensurable with a radical queer enterprise?

Surely it is too soon to know the direction that sexuality scholars will take in negotiating these crosscutting currents. Yet, there is a promising "post-queer" stream of work within sexuality scholarship – one that brings to bear the categorical scrutiny of queer theory on concrete, empirical case studies – that may serve as the promising start to a more synthetic research agenda. For instance, as observed above,

Newton demonstrates the crude reductionism of sexual categories while explicating their global significance for generations of lesbians on Cherry Grove.[59] Pronger excavates the centrality of masculinity for the male homoerotic imaginary while highlighting its ironic interruption in the play of gay sex.[60] And Dowsett develops a "practice-based" theory of sexuality that examines complex and varied processes of sexual identity development, but always in reference to the cultural and institutional embodiment of sexual categories, including the unique opportunities (and constraints) that attend sexual identifications.[61]

Yet perhaps the most developed example of a post-queer enterprise can be found in Connell's analysis of masculinity.[62] Using the life-history method, Connell analyzes the biographies of Australian men from a variety of class backgrounds. His work makes clear the inadequacies of both strains of queer theory even as it uncovers subtle disruptions in sexual and gender identity development. Contrary to radical deconstructionism, Connell finds that homosexual men often seek out and forge vital attachments to gay community institutions that embody classifications of sexual orientation (e.g., gay bars and baths). They recognize and negotiate their homosexual identities through strategic career choices, controlled disclosures among homophobic associates, and "coming-in" to existing gay milieu through investments in gay networks.[63] Moreover, Connell observes that in the lives of his subjects, sexological categories serve less as instruments of regulation and social control than as the foundation for conditions of freedom. In short, sexological categories have an active, liberating and enduring role in structuring the life histories of homosexual men.

Furthermore, contrary to radical subversion, Connell notes the marked masculine styles of many of his "very straight gay" subjects. These men show strong commitments to masculinity in their own presentational strategies and personal affect, but also in that of their object-choices. These are men who eroticize not simply "a-body-with-penis," but rather, "embodied masculinity."[64] Moreover, far from aligning themselves with a feminist politics – let alone a radical queer agenda – Connell's men are largely apolitical, with little understanding of or identification with feminist goals. In short, "there is no challenge to the gendered order here."[65] Indeed, Connell's "very straight gay" men are a far cry from radical queers.

Yet Connell's men are not simply homosexual men who identify with sexological categories, exhibit a masculine affect, and eroticize "em-

bodied masculinity." Their life histories demonstrate patterned "crisis tendencies" that are embedded in the wider social structure. With one foot in the clutches of institutionalized hegemonic masculinity and the other floating in the quick-sand of sexual marginality, these homosexual men do not simply reproduce the social order, but uneasily, clumsily, and often unwittingly rework it in the process of their daily lives. There is no spectacular disruption here, but neither is there wholesale rearticulation. Rather, the process of developing and acting on sexual and gender identity is muddy, conflicted and provisional, and in this sense – if even for only a fleeting moment – unavoidably self-conscious. Thence the recuperation of the queer project, i.e., the categorical instability promised by queer theory. Indeed, here is the heart of a post-queer sexuality studies that recognizes the subversive potential of sexual marginality within the strong parameters of an empirical sociology.

Conclusion

In this article, I have identified two strains of queer theory that are plagued by an underdeveloped analysis of the effects of the "social" on the sexual. The first strain, radical deconstructionism, glosses over the ways in which sexual classifications are embodied in institutions and social roles, and thus under-theorizes their role as a principal axis of social organization. Similarly, the second strain of queer theory, radical subversion, neglects the shared social contexts in which sexual actors are socialized, and thus obscures the complexity of sexual marginality and its attachment to other institutionalized identities and social roles. Yet, even when homosexual practices are perceived to disrupt heteronormativity in the abstract, we would be foolish to think that subjects practicing homosexual desires develop a sexual subjectivity consistent with a radically queer epistemology, or that subversion occurs just because it is theorized from the standpoint of the plush academic arm-chair.

Ultimately, keeping our eye on the "social" presents sexuality scholarship with a critical *dual* challenge: First, deconstructionist analyses that expose the epistemological basis of categories of sexual orientation do not in and of themselves change the power of those categories in shaping sexual identities and social exchange. Classifications of sexual orientation are embodied in institutions and social roles and are highly consequential for the development of self-concepts and the

patterning of social interaction. Heterosexuals and homosexuals occupy distinct social structural positions by virtue of their sexual orientation and cannot be viewed as analytically interchangeable. Hence, scholars of sexuality must recognize the expanding salience of sexual classifications for the construction of self, regardless of their convictions regarding the etiology of sexual orientation.

And yet, secondly, sexual actors cut across social cleavages, and we would be wrong to think that sexual orientation by itself defines the totality of institutionalized identities that one may occupy. Regardless of their sexual orientation, women and men share the same ranges of socialization as children and young adults, and may share a multitude of social characteristics, ideologies, and experiences. In fact, a substantial literature demonstrates the ways in which marginal sexual actors arrive at sexual identities and practices not in spite of heteronormativity, but because of it. Hence, scholars of sexuality must not assume that subversive intentions or effects come married to sexual marginality. Ironically, when we overestimate heterosexual and homosexual difference, we render ourselves unable to account for the subversive potentials of homosexuality, ignoring the ways in which self-concepts accrue from *both* the institutionalization of gender and sexuality, and from the marginality of homosexual practices.

Reconciling these dual challenges calls for a reenergized sociological presence in the study of sexuality. By reconnecting sexual practice and identity to the patterned organization of the social world, we make sexual actors the subject of a scientific enterprise, rather than the object of our political sensibilities or activist intentions. Such an effort will keep sexual classifications at the center of our analyses as long as these continue to exert influence on sexual actors. Yet their "truth" need not be taken for granted; on the contrary, a more sociological, post-queer study of sexuality must retain a critical distance from the reigning categories that constitute identity so as to be mindful of the ways that individuals may use, negotiate, and resist these constructs. Surely such an effort runs through the heart of the sociological enterprise, as decades of research on deviance and medicalization have demonstrated heretofore.

In summary, if we overextend the explanatory power of queer theory in the study of sexuality, we do a disservice to our ability to understand the making of sexual actors. Indeed, the "modern sexual regime," like all Old Regimes, will not dissipate through theoretical innovations

alone. It took more than Enlightenment ideology to topple the French Monarchy, and it will take more than queer theory to render the modern sexual regime and the hetero/homo binary inert. In the meantime, rather than circulating our fantasies of a sexual revolution, perhaps we are better off to look for subversion in its less overtly spectacular forms, in the subtle disruptions and local disjunctures that pervade social interaction. An invigorated sociological presence in the study of sexuality will surely mean keeping our eyes and ears open to these queer possibilities.

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Notes

1. See, for instance, Henry Abelove, *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1993); and Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in Diana Fuss, editor, *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 13–31; and Josh Gamson, "Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma," in *Social Problems* 42/3 (1995): 390–407; and Steven Seidman, "Identity Politics in a 'Postmodern' Gay Culture: Some Historical and Conceptual Notes," in Michael Warner, editor, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 105–142; and Dana Takagi, "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity in Politics in Asian America," in Steve Seidman, editor, *Queer theory/Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 243–258.
2. See, for instance, Charles Lemert's discussion of the significance of queer theory for sociology in "Editors Preface," in Steven Seidman, editor, *Queer theory/Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), vii–ix; or Stein and Plummer's enthusiastic engagement with queer theory in "I Can't Even Think Straight: 'Queer' Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology" in Steven Seidman, editor, *Queer theory/Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 129–144.
3. Here I refer to the wide range of research that characterizes the study of sexuality in the last three decades, including contributions from sociology, anthropology, com-

parative literature, cultural studies, cinema studies, and history. While much of this work might fall under the rubric of "lesbian and gay studies," I avoid this category because it excludes important recent efforts to problematize heterosexuality.

4. Heteronormativity refers to that set of institutionalized norms and practices that supports and compels private heterosexuality, marriage, family, monogamous dyadic commitment, and traditional gender roles.
5. Arlene Stein and Kenneth Plummer, "I Can't Even Think Straight: 'Queer' Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology," in Steven Seidman, editor, *Queer theory/Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 134.
6. See, among many others, Barry Adam's detailed discussion of the formation of "homosexual" movements in *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement* (Boston: Twayne, 1995); or Lillian Faderman's discussion of the impact of sexological categories on the formation of lesbian communities in *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991); or the wonderfully rich work of Frances Fitzgerald who studies gay life in the Castro, San Francisco just prior to and following the onset of HIV/AIDS in *Cities on a Hill: A Journey Through Contemporary American Cultures* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1986).
7. For instance, Leo Bersani notes the prevalence of the eroticization of masculinity among gay men and their repugnance for femininity in "Is the Rectum a Grave?" in Douglas Crimp, editor, *AIDS: Cultural Analysis Cultural Activism* (Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1987), 197–222. Similarly, Bob Connell identifies the "moment of engagement" when gay men are socialized into dominant constructions of masculinity in "A Very Straight Gay: Masculinity, Homosexual Experience, and the Dynamics of Gender," *American Sociological Review* 57 (1992): 735–751.
8. On this point, see Tim Edwards "Queer Fears: Against the Cultural Turn," *Sexualities* 1/4 (1998): 471–483; and Josh Gamson's analysis of the limitations of the anti-identity position of queer politics in "Must Identity Movements Self-Destruct? A Queer Dilemma," *Social Problems* 42/3 (1995): 390–407; and also Stephen Murray's criticism of "medical creationism" in *American Gay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
9. Steven Seidman, "Introduction," in Steven Seidman, editor, *Queer Theory/Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996).
10. Tim Edwards, "Queer Fears: Against the Cultural Turn," *Sexualities* 1/4 (1998): 471–483.
11. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage, 1980).
12. Among others, see Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in Diana Fuss, editor, *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991); and David Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1990), and also Annamarie Jagose, *Queer theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York Unviersity Press, 1996).
13. David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Toward a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 45.
14. Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in Diana Fuss, editor, *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 13–14.
15. Ibid., 23.
16. Ibid., 21.
17. Ibid., 27.
18. Ibid., 29.

19. David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Toward a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 32.
20. Annamarie Jagose, *Queer theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 96.
21. Esther Newton, "Just One of the Boys: Lesbians in Cherry Grove, 1960–1988," in Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale, and David Halperin, editors, *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), 528.
22. Ibid., 538.
23. Steven Seidman, "Identity Politics in a 'Postmodern' Gay Culture: Some Historical and Conceptual Notes," in Michael Warner, editor, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 133–135.
24. Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in Diana Fuss, editor, *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 24.
25. David Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 493.
26. David Greenberg, Book Review, "Forms of Desire," by Ed Stein, *Journal of Homosexuality* 23/3 (1992): 122–123.
27. Ed Schur, *Labeling Women Deviant: Gender, Stigma and Social Control* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971); and Erving Goffman, Stigma (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963).
28. See, for instance, David Greenberg, *The Social Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); and Gilbert Herdt, "Intergenerational Relations and AIDS in the Formation of Gay Cultures in the United States," in Martin Levine et al., editors, *In Changing Times. Gay Men and Lesbians Encounter HIV/AIDS* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
29. See, for instance, Frances Fitzgerald, *Cities on a Hill: A Journey Through Contemporary American Cultures* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1986); and Martha Fowlkes, "Single Worlds and Homosexual Lifestyles: Patters of Sexuality and Intimacy," in Alice Rossi, editor, *Sexuality Across the Life-Course* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
30. See, for instance, John Gonsiorek, "Gay Male Identities: Concepts and Issues," in Anthony D'Augelli and Charlotte Pattersons, editors, *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities over the Lifespan. Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 24–47.
31. See, for instance, Jeffrey Escoffier, *American Hero. Community and Perversity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998); and Gergory Herek, "On Heterosexual Masculinity: Some Psychical Consequences of Gender and Sexuality," in Linda Garnets and Douglas Kimmel, editors, *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Male Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 316–331.
32. See, for instance, David Greenberg, *The Social Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Routledge, 1993); and R. Savin-Williams, "Lesbian, Gay Male and Bisexual Adolescents," in Anthony D'Augelli and Charlotte Pattersons, editors, *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities over the Lifespan. Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 165–188.
33. See, for instance, Michael Gorman, "The Pursuit of a Wish: An Anthropological Perspective on Gay Male Subcultures in Los Angeles" in Gilbert Herdt, editor,

Gay Culture in America: Essays From the Field (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 87–106; and Martin Levine, "The Life and Death of the Gay Clone," in Gilbert Herdt, editor, *Gay Culture in America: Essays From the Field* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 68–86.

34. See Barry Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement* (Boston: Twayne, 1995); and Donn Teal, *The Gay Militants: How Gay Liberation Began in America*: 1969–1971 (New York: St. Martins Press, 1971).
35. Among many others, see Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); and John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983); and Martin Weinberg and Collin Williams, *Male Homosexuality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).
36. The Internet is a fine example of this process. Web sites like "Gay.Com" or "PlanetOut" are founded on sexological categories and reproduce these as a means of attracting a customer base. Erotic chat rooms too are often organized around sexual classifications that serve as cyber landmarks around which one must orient herself.
37. Stephen Murray, *American Gay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 34.
38. Esther Newton, "Just One of the Boys: Lesbians in Cherry Grove, 1960–1988," in Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale, and David Halperin, editors, *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993) 538.
39. Alexander Doty, *The Lesbian Postmodern* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 3.
40. Eve Sedgwick, "Queer Performativity: Henry James' The Art of the Novel," in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1/1 (1993): 1–16.
41. Alexander Doty, *The Lesbian Postmodern* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
42. See Michael Bronski, "Why Gay Men Can't Really Talk About Sex," in Michael Lowenthal, editor, *Gay Men at the Millennium* (**HELLO**, 1997); and Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); and Michael Warner, "We're Queer, Remember?" *The Advocate* 9/30 (1997): 7.
43. Michael Bronski, "Why Gay Men Can't Really Talk About Sex," in Michael Lowenthal, editor, *Gay Men at the Millennium* (**HELLO**, 1997).
44. Jeffrey Escoffier, *American Hero, Community and Perversity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 183.
45. Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). See also the same conflation in Warner, "We're Queer, Remember?" The *Advocate* 9/30 (1997): 7.
46. Both David Halperin and Eve Sedgwick make these distinctions in their work. See above.
47. Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxvi.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid. For instance, see pages vii, ix, xxi, xvi, xvii, xxv, xxvi.
50. Ibid. For instance, see pages xi, xii, xxvi, xxvii.
51. Scholars in this literature include George Chauncey, Bob Connell, Martin Levine, Simon and Gagnon, among many others.
52. Martin Levine, "The Life and Death of the Gay Clone," in Gilbert Herdt, editor,

Gay Culture in American: Essays From the Field (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 68–86.

53. Martin Levine, "The Life and Death of the Gay Clone," in Gilbert Herdt, editor, *Gay Culture in American: Essays From the Field* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 73.
54. Ibid., 77.
55. Ibid., 78.
56. Michael Kimmel, "After Fifteen Years: The Impact of the Sociology of Masculinity on the Masculinity of Sociology," in J. Hearn and D. Morgans, editors, *Men, Masculinities and Social Theory* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990). See, for a similar point on gay men and masculinity, Seymour Kleinberg, *Alienated Affections* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980).
57. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).
58. Ibid., 49–50, emphasis added.
59. Esther Newton, "Just One of the Boys: Lesbians in Cherry Grove, 1960–1988," in Henry Abelove, Michele Aina Barale, and David Halperin, editors, *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader.* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993).
60. Brian Pronger, *The Arena of Masculinity. Sports, Homosexuality, and the Meaning of Sex* (New York: St. Martin's Press. 1990).
61. Gary Dowsett, *Practicing Desire: Homosexual Sex in the Era of AIDS* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
62. See Bob Connell, "A Very Straight Gay: Masculinity, Homosexual Experiences, and the Dynamics of Gender," *American Sociological Review* 57 (1992): 735–751; and also Bob Connell, *The Men and the Boys.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
63. Bob Connell, "A Very Straight Gay: Masculinity, Homosexual Experiences, and the Dynamics of Gender," *American Sociological Review* 57 (1992): 744
64. Ibid., 746.
65. Ibid., 748.