

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOMOSEXUAL POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND
THE CREATION OF CIVIL UNION LEGISLATION IN
THE UNITED STATES, ARGENTINA, AND BRAZIL

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University-San Marcos
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of ARTS

by

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San Marcos, Texas
May 2008

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge all of the guidance and direction I received from my committee members, Dr. Bill DeSoto, Dr. Ed Mihalkanin, and Dr. Victoria Bynum. I would also like to thank the people who helped me to edit this thesis, Katrina L. Hansen, Yolanda Decker, Jessica Listi, Cyprus Walter, and Jared Walls. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Magda Hinojosa for her guidance in the areas of Latin America. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Arnold Leder, Dr. Marilyn Mote-Yale, Dr. Margaret Menninger, and Professor Sherri Mora. They have all been true friends and mentors that have guided and encouraged me throughout the years. Furthermore, I must thank all of my friends and family who have supported and encouraged me in all of my academic endeavors. These family members and friends are my parents, Oscar and Yolanda Decker, my sister Nicole Vines, my grandparents Arlin and LaVonne Coke and Joe and Olga Decker, my best friend and colleague Jilian McElyea, and all of the staff members of the Political Science department. I would like to thank my cousins Robby Coke and BobbieJo Coke who have preceded me in higher education and have shown by example that hard work and dedication can take you everywhere you want to go. In addition, I would like to especially thank Katrina L. Hansen for her support, encouragement, and patience throughout this process. Finally, I would like to thank all of my friends for their support and encouragement throughout this process and throughout my academic career and life.

This manuscript was submitted on March 19, 2008.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Homosexuality has been a fierce topic of debate during the twentieth and early twenty-first century. Most of the debate has raged over whether homosexuality is a choice or a condition, moral or immoral, and even whether it is legal or illegal to engage in such activity. The main theoretical precepts for dealing with homosexuality follow many different and distinct arguments. The main theoretical perspective I will use to explore the correlation between homosexual social movements and the reformation and creation of laws dealing with homosexuality is the homosexual identity theory. Identity politics center around, and are defined by characteristics that make one a minority in their own culture and seeks to persuade the majority to socially respect that minority group. Identity centered political movements that can serve as examples are the civil rights movement and women's rights movements.

In the work by Button, Reinzo and Wald, identity politics are a style of political conflict that is "concerned with the political meanings of everyday life and interpersonal relations, sexuality and subjective experience, lifestyle and popular culture" (4). For people engaging in identity politics a phrase that was popularized by Simone de Beauvoir of the women's movement captures the essence of identity politics "The personal *is* political." According to Button et al. there are three essential qualities of identity politics and they are:

First identity politics represents *new lines of political cleavage*...Second, identity politics encompasses *broad goals*—not simply to secure additional economic resources for groups like women, blacks, and Latinos but to ensure that they are accorded a full measure of equality and social respect...and finally, the social movements that pursue identity politics typically embrace a *wide array of political tactics* (4-6).

In addition to this the most essential quality of identity politics is to secure social acceptance for the group. The political ideal that is most frequently cited and encouraged by marginalized groups is equality. Button, Reinzo, and Wald argue that “the goal of this [gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual] movement has been literal protection—to be achieved by including verbal and physical assaults on gays and lesbians among those actions known as hate crimes” (3). Furthermore one of the largest barriers to formal equality were the antisodomy laws that made all homosexual sex acts illegal. The repeal of these laws will be further discussed in the sections involving each specific country. The overall goal of all reforms initiated by the gay rights movement has been to eliminate the discrimination faced by lesbians and gays received only by their simple identity as homosexuals.

However, it must be clearly stated that identity theory does not only seek to use litigation and court decisions to justify equality for homosexuals, it also claims that homosexuals must be socially accepted, and not demonized, for their status to be truly equitable. There are arguments that state that through litigation social attitudes will eventually change, however this leaves out religious sentiments and affiliations that might further increase prejudice against homosexuals. To address this specific type of discrimination litigation will not suffice and other methods must be developed for acceptance by certain religions that denounce homosexual behavior.

The theoretical framework of identity politics will be used to track and explain how the homosexual movement has advanced in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil. While the theoretical framework must be kept in mind this paper will let the movement speak for itself through the tracking of events that comprise the various movements.

In the past two decades there has been a flurry of litigation and legislation concerning homosexual's legal rights in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil. This paper will seek to illuminate the history of the different homosexual movements in these three countries, the political successes of the groups, the reasons for these successes, and will argue how these movements are likely to continue. While the movements in these countries have had some historical differences, they do share certain characteristics in how they form, expand, operate, and what successes and defeats they have experienced. While the movements do share similar characteristics, the legislation that has passed as a result has differed widely in context and reasons for implementation.

Theories of homosexuality have greatly differed over the past two centuries and it has been attributed to many different "factors." Sigmund Freud first articulated the notion that homosexuality was a natural phase of development that must be worked through to properly understand heterosexuality. Homosexuality was initially interpreted by the psychiatric community as a mental disorder. Sociologists and anthropologists still argue over whether it is nature or nurture. Genealogists seek to find the gay gene that could be the basis for homosexuality. For the purpose of this thesis, theory will be laid out but not argued upon for the reason that it will primarily concern itself not with the causes but the ramifications for citizens and the relationship they have with their

governments. This paper will examine each country individually and then formulate a conclusion based on the comparative analysis and study of all three different movements.

The first country to be examined is the United States. Homosexual practices have always existed in one form or another and have either been sanctioned as legal or illegal by the state or country. In the United States homosexual sex acts were, for the most part, criminalized and it was not until the Supreme Court verdict in *Lawrence V. Texas* (2003) that homosexual sex acts were decriminalized. The verdict also struck down numerous laws that dealt with heterosexual conduct such as oral sex and anal sex. The fact that these laws no longer exist has been one of the most important victories for the homosexuals in the United States.

The repeal of the laws marked a fundamental shift in how homosexuality was treated in the United States. It is important to note that the criminalization of homosexual activity is a fundamental difference between the homosexual movement and the civil rights and women's rights movement. While there are many similarities between the homosexual, women's, and civil rights movements the homosexual experience was different because it involves the illegality of homosexuality itself; while it was never illegal to be black or a woman it was illegal to engage in homosexual behavior. The legal condemnation of homosexuality throughout the twentieth century in the United States has further served to marginalize and criminalize a group that was already seen as a threat to the morality of the United States.

After examining the United States, this paper will examine and interpret the homosexual movements that have occurred and are still in motion in Argentina and Brazil. After thorough examination a conclusion will be drawn that pulls together the

theoretical framework of identity politics, the history and direction of the three movements, and likely future developments in all three countries.

CHAPTER II

THE UNITED STATES MOVEMENT

In this section of the paper the United States will be examined for the purpose of understanding how the homosexual movement started, where it led, and the goals it achieved. This paper will first examine the history of the movement in order to shed light of how homosexual identities came to develop in the United States, and how the early subcultures organized into a full blow movement. Following the historical analysis of the movement this paper will discuss the contemporary developments in Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New Hampshire. While there has been a flurry of positive and negative legislation regarding homosexuals, this paper will focus on the five states that have conferred marriage or civil union partnerships to homosexuals.

The practice of homosexuality can be traced to the ancient Greek societies, from where we derive our political and societal roots, to present day society. Although homosexuality has been present throughout history, it has often been concealed in historical evidence. Toward the end of the nineteenth century “romantic friendships” celebrated the love and companionship between women. Under the guise of “friendships” lesbian relationships began to emerge in the United States. When women began entering into colleges at the turn of the nineteenth-century, they formed life long

bonds because many of them could now support themselves without the aid of men. These relationships were cultivated in the more affluent and middle classes. Lillian Faderman states that, “Thousands of women now banded together in colleges and in various professions, and they created a society of what the nineteenth century and earlier had seen as romantic friendships” (12). Education “more than any other phenomenon” was the primary mechanism through which the modern development of lesbianism emerged (13). In contrast, poor women were often denied such relationships and forced to marry out of necessity.

Critics of education for women stated that college “masculanized” women and encouraged attractions between women. These fears were not completely unfounded. Faderman states that, “Females who attended college were far less likely to marry than their uneducated counterparts” (14). This unique group of unmarried women, the first generation of women in the United States to attend colleges, were referred to as “spinsters” (15). In reality, these women were able to cultivate intimate relationships among themselves because women’s colleges provided an escape from the male-dominated world. Furthermore, women who were once isolated now had the means of connecting to each other and the larger world. Out of these new circumstances many women worked together to create their own institutions to encourage reform.

A new vocabulary emerged out of the relationships that women cultivated with each other within the college setting. Romantic friendships between women came to be depicted in slang with terms like, “smashes,” “crushes,” and “spoons” (Faderman, 19). In a contemporary piece written in a Yale newspaper in 1873, the anonymous female writer states that,

When a Vasser girl takes a shine to another, she straightway enters upon a regular course of bouquet sendings, interspersed with tinted notes, mysterious packages of 'Ridley's mixed Candies,' locks of hair perhaps, and many other tender tokens, until at last the object of her attentions is captured, the two women become inseparable, and the aggressor is considered by her circle of acquaintances as—*smashed* (Faderman, 19).

It is important to note that these terms did not directly imply that these women were engaging in sexual activity. It is impossible to know whether or not these relationships were sexual. However, some probably were. The term "Boston Marriages" was introduced into the American vernacular at this time as well. This term referred to same-sex households established by two women college graduates. The relationships established by women and the institutions cultivated out of those relationships, although radical at the time, would form the foundation for the expansion of women into the public sphere. As women began creeping into the public sphere during the end of the nineteenth century, gender roles became more and more fragmented. "Competing conceptions of gender informed much of the cultural ferment of these years, as numerous voices questioned the inviolability of women's traditional sphere" (Peiss, 185). Emphasizing the importance of assimilation Peiss states, "The working women's friendships as described by reformers and settlement workers occurred in a context that strengthened women's abilities to negotiate the public, heterosocial world of commercial amusements rather than maintain a privatized female one" (114). The process of assimilating into the public sphere was not an easy endeavor. Men were becoming increasingly threatened by women's presence in 'their' public arena.

From the 1870s to the early 1900s women reshaped the way in which they were allowed to interact within society. This development proved to have a profound impact on the lives of lesbians to this day. Without the entrance of women into the public sphere, geographically isolated lesbians would never have been exposed to each other. Unfortunately, women were not the only ones who noticed the changing nature of female relationships.

Sexology emerged as a discipline around the turn of the nineteenth century and was influenced heavily by Sigmund Freud. Sexologists began to view with suspicion the female relationships being cultivated by working-class women. Faderman states that

Regardless of the extent or nature of romantic friendship and love between working-class women, when the sexologists (primarily medical men with middle-class backgrounds) who began writing about sexuality in the latter half of the nineteenth century turned their attention to homosexuality, they were more easily able to acknowledge that intimate relations between women in the classes 'beneath' them could go beyond the platonic than they could with reference to their own class (39).

The sexologists, who were predominantly white middle-class males, saw what they viewed as degenerate behavior only when they expected to see it, in the working and lower-classes. Therefore, because lesbianism existed in the "troubled" classes, it was stigmatized immediately and branded degenerate or deviant. Prior to the end of the nineteenth century, lesbians were known commonly as sinners; now they were further constrained under new scientific labels such as, " 'sexual invert,' a victim of inborn 'contrary feeling,' a 'homosexual'" (Faderman, 40). Zimmerman states that, "religious and cultural attitudes toward lesbians both shaped and were affected by psychiatric nomenclature and treatment" (611). Before the turn of the century there was no specific

term to identify lesbian relationships. The scientific classifications of gays and lesbians was undertaken for the eugenics movement, and this would have a profound effect on the way homosexuality was understood and dealt with by the medical community.

Stereotypical perceptions of what we now call 'lesbians' began to coalesce in this time period as well. Faderman points out that, "The females that the earliest sexologists such as Karl Westphal, Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Cesare Lombroso defined as sexual inverters were often captive populations, in prisons and insane asylums, daughters of the poor" (41). It is hard to cast a favorable light on homosexuality when the studies defining them were based on those who are already labeled as degenerate by society and institutionalized. Faderman's assertion here is crucial because it illustrates that the stereotypes of lesbians as degenerates originated in the "scholarly" community. Once these stereotypes and labels were accepted among professionals, they were disseminated slowly to the public who adopted their ideals. The German writer Karl Westphal introduced one of the core stereotypes of lesbian as "masculine." "Westphal's writing alerted other medical men to a supposed correlation between 'masculinity' and female same-sex love" (Faderman, 42). Like Westphal, Havelock Ellis, who preceded Freud, advocated the "inversion" theory. "Havelock Ellis understood both male and female homosexualities as forms of 'inversion' and narcissism, in which individuals believed that they were really the opposite gender and formed romantic and sexual attachments accordingly" (Zimmerman, 613). Bonnie Zimmerman further states that, "Subsequent psychoanalytic theorists suggested that clitoral fixation, fear of men, fear of rejection, narcissism, and sexual abuse contributed to the development of lesbianism" (611).

Ironically, at this point in American history many women –both hetero- and homosexual–began to pass as males in order to receive better wages and the freedom of travel. The working class expansion into the public sphere had begun, and many women realized for the first time how much society was limiting their freedom. Not all women who were cross dressers at this time were lesbians. In an attempt to escape confining feminine roles, some simply posed as men. Faderman states that, “ ‘Butch drag,’ professional-women style, served as armor to deflect the arrows of sexism for those early generations of career women” (21). Furthermore, she states that “Most of these working-class women appear to have begun their ‘masculine’ careers not because they had an overwhelming passion for another woman and wanted to be a man to her, but rather because of economic necessity or a desire for adventure beyond the narrow limits that they could enjoy as women” (43). Sexologists nonetheless treated lesbians and straight cross-dressers, as if they were one and the same, inseparable. Furthermore, Faderman states that “It was the European sexologists who were the first to connect sexual inversions and feminism” (46). Lesbian stereotypes were quickly applied to them in order to discredit the movement. Any subversion of gender roles became suspect. For those who genuinely desired lesbian relationships in the lower classes, butch drag was adopted as a survival skill. Due to the low wages paid to women, one woman in the relationship might adopt butch drag in order to receive the wages of a man, increasing the wages of the household. Butch drag allowed women to surpass the barriers of gender.

Around the turn of the century the concept of healthy “romantic friendships” was being replaced by words like “degenerate.” By the 1910s articles began popping up in magazines, the first wave of mass media within the United States, warning girls and their

parents about the dangers of romantic friendships. Those engaged in romantic friendships were often confused about the fall from grace they were experiencing. Faderman states that this had varying effects on the women involved in romantic friendships. Some abandoned those friendships, some denounced them, while others discredited the friendships in public but remained within them in private. Faderman states that, “Jeannette Marks, professor at Mount Holyoke, lived for fifty-five years in a devoted relationship with Mary Woolley, president of Mount Holyoke, and yet wrote and attempted to publish an essay in 1908 on ‘unwise college friendships’” (53). Woolley went so far as to label these friendships “unpleasant or worse,” and “abnormal social condition” (Faderman, 53). Conflicts that arose for women within same-sex friendships may have prompted many of them to denounce lesbianism while proclaiming their relationships to be friendships.

Sexologists argued that the basis for lesbianism was congenital. This theory was both detrimental and empowering to homosexuals. Those who were empowered felt released by the congenital invert theory because sexologists proclaimed lesbianism not to be a choice; it was decided by nature. Lesbians who were not “masculine,” however, were perceived as choosing to be homosexual. Faderman interprets congenital inversion by stating that, “If a female were not a female at all but a man trapped in a woman’s body, it should not be condemnable nor surprising that her sexuality would assert itself as would a man’s” (58). With the sexual difference now attributed to nature, homosexuals began to whisper the word “persecution.”

In contrast to the United States, in Europe homosexuality was treated in a much more progressive and liberalized manner. The German Scientific Humanitarian

Committee founded by Magnus Hirschfeld was the first organization to challenge the legal sanctions against sodomy (58). Its argument was that, “the law and society had no business persecuting homosexuals, since their behavior was normal for them” (59). Furthermore, the congenital inversion theory asserted that those who were not born congenital inverters could not be persuaded into homosexuality. This challenged the notion that homosexuals preyed on straights and converted them into homosexuals as well. Faderman expands on this point when she quotes an American medical doctor, Joseph Parke, stating “if the abnormality is congenital, clearly it cannot be a crime. If it be acquired it may be both vicious and criminal” (59).

During the 1920s the published works of psychologist Sigmund Freud began filtering into the conversations of mainstream America. Freud’s work must be considered to understand why the 1920s provided a somewhat tolerant environment for homosexuals in larger urban areas. Freud interpreted homosexuality as a normal phase in child development. However, he attributed the continuation of homosexuality in an adult’s life as detrimental if it eclipsed a heterosexual union. “In his first detailed case study of a lesbian (1920), Freud hypothesized that mother fixation, penis envy, and maternal indifference were causative factors” (Zimmerman, 611). Freud did, however, open the door on sexuality, and this led to discussion and experimentation precisely at the time when a sexual revolution began to develop in the United States. The catalyst for the sexual revolution of the twenties was the expansion of women into the public sphere and the introduction of the automobile. As women and men interacted without the constraints of parents, sexual taboos slowly came into question. The relaxation of strict constraints

on sexuality that characterized the Victorian era affected homosexuals in large cities in a positive way.

During the 1920s bisexuality emerged as a new form of sexuality different from homosexuality and heterosexuality. According to Freudian theory, bisexuality was a new form of sexual experimentation that could free one from stifled inner inhibitions while releasing sexual repression. Bisexuality was viewed in very different and more acceptable terms during the twenties than was homosexuality.

Because of the sexual revolution, homosexual characters and relationships began to be addressed during the 1920s. American writers began incorporating homosexuality within their works. Faderman lists several such works by American novelists: Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), Sherwood Anderson's *Poor White* (1920) and *Dark Laughter* (1925), and James Huneker's *Painted Veils* (1920) (65). Playwrights as well as novelists began to incorporate homosexual themes into their works. Unfortunately, several actors were arrested while portraying homosexuals, jailed, and sent to court on charges of obscenity. Other performances were ridiculed by critics until they were forced to close. During the showing of Sholom Asch's *God of Vengeance*, Faderman states, "The producer, director, and cast of twelve were all hauled off to court on charges of obscenity" (66). On one hand homosexuality was slowly emerging as a viable alternative to heterosexuality; on the other hand, the United States was not far removed from the Victorian Era in terms of the law, and many people were fiercely opposed to the changing sexual mores.

In large cities such as New York and Chicago, a homosexual underground began to form. In 1924, Henry Gerber, a working-class homosexual, created The Chicago

Society for Human Rights, the first group to advocate gay rights in the United States (Stewart, 3). Stewart citing Kats adds that as a result, “These men were jailed, brought to trial, but ultimately set free; Gerber lost his job with the post office, and the society disbanded” (3).

In Harlem and Greenwich Village a remarkable level of tolerance, for the time, was exhibited towards homosexuals. In Harlem, Faderman links the plight of African Americans’ social struggles within white society to the plight of homosexual struggles within the heterosexual society. However, one can not assume that tolerance was universal in Harlem. The clubs there functioned during the 1920s as havens for both heterosexuals and for white middle class people who sought a less prohibitive and less socially sanctioned atmosphere. Members of the social elite who frequented Harlem were du Pont heiress Louis Carpenter du Pont Jenney, Tallulah Bankhead, and Lucille Le Sueur (Joan Crawford) (71). In Harlem whites could escape the social constraints they encountered within their own societies. Faderman notes that this was a type of white “sexual colonialism” (68). Nevertheless Harlem appears to have provided a refuge for many homosexuals during this period.

Many performers in the Harlem club scene were either homosexual or bisexual, and used their sexuality to benefit them. Blues singers such as Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith toyed with the rumors of their bisexuality. Never fully exposing themselves, they did not deny the possibility either. Another performer, Gladys Bentley, hid her bisexuality in order to capitalize in her career as a homosexual entertainer. Bentley even married a woman in a civil ceremony in New Jersey (Faderman, 70).

Marriage was a largely visible cultural phenomenon for black lesbians who lived in Harlem. “It was also easy for black lesbians to form a subculture in Harlem relatively early, [since] blacks in general felt themselves to be outside the pale in white America” (Faderman, 73). Weddings in Harlem for lesbians were large ornate affairs attended by many from the Harlem lesbian subculture. “Real marriages licenses were obtained by masculinizing a first name or having a gay male surrogate apply for a license for the lesbian couple” (Faderman, 73).

In Greenwich Village the experiences of homosexual men and lesbians met with the same level of tolerance and ambivalence as they did within Harlem. Greenwich Village became a social haven for middle class lesbians who chose to reside within the less restrictive bohemian culture. However, lesbianism was still seen as inferior to heterosexuality by many of the men in the Village. “There was apparently considerable discomfort about the genuine lesbian and some relief at any evidence of her bisexuality” (Faderman, 85). This coincided with the tolerant yet ambivalent attitude that existed in Harlem. Freud’s influence upon American culture surfaced in many of the attitudes that embraced bisexuality over lesbianism or homosexuality. For instance:

The men [of the village] often cherished a real conviction, born of knowledge of Freud on which they prided themselves, that lesbianism was just a phase some women went through and while it was all right to express it in order to get rid of suppressions, it must not become arrested as a way of life (Faderman, 85).

For the middle-class community, a newfound emphasis on sexuality in combination with the examination of gender roles changed the sexual mores and social framework. Women began entering the public sphere in droves during the 1920s. Work attracted many young women away from their homes and brought them into close contact

with members of the populace outside of their families. Through these contacts, lesbians were able to discover that there were others like them out there. Faderman states that, “Evidence suggest[s] that a subculture was slowly being established in a number of working-class communities throughout America in the 1920s” (79). Lesbian communities in major U.S. cities would continue to grow during the 1930s, but they would have to withstand a backlash against the relaxed attitude of law enforcement that allowed them to blossom during the 1920s.

The Great Depression dramatically reversed the favorable public perception of female workers in the labor market. With an enormous percent of the population unemployed, many believed that women must relinquish their jobs to men. Direct connections were drawn between the number of women employed and the number of unemployed men. Faderman quotes Cousins who stated:

There are approximately ten million people out of work in the United States today; There are also ten million or more women, married or single, who are job holders; Simply fire the women, who shouldn't be working anyway, and hire the men. Presto! No unemployment. No relief rolls. No depression (96).

In addition to the pressure women felt to leave the labor force, the pressure to enter into a heterosexual marriage was enormous. Financial security was attainable in such relationships while it was scarce in lesbian relationships. This, however, does not mean that those who married out of necessity ceased lesbian activity upon entering into marriage. “Front” marriages were another viable option for both lesbians and bisexuals. Faderman states that, “Sometimes marriage was nothing more than a front to permit a woman to function as a lesbian and not be persecuted” (97).

The experience of college lesbianism, increased by romantic friendships, also declined during the Depression era. The reasons for the decline were the same as for the middle and working classes. Gender roles were drastically re-examined by society at large and any deviation from the norm was suspect. Furthermore, the pressure to leave jobs open for males and for women to marry should not be understated. Faderman writes that, “The dean of Barnard College told a class of the early 1930s that each woman must ask herself if it was really *necessary* for her to be employed” (96).

Due to the prevailing negative view of lesbianism, concealing one’s relationships and hiding the simple fact that one was a lesbian was imperative. “Their [lesbians] most difficult task as social beings was making contact with other lesbians in the context of a society that mandated that they be silent about their affectional preferences” (Faderman, 105). The need to conceal a lesbian identity proved to be a huge obstacle to the formation of a lesbian culture. Simply meeting other lesbians was an enormous task unless one happened to live in a major metropolitan area. Faderman writes, “...women could hope to find refuge and sometimes even desirable social companionship in cities such as Boston, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco” (111).

Within major cities gay and lesbian bars served as meeting places and toe-holds for the fledgling gay and lesbian cultures. In the 1930s, a handful of gay bars existed across the country: “Tony Pastor’s and Ernie’s (NYC), The Barn (Cleveland), Mona’s (San Francisco), The Roselle Club and the Twelve-Thirty Club (Chicago)” (Faderman, 107). Of these bars, Mona’s in San Francisco was the first lesbian bar to cater to working-and middle-class lesbians (Faderman, 107). In major U.S. cities gay and lesbian

subcultures slowly coalesced, providing the springboard for the nationwide liberation movement in the late 1960s.

Lesbians and heterosexuals became aware of the existence of other lesbians through the proliferation of works by sexologists. The lives of lesbians were portrayed and examined in fictional novels, plays, songs, and poetry. During this time of growth for the fledgling community there was also a backlash against lesbianism in general, thanks in part to the work of Freud, sexologists, and other writers who depicted lesbian relationships in a dismal fashion. This dismal portrait was rarely challenged by real life lesbians because exposure was risky and the consequences severe. Lesbian Pulp novels began to surface in America during the 1930s. Representative works, like *Hellcat* (1934), *Love like a Shadow* (1935), *Queer Patterns* (1935), and *Pity for Women* (1937), portrayed lesbians as “monstrous” (Faderman, 101). They drew in most part from earlier French depictions of “lesbian vampires” (Faderman, 101).

In most cases, however, novels with lesbian themes or characters focused on “lesbian suicide, self-loathing, hopeless passion, and chicanery” (Faderman, 102). Interestingly, these depictions were offered by both heterosexual and homosexual writers. Another development that helped to solidify the stereotypes of lesbianism was the censure of lesbian images by the National Organization for Decent Literature (Faderman, 102). This may shed light on why lesbian authors would cast lesbianism in such a dismal light. Due to censorship, the only way one could get works with lesbian subject matter published was to portray lesbianism as a frightful condition.

The most important development for lesbians during the 1930s was a heightened awareness of the existence of other lesbians, and that those relationships could be sexual

in nature. This affected lesbians in positive and negative ways. Some felt that they must hide their lesbian relationships and tendencies at all costs. Those who were more daring might embrace the life and try to move to an environment that would at least tolerate their existence.

The most disturbing development of the 1930s was the treatment of homosexuality by the field of psychiatry. “Homosexuality was defined as a sexual disorder under ‘psychopathic personality’ in the 1935 *Standard Classified Nomenclature of Disease* and as a sexual deviation under ‘sociopathic personality disturbance’ in the first edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*” (Zimmerman, 611). The treatments, or cures, for homosexuality were barbaric.

“Treatment modalities ranged from psychoanalysis and hypnotherapy to involuntary hospitalization, electroshock, and lobotomy. Conversion therapy was severely damaging to the mental and physical health of lesbians who were subjected to it and consistently unsuccessful in achieving its goal” (Zimmerman, 611).

During the 1940s, society’s absolute rejection of lesbianism shifted to begrudged tolerance. During World War II women were crucial to the war effort, and lesbians working for the war effort were tolerated within the military to a surprising extent. Traditional feminine roles were open and flexible during the war. Many women filtered into cities to obtain jobs in factories and as a result experienced financial independence from men. Many other women joined the military to aid in the war effort. These women served under the “Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC; the word ‘auxiliary’ was dropped the following year)” (Faderman, 122).

Some women entered military service after having already established a lesbian identity. Other women, who joined the military with no prior exposure to lesbians, may have seen it as a new possibility for exploration. Contrary to popular belief, it was not the proximity of heterosexuals and lesbians that cause the number of lesbian relationships to multiply in the military, but more likely the fact that many women had encountered few lesbians in their previous lives. Female soldiers now had an opportunity to socialize with women like themselves.

Because lesbians were crucial to the war effort, the government and military encouraged their tolerance. Faderman asserts that “The WAAC even warned officers not to set out to expose or punish lesbian behavior” (123). WWII military officials refrained from discharging homosexuals unless their relationship was disrupting to military order. Faderman further states that “lectures recommended to officers that if they believed that two women who were romantically involved with each other [and if it] created a disruptive influence in a unit, they might be administratively split, but they should not be discharged” (123).

In addition to exposing lesbians to one another, the war effort exposed many heterosexual women to lesbians. As a result, many concluded that there was nothing sick or wrong with lesbians; they simply loved women and not men. In an interview with *Berube* magazine, Pat Bond stated that, “Even women who did not identify themselves as lesbians in the military tended to treat lesbianism, which became a familiar phenomenon, with a ‘who cares?’ attitude” (Faderman, 125). This attitude of tolerance appeared in civilian society as well. Faderman postulates that, “It may be that such a relative

tolerance toward homosexuality was also promoted by the social upheaval of the war, which threw off balance in various areas of American life” (125).

Due to women’s increased presence in the military and in factories, gender specific dress became more flexible and less rigidly defined. For example, previous to women entering into the military and into factories, the wearing of pants by women was unacceptable. Faderman states that previously “Even butch lesbians understood that while they might wear pants at home, they had to change to a skirt to go out on the street—unless they were able to pass as men” (125). The ability to go out in public dressed in pants increased the visibility of lesbians to one another.

Now that a woman’s wardrobe had expanded to include “masculine” clothes, a sharp division in the butch and femme roles developed. Lesbian butch and femme roles mirrored the masculine and feminine divisions of their heterosexual counterparts. Women who wore masculine attire were supposed to pursue feminine women, just as in heterosexual society. “Unless two women were on a date, butches would sit only with other butches and femmes would sit with femmes” (Faderman, 126). The butch and femme roles developed during the 1940s and became a mainstay of working-class lesbianism.

In addition to loosening gender-specific dress, the military also hastened the formation of gay subcultures at the end of WWII when many gays were discharged en masse at the ports of large coastal cities. Faderman states that “Thousands of homosexual personnel were loaded on ‘queer ships’ and sent with ‘undesirable’ discharges to the nearest U.S. port” (126). Many of these homosexual personnel remained in the cities where they were unloaded by the military.

In tandem with the rise of a homosexual population within a city, many new bars opened and served as meeting places and hangouts. For those living in these cities such as New York, Boston, and San Francisco, it seemed as if the 1940s were the end of the suppressive and closeted thirties and the beginning of acceptance by society at large. In 1947, *Vice Versa*, the first lesbian periodical was released (Faderman, 129). The hope that society would, in general, tolerate homosexuals was fervent; however, it was fleeting.

During the latter half of the 1940s, and after the conclusion of WWII, society recoiled from the changes of the early forties and many Americans were encouraged to embrace conformity. Homosexuality was once again deemed vile by society at large. Coupled with the shift towards “normalcy”, the psychoanalytic field was on the rise, and many in the field became obsessed with curing homosexuality in addition to other mental disorders or diseases. Homosexuals were confined in institutions, their releases dependent upon their renunciation of their sexuality and the acceptance of heterosexuality. Freudian theory was trumpeted by psychoanalysts who defined lesbianism as a sickness. Many lesbians who received psychiatric treatment did not elicit treatment for lesbianism. Some were forced into institutions by their parents while others sought treatment for other problems and were simply goaded into being “cured” of their lesbianism.

Psychologists were instrumental in resurrecting the stereotypes of lesbians as miserable, conniving, and mentally-sick people. Bisexuality was under attack as well. In the counter culture of the Roaring twenties, bisexuality existed covertly and was still little understood by the American male husband. However, in the backlash of the post-war

1940s bisexuality was condemned just as homosexuality was. The views of psychologists were widely adopted and unquestioned by society at large, and as a result, progress was once again halted. The members of the subculture were forced into silence and solitude for fear of discovery. As a result the subculture went into remission and compulsory heterosexuality once again prevailed.

In the aftermath of WWII the social climate in the United States became one of conformity. The status-quo was adopted again in the late 1940s and homosexuality was once again demonized. The favorable policies toward homosexuals in the military were dramatically reversed during peace time. "Between 1947 and 1950, 4,954 men and women were dismissed from the armed forces and civilian agencies for being homosexual" (Faderman, 140).

Just as the Depression strangled the lesbian cultural progress of the roaring 1920s, the McCarthy era would suffocate it. Homosexuals in the military were subject to persecution throughout the 1950s. Witch-hunts were rampant within the government-controlled military organizations. Faderman quotes another source stating that, "the women's branch of the Navy (WAVE) was instructed in 1952 that 'homosexuality is wrong, it is evil,...an offense to all decent and law abiding people, and it is not to be condoned on grounds of 'mental illness' any more than any other crime such as theft, homicide, or criminal assault" (151). Many service men and women were discharged from the military for homosexuality or for any evidence of prior homosexual tendencies. Those discharged received no military benefits as a result of their discharge. The attitudes of the military furthered the paranoia of the 1950s, forcing lesbians in all walks of life to deny their homosexuality relentlessly, and to permanently hide their personal

lives. Due to the military's purge, lesbians within the military acquired the means and skills to conceal their sexuality from being discovered, keeping many in the service. Ironically, Faderman points out, "the military experience strengthened the bonds between women who chose to be part of the lesbian sisterhood; it showed them how to network and how to guard against the forces that were enemies of women who loved women" (155).

In the 1950s the pressure to conform intensified to the point of paranoia. One of the chief instigators of that paranoia was Senator Joseph McCarthy. During the McCarthy Era a modern day witch-hunt overtook America. Communists were the initial subversive group targeted, but as the witch-hunts gathered momentum, others on the fringe of society became a target. Homosexuals were one such targeted group. Faderman attributes the persecution of homosexuals to the belief that "homosexuality was a detriment to the country's image and standing in the world" (14). This conclusion eventually led to the dismissal of homosexual government employees under the pretense that they were susceptible to blackmail.

McCarthy sought to eradicate homosexuals from the government. Faderman who cites Nicholas Von Hoffman points out, "Ironically, McCarthy's two aids were flamingly homosexual, even flitting about Europe as an 'item,' but that did not stop him from charging the State Department with knowingly harboring homosexuals and thereby placing the nation's security at risk" (141). McCarthy was successful in removing homosexuals from government jobs. "By April of that year [1950], ninety-one homosexuals were fired from the State Department alone" (Faderman, 141). Government policies designed to stop homosexuals from "infiltrating" the government, and the

purging of existing homosexual workers did not stop at mere discovery of the fact. In an Executive Order handed down by President Eisenhower, government persecution became official. Faderman states, “That Order mandated the investigation for homosexuality not only of persons in ‘sensitive’ positions, but of any government employee and of all new applicants for positions” (143). Homosexuals were engulfed by the tide of paranoia. During the 1950s, the discovery of ones’ homosexuality could result in the loss of their job, custody of their children, and their rightful place in society.

The line between hetero-and homosexuality was bold and defined in the 1950s. Minority groups were as intolerant of homosexuality as was the predominant culture. Furthermore, leftists viewed homosexuals within their organizations as liabilities prone to government blackmail. Even in the recesses of society homosexual men and women were shunned as deviants or liabilities. In 1954 Sen. McCarthy was reined in by the Senate but the damage had been done. After the era of McCarthy, writes Faderman, “Homosexuals in all walks of life, not just those who worked for the government, were hunted down” (145).

In order for a homosexual to survive in 1950s America, hiding one’s sexuality and one’s identity was imperative. In order to do this all aspects of one’s homosexual life had to be concealed, disguised, and otherwise buried from society at large. As in the past, front marriages helped many to enjoy at least a relatively undisturbed life.

The media of America accelerated its criticism of homosexuals during the 1950s. Homosexuality was inextricably linked with words like *sinister*, *menacing*, *sadism*, and *conspiracy* (Faderman, 145-146). Those who added a positive adjective along side the word homosexuality were subject to strict government censorship. Censorship was just

another form of institutionalized persecution of homosexuals propagated during the 1950s.

Pulp novels were still in circulation during the 1950s and provided only negative and stereotypical depictions of homosexuals. However, it is important not to overlook the importance of pulp novels, in that they provided at least an image for homosexuals to identify with. Zimmerman notes that, “Despite the moralizing, the prejudices, and the bad writing, lesbians voraciously devoured these novels” (623). Unfortunately, pulp novels usually depicted only white women. “Lesbians of color are virtually nonexistent in these works. Where they do exist, they are an exoticized, super-sexualized other, the ‘dark’ seductress who has trouble in mind for her blond, white (an innocent) victim” (Zimmerman, 623).

There were some pro-lesbian pulps that emerged during the 1950s as well. “The ‘pro-lesbian’ pulps, representing a fraction of these paperback originals, feature lesbian characters who rebelled against the stereotypes of perversion and social prejudice” (Zimmerman, 624). Despite the fact that they were not widely read by mainstream America, the early pulps do capture an interesting perspective of lesbianism in the 1950s in the United States. “Some of the more popular books were written by Ann Bannon and are still recognized as ‘classics’ by aficionados of the genre” (Zimmerman, 624). Pulps have left a lasting effect both positive and negative in the homosexual community. On the positive side they provide a legacy of strength for lesbians to draw from; on the negative side they generated and reinforced homosexual and specifically lesbian stereotypes.

Amazingly, in the midst of the persecution of the 1950s the first lesbian organization, the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) was formed (Faderman, 148). The DOB was organized as a social club but would later develop a voice for politics. *The Ladder* was the magazine of the DOB and provided a positive interpretation of lesbianism for its members. In order to encourage and to protect its membership, the DOB assured absolute anonymity to anyone belonging to the organization. However, there were those in the government who did not let the creation of a lesbian organization go unnoticed. Faderman states that the, “Daughters of Bilitis could not know that informants had actually infiltrated DOB in the 1950s and were supplying the FBI and CIA with names of the organization’s members (149). Although the organization was infiltrated by the FBI and the CIA, harassed, and had their building searched for the names of its members, the organization functioned as a haven for those daring to refute the assertion that they were society’s deviants.

Despite the fact that lesbians were ostracized by society, the varying lesbian subcultures established in the 1920s and renewed in the 1940s managed to survive throughout the fifties by closely guarding their existences. The strict divisions of hetero- and homosexuality in the 1950s led many lesbians to see themselves as entirely apart from society. Ostracism of homosexuals was a critical development that defined homosexuality as a completely separate identity. Faderman states that, “the choice of love object determined more than ever before a social identity as well as a sexual identity” (159). In the same vein, she writes, “in the midst of the worst persecution of homosexuals, the lesbian subculture grew and defined itself more clearly than ever before” (159).

The lesbian subculture that existed in the 1950s was rife with distinctions based on class, race, and age. While the subculture struggled to define itself, one problem lesbians encountered was a lack of collective history and past experiences from which to draw. This lack fractured the lesbian subculture. Without a common reference point of traditions, the class and race wars of 1950s American were mirrored in the lesbian subcultures.

Within the subcultures, gay and lesbian bars had long since been a refuge and a place to meet other homosexuals. Bars were most often patronized by working-class lesbians and occasionally by middle-class lesbians. “To many young and working-class lesbians the bars were a principal stage where they could act out the roles and relationships that elsewhere they had to pretend did not exist” (162). In a cyclical fashion, the gay bars harbored and fostered the subculture while the subculture in turn supported the bars.

During the 1950s the butch and femme roles became as strictly separated as they were between men and women in the dominant culture. Faderman states that, “The whole world, heterosexual and homosexual, seemed to be divided into masculine and feminine” (167). The roles were so strict that for one to be accepted into the subculture one had to choose a role. “Being neither butch nor femme was not an option if one wanted to be part of the young or working-class lesbian subculture” (168). The emphasis on gender roles by the working-class and young lesbians was an attempt to create standards for the framework of their subculture.

Despite the dichotomy of butch and femme roles, a third gender representation came to light in the 1950s, the kikis. Kikis were neither butch nor femme, they fell

somewhere in between the two distinct roles. Kikis were not accepted by the butch and femme subculture. To them they seemed “confused” (Faderman, 168). The term *kiki* could also apply to couples that were composed of two butches or two femmes (Faderman, 168). There were several other terms coined within this time period in order to classify the emerging gender roles of the subculture. For example, “In New York kiki lesbians were also called ‘bluffs’ –the word being not only a combination of ‘butch’ and ‘fluff’ (another term for femme) but also an indication of how such women were regarded in that community” (Faderman, 168). A subclass of butches referred to as “stone butch” also emerged during the 1950s. “‘Stone butches’ observed taboos similar to those that were current among working-class heterosexual males” (Faderman, 169).

Gay bars provided a social haven for homosexuals in the public sphere by functioning as meeting places and hangouts. Unfortunately, gay bars were conspicuous targets and were often subjected to police and vice raids throughout their historical existence. Patrons would be hauled out of the bar and taken to jail. Some bars offered bribes to police while others developed tactics for appearing as straight bars with straight patrons when the police raids occurred. Gay bars were most frequently raided when electoral candidates running for office promised to “clean-up” the city by targeting gay bars and homosexual “deviants.”

In addition to conducting raids, undercover agents would pose as homosexuals in gay bars in order to entrap homosexuals. The head of the Alcoholic Beverage Control in Northern California announced that, “a vigorous new campaign against bars catering to homosexuals,” and admitted that “a dozen undercover agents are at work gathering evidence to root out homosexual bars in the Bay Area” (164). The strict divisions of

gender roles were intensified in order to identify undercover agents within the bars. Undercover agents would not be familiar enough with the subculture's gender-role distinctions to blend into the scene without some suspicion.

Not all lesbians were satisfied with the bar scene for social fulfillment and desired alternative social activities. "There were a few attempts by working-class and young lesbians in the 1950s and 1960s to build institutions other than the gay bars" (Faderman, 161). Softball teams were one such creation. Lesbian teams played within the softball leagues across the country. "The games did succeed in providing legends and heroes for the lesbian subculture, as well as offering both participants and viewers some possibility for making lesbian contacts outside of the bars" (Faderman, 161-162).

As the subculture grew, distinctions between the classes became more apparent. The divisions in male and female roles led to further splits within the lesbian subculture. As gender roles developed butches were endowed with male attributes in the subculture, and femmes were endowed with feminine characteristics. Faderman points out that in butch and femme relationships, if the butch allowed the femme partner to exercise power over her sexually, one would say that she had been "flipped" (169-170). The dynamics of power that were created in butch and femme relationships led middle-class lesbians to reject such roles because they mirrored male domination of women. Middle-class lesbians and wealthy lesbians were also less likely to interact in butch and femme working class culture because their discovery in a gay bar posed a potential threat to their lifestyles. There were exceptions to the rule such as Louis duPont Carpenter Jenny and Tallulah Bankhead who preferred masculine dress (Faderman, 176). Faderman points out that wealthy lesbians "lived much of their lives outside of a lesbian subculture, free of its

mores and rules; they felt less compelled to limit themselves to a lesbian identity and were more likely to behave bisexually” (177). Furthermore, wealthy lesbians were more susceptible to familial and social pressure and this may have pressed some toward conformity rather than towards a lesbian identity within the subculture.

The views of middle-class lesbians were apparent in the few lesbian publications that were intended to influence their middle-class readers. In publications such as *Vice Versa* and the *Ladder*, these lesbians “expressed embarrassment over butch and femme roles, which, by their obviousness, encourage the stereotype of the lesbian among heterosexuals” (Faderman, 179). For middle-class lesbians, the fear of agitating the parent culture seemed counterproductive. Examples of police harassment and assaults committed on those who assumed butch roles and wore butch clothing served to bolster middle-class lesbians’ decision to camouflage themselves within the mainstream culture. There was not much interaction between the classes of lesbians in the 1950s and 1960s. When it did occur it was rare and certainly not the norm.

In cities that had only one bar, severe class distinctions resulted in a “line” being drawn down the middle of the bar. Faderman draws upon the impression of a woman named Betty who remembered that, “At the Cave [in Omaha, Nebraska] the middle-class women, who dressed in conservative Saturday night finery, sat on one side of the room, and the working women, often in T-shirts, ‘with cigarettes rolled in their sleeves’ and ‘their overdressed femmes with too much lipstick and too high heels, sat on the other’ (182).

During the decade of the 1960s the United States underwent a dramatic cultural and social transformation. The nation abandoned the strict tenants of conformity, and a

liberalization of America began. The sexual revolution of the 1960s was intertwined with other social movements of the decade. Minorities achieved victories under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which sought to protect and gain their civil rights. The battle for equality was tumultuous but ultimately successful. Groups such as the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC), and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), who were involved in the Civil Rights struggle, served as models for the radical institutions of homosexuals in the late 1960s and 70s. However Liz Gibbs states that, “Paradoxically, the ‘singing 60s’ were rabidly heterosexist, and sexual permissiveness was not deemed to extend to individuals who identified as lesbian or gay” (91). Gays and lesbians watched as the United States was transformed, ultimately giving minority groups government protection; however, during the decade of reform they were still being bullied and harassed for their differences.

Harassment from the federal government and local officials still plagued the DOB in the 1960s. “At DOB’s first national convention in 1960, San Francisco law officers came to hassle the organizers with questions about whether they advocated wearing clothing of the opposite sex, which would have been illegal” (Faderman, 191).

During the 1960s homosexuals eagerly watched the dramatic achievements of minority groups and feminists, hoping that their group might be the next to cast-off its shackles. Due to the social environment, the first activist demonstration by a group of homosexuals occurred in the 1960s. Activists modeled the first activist demonstration after successful methods of the civil rights movement. Faderman states that, “It was not until the early years of the more liberal 1960s that they first lesbian and gay confrontational action was staged by a mixed homosexual group, Homophile League of

New York, who picketed an induction with signs such as ‘If you don’t want us don’t take us, but don’t ruin our lives’” (191). This action was quickly adopted by activists as a tactic to attract attention to the persecution of gays in the United States.

Early on, political activism was rejected by both working-class and middle-class lesbians who preferred to stay out of the gaze of the public but this did not stop working-class gays. Early gay activists began to protest their position in the social structure of America at the precise time when the constraints for the 1950s were easing. “The homophile movement of the 1960s expanded and reorganized as part of a larger social upheaval and soon began to question the premises of the assimilationist approach” (Adam, 68). The nation in general was becoming more tolerant to minority cultures, and early working-class activists were therefore on the cutting edge of the gay movement.

In 1950, Mattachine the first organization for homosexuals was created by five former communist men in Los Angeles, California and quickly sought to attract lesbians in order to strengthen their organization (Faderman, 190). The DOB and Mattachine began to work together in order to undertake the monumental task of fighting for gay rights in a homophobic nation. “In the mid-1960s San Francisco DOB together with Mattachine decided to tackle the most insidious persecutor of homosexuals, organized religion” (Faderman, 192). The result was the creation of The Council on Religion and the Homosexual (Faderman, 192). At a fund-raiser held to benefit The Council, San Francisco police photographed all attendees upon arrival. Ministers who attended the event were exposed to the same treatment as were homosexuals and, as a result of their treatment by the police, became advocates for Mattachine and DOB’s cause. Several denominations showed a willingness to embrace homosexuals in their congregations,

while others rethought their stance. Along with a shift of opinion among certain religions, some psychologists revised their positions. The negative stance of psychologists in regard to homosexuality began to waver during the 1960s. During the 1960s and 1970s “rigorous scientific scrutiny demonstrated that lesbians are indistinguishable from heterosexual women in psychological adjustment” (Zimmerman, 612).

In 1961 The Motion Picture Association lifted the ban on gay themes (Adam, 70). “By the end of 1966 the New York Civil Service Commission, which had previously rejected applicants if anything in their appearance, attitude, or actions indicated they were homosexual, began approving homosexual hires” (Faderman, 193). As the decade progressed, the outright oppression of homosexuals began to recede. Student organizations for homosexuals also emerged in the latter half of the 1960s. The Student Homophile League was established in 1967 by gay and lesbian students at Columbia University and soon spread to other institutions (Faderman, 193). The organizations of students would prove to be crucial by articulating a more radical and militant voice than the older gay organizations. Barry Adam citing D’Emilio notes that “Gay and lesbian groups were springing up across the United States and Canada, jumping from fifteen in 1966 to fifty in 1969” (73).

In addition to the new groups that were popping up many heterosexual women began to cross the strict lines of sexuality to experience something wholly new. “Many of the young women who experimented with lesbian sexuality in the context of the hippie milieu saw it as only an experiment and nothing more” (Faderman, 203). Lesbianism in

the sexual revolution was viewed as the ultimate act of rebellion. Not only were they rejecting customary tradition they were rejecting male authority.

During the 1960s two movements for the rights of women who loved women emerged (Faderman, 189). One group believed they were born homosexual and referred to themselves as “essentialists;” the other group believed that one chose to be lesbian and they referred to themselves as “existentialists” (Faderman, 189). Existentialists came to be known as political lesbians or “lesbian-feminists” (Faderman, 189). These different perceptions of what made one a lesbian would become crucial in the decade of the 1970s.

In retrospect the sustained movement for gay and lesbian rights began at the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969, after a raid on the inn occurred during the New York mayoral campaign. Faderman postulates that “incumbents often sicced the police on homosexuals to bolster his record as a vice fighter” (194). Police came to the Stonewall Inn with a search warrant to investigate liquor violations in the establishment. “Instead of scampering off in relief when the police booted them out on the street after questioning them, the two hundred working-class patrons—drag queens, third world gay men, and a handful of butch lesbians—congregated in front of the Stonewall and, as blacks and other oppressed groups had done before them in the course of the decade, commenced to stage a riot” (194). For the first time in U.S. history, the gays and lesbians at the Stonewall Inn did not acquiesce to the New York City Police; they remained at the site and through their actions sparked the Gay Revolution. The riot was in response to yet another raid upon gay bars that were happening not only in New York but across the nation. The story of the riot was relegated to a small article in the *New York Times* under the heading *4 Policemen Hurt in ‘Village’ Raid*. However, for gays and lesbians around the world the

significance of Stonewall was enormous. “The Stonewall Rebellion was crucial, because it sounded the rally for that movement” (Faderman, 195). The movement in the United States was invigorated after the events at Stonewall and movements in other countries as far away as Argentina were aware of the event and were inspired to create their own homosexual groups.

In the wake of the Stonewall Rebellion, homosexuals drew analogies of the plights of minorities with their own oppression. “Radicalized by their experiences in black and student organizations, they [gays] were now thinking through their own lives with new concepts and were taking a militant message to new constituencies” (Adam, 76). Media depictions of homosexuals and homosexuality began to liberalize, and psychologists shifted their views of homosexuality as a sickness to one on non-judgmental acceptance. Middle-class homosexuals seized upon the actions of the working-class in the rebellion and created hundreds of publications and organizations (Faderman, 197). “The explosion of specifically lesbian publications around 1970 reflects many lesbians’ rejection of a co-sexual gay community in favor of lesbian feminism and often separatism, perhaps in no small part because of the misogyny lesbians found in some gay men’s communities” (Zimmerman, 581). In addition Zimmerman states, “Lesbian and feminist periodicals were vital to creating lesbian theory, culture, and community in the 1970s, especially among lesbians who lived far from cities with large, visible, lesbian populations” (581).

As information proliferated new expressions of lesbianism emerged. A new group of homosexuals referred to as “new movement lesbians” seized the reins of the expanding movement (Faderman, 197). The new movement lesbians were college

educated middle-class women who pursued egalitarianism. Because they rejected the class divisions that divided the lesbian community, the movement became more malleable. Their de-classed system of organization facilitated a coalescing of the movement among college aged, new movement lesbians, but the radicalism of their tactics alienated them from some of the very groups they were trying to enfranchise. Due to their exposure to the tumultuous decade of the 1960s, lesbians of the new movement were politically aware and had a taste for radicalism. Faderman states that, “their militancy often outstripped the capacities and understanding of both older working-class lesbians and middle-class lesbians, and difficulties emerged between the generations” (197).

Organizations such as the DOB struggled to transform their image in order to attract the new movement lesbians. According to Faderman, “despite their relatively militant rhetoric of the late 1960s, DOB and *The Ladder* could not recover from their conservative image, and they were seen as too poky for the new activists” (197). Ultimately, *The Ladder* ceased publishing in 1972, because it had not captured the interest of the younger women, and because of internal problems as well (Faderman, 197).

In the initial phases of the movement, gay men and lesbian women joined together to battle outside oppressors. “Armed with data refuting the psychopathological views of homosexuality, lesbian and gay activists lobbied the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in the early 1970s to eliminate homosexuality from the *DSM*” (Zimmerman, 612). In 1973, psychologists dropped their stance that homosexuality was a mental disorder although they by no means embraced homosexuality. “In 1973, the APA voted to

remove homosexuality from the *DSM* and replace it with ‘sexual orientation disturbance’ (612). With deliberate effort and time, lesbian and gay psychiatrists remolded the view of those in the psychiatric community in regard to homosexuals and homosexuality. “Lesbian and gay psychiatrists lobbied for and won official status within the APA in 1978 through the formation of the Task Force on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues” (Zimmerman, 612).

The Gay movement, like other movements before it, developed divisions along lines of gender. Women became dissatisfied with being subjected to male power within the movement, and this caused splits in the movement that would ultimately cause women to seek reform independently. The women’s movement arose out of the rubble of the New Left movement during the late 1960s and the early 1970s. In the 1970s the idea of lesbianism as a political choice was developing rapidly. Many women in the movement realized that the potential for women’s power and independence would dramatically increase if they could escape the sexual domination of males. Jill Johnson seized upon this ideal in her 1973 work *Lesbian Nation: The Feminist Solution* (Zimmerman, 417). “*Lesbian Nation* narrates the constitution of a political consciousness and an identity termed ‘lesbian’ that could be the intersection of the personal and the political” (Zimmerman, 417).

Just as the revived women’s movement arose out of the ashes of the New Left movement the lesbian movement would become the phoenix of the gay movement. “To their disappointment, many lesbians discovered that gay men could be just as blind to the needs of women as straight men” (Rosen, 166). The feminist movement and the lesbian movement drew energy from one another but did not always see eye to eye. Many

feminists were afraid of the negative attention lesbians would bring to the movement. The feminist movement divided over the issue of lesbianism. “The rights of lesbians proved to be another divisive issue, though one that only surfaced several year later, after the founding of the gay liberation movement” (Rosen, 83).

Betty Friedan, the founder of the National Organization for Women (NOW), bolstered fears by labeling lesbians in the movement the “lavender menace” (Rosen, 83). The women’s movement ostracized lesbians in fear of government infiltration, and because of the vulnerable positions of homosexuals and their susceptibility to blackmail. Rosen states that Friedan was “convinced that the FBI had somehow manipulated the gay/straight split” (253). Betty Friedan’s fears were not entirely unfounded. The FBI did have informants following and participating in the movement. The impact of the FBI is however, questionable. Rosen argues that “Although it intensified paranoia, the FBI did not really change the movement’s course” (259). Nevertheless it is important to contemplate whether the FBI’s infiltration of political movements ultimately undermined the civil rights of many Americans.

The energies of alienated and frustrated lesbians erupted in the early years of the 1970s. “In New York City, a group of young women who called themselves “Radicalesbians” started recasting lesbianism as a political choice in the 1970s” (Rosen, 167). Radicalesbians used ingenious tactics to grab the attention of the women’s movement, often directly confronting their ostracism.

At the Second Congress to Unite Women in 1970, Radicalesbians wearing T-shirts that read ‘Lavender Menace’ grabbed an open microphone to promote the politics of lesbianism, and passed out copies of an essay called ‘Woman-Identified-Woman,’ a position paper that

quickly swept through the nation's women's liberation groups (Rosen, 167-168).

The split between lesbians and feminists was neither permanent nor pervasive but it did undermine what could have been a very powerful combined strength. "In 1973, NOW established a Task Force in Sexuality and Lesbianism, and passed a resolution that, by defining homosexuality as a civil rights issue, repositioned the granting of rights to lesbianism and sexual preference as but another liberal extension of civil rights" (Rosen, 83). Rosen also states that, "To everyone's surprise, Betty Friedan unexpectedly lent her support to the resolution to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and preference" (294).

Many feminists who were not necessarily lesbians became aware of the concept of political lesbianism through the consciousness-raising groups of the feminist movement. "In the light of the women's new awareness, lesbianism seemed very attractive, and more and more radical feminists came to doubt if heterosexuality could really be consonant with their personal and political ideology" (Faderman, 205). Lesbian-feminists denounced heterosexuality and embraced homosexuality as a choice. This was the existentialist position; as a result the ideology and cultures of new lesbians and those of the established old guard clashed and became irreconcilable.

Lesbian-feminists were vehement in their attacks upon gender distinctions reflected in the dress of butch and femme lesbians. Lesbian-feminists felt that these roles replicated the oppression of women by men in a relationship comprised of two women. Ironically, Faderman points out, "Although butch-and-femme were 'p.i.' in the lesbian-feminist community, everyone looked butch. But the goal was to appear strong and self-

sufficient, rather than masculine: no matriarchy could function if its inhabitants had to run or fight in high heels and tight skirts” (231). In contrast, working-class lesbians continued to embrace the butch and femme roles. Butch lesbians found strength in their masculine images.

Lesbian-feminists were often at the forefront of reforms developing in response to the feminist movement. As the gay liberation movement and the feminist movement developed, some lesbian-feminists created matriarchies free from the domination of men (Faderman, 226). “Their vision was of a totally self-sufficient community where lesbian-feminists would be able to take care of their own” (Faderman, 226). Most often these utopian communities were created in the countryside, yet some were created in cities. “Although the women often made noble efforts, most of the country communes that were established in the 1970s died before the next decade” (Faderman, 239). However, very positive gains were achieved by lesbian-feminists seeking to break away from the dominant patriarchal society. Food co-ops, credit unions, job placement services, and a blue print for a pension plan were created for and by women (Faderman, 226). “Lesbian-feminists also contributed a disproportionate amount of dedication and energy to the movement” (Rosen, 174). By developing their own service programs, women hoped to eliminate their dependence on patriarchal institutions.

A phenomenon that developed out of the non-hierarchical structure of the movement was “star-tripping” (Faderman, 230). If one rose to the forefront of the feminist or lesbian movement they were attacked by rank and file members. Rosen argues that, “Responding to lesbian-feminist vanguardism in the movement, some movement activists trashed Robin Morgan for being a wife and a mother” (230). Those

at the top were not the only ones subjected to the accusations of not being true to the movement. According to Faderman, “Their [lesbians] anger was sometimes manifested as a horizontal hostility in which members of the community were constantly attacking other members, either because they had strayed from some politically correct behavior or because the diversity within the growing groups was not sufficiently recognized to appease everyone” (235). Unfortunately as a result of the movement’s proliferation, the interests of all lesbians were thinly spread. Unfortunately grievances were aimed at each other instead of their actual oppressors in heterosexual society (Faderman, 236).

In addition splits occurred along racial lines. Black and Latino lesbians were subjected to triple-jeopardy in society and felt out of place in the mainstream movement. “Chicana lesbian feminists experienced even greater alienation, they felt they belonged nowhere” (Rosen, 290). Furthermore, many blacks and Latinos felt that their allegiance was better served in the civil rights movement. “Socially aware racial and ethnic minority lesbians frequently felt that at a time when their people were finally organizing to demand rights, it was their inescapable duty to give their allegiance to their parent culture” (Faderman, 241). Consequently, joining the gay movement often severed racial community ties. “The few minority women who became part of visible lesbian-feminist life in the 1970s were usually able to do so only at the cost of alienation from their ethnic communities” (Faderman, 242).

Although the participation of minorities in the movement was not as high as their white counterparts, women of color had an impact and a place in the movement. “Black lesbians were the first to organize as lesbians and feminists along racial lines. They were active in the formation of the National Black Feminists Organization in 1974, and in

1978 they formed a National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gay Men” (Faderman, 242). New magazines and new softball leagues were mediums created to give lesbians of color a voice.

The media in the 1970s had mixed responses to the Gay Liberation Movement, Feminist, and Lesbian movements. In regard to feminists, two stereotypes predominated: “One was the hairy, man-hating dyke, dressed in overalls and stomping boots;” and “The second and far more ubiquitous image was that of a selfish ‘superwoman’ who would come to stand for all women in the movement” (Rose, 296). Furthermore Michael Nava and Robert Dawidoff argue that the stereotypes derived out of the Gay Liberation movement by the media continue to harm homosexuals, “The majority culture’s attachment to its stereotypes of gay men and women constitutes the single greatest impediment to gay and lesbian civil rights” (29).

Despite the early split between gays and lesbians in the Gay Liberation movement both groups have often combined their camps to seek legal reforms to protect one another. In 1976 gays and lesbians succeeded in getting Jean O’Leary elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention (Faderman, 199). During the election, Democrats included gay rights measures in their national platform, enfranchising gays for the first time in American history (Faderman, 199). In 1978, gays and lesbians in California joined forces to defeat an antigay constitutional amendment that proposed, “to fire or refuse to hire...any teacher, counselor, aide, or administrator in the public school system...who advocates, solicits, imposes, encourages, or promotes private or public homosexual activity...that is likely to come to the attention of students or parents” (Faderman, 200).

Although lesbians did not achieve a Lesbian Nation, enormous progress was made. Lesbian-feminists made both the feminist and gay movement more accountable to lesbians and to gender issues. It also facilitated the growth of women's entertainment. "Through music, dance and art—as well as thousands of centers and institutes—lesbian feminists invented traditions and ritual that created a warm and hospitable environment for the many women just 'coming out'" (Rosen, 174-175). In addition, the movement succeeded in changing the way society viewed homosexuals. Laws protecting homosexuals in employment were passed; psychiatrists improved their stance; and institutions for homosexuals were created. Due to the bold nature of the radical-lesbians the more moderate middle-class lesbians looked tame in comparison.

Under the Presidency of Bill Clinton homosexuality returned to the forefront of American politics. He introduced the *Don't Ask Don't Tell* policy and the media and public began to discuss the place of homosexuals within the United States. The result of the policy was only a half measure. Homosexuals were allowed for the first time since WWII to legally remain within the military under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The policy was not a blanket policy of protection, rather, it allowed for a homosexual to enter the military but it forbade them from disclosing this information to anyone within the military. If they did they were subject to court marshal and a dishonorable discharge if they were found engaging in homosexual conduct or seen as "flaunting" their status.

With the discussion of homosexual's legal status within the country gay groups began to push for marriage equality. Many different strategies have been employed by gay groups including, civil unions, domestic partnerships, and gay marriage. Some strategies have worked in some states while others are more successful in others. In order

to fully understand what led to the success in each state they need to be examined separately. The states that will be examined in the U.S. are: Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New Hampshire. The first state to enact a protectionist policy for gay couples was Vermont.

Vermont became the first state to legalize a partnership between homosexual couples in 2000 under Governor Howard Dean. The Vermont legislature was ultimately forced to capitulate to civil unions after its supreme court determined that refusing to do so was tantamount to discrimination. The decision brought a new and controversial phrase into the American vocabulary, civil unions. The term while certainly provocative to many Americans was developed and used in an attempt to try and circumvent an even more controversial phrase, gay marriage. The legislation allowed for and provided legal protections in matters of child custody, life insurance, and healthcare. However, the law also prevents the unions from being called marriages and does not confer all of the legal benefits afforded to heterosexual couples in possession of state and federal marriage status. Under the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) gay marriage, civil unions, and domestic partnerships are not recognized at the federal level leaving a stark gap between the rights conferred to heterosexual couples versus homosexual couples in legal relationships.

In a *Home Truths* article published by the BBC a gay man named Michael recounts the importance of being able to marry his partner Joseph in Vermont, he says, “We want the state recognition, we want that piece of paper but more than that we want to know more than when one of us is sick the other can go to the hospital and make

decisions for the sick person, just like my parents can do. It's to do with peace of mind" (BBC Home truths, 2).

In Connecticut several laws have been enacted and several have died in the legislature that dealt with homosexuality. Connecticut was once at the forefront of creating legal benefits for homosexuals but has struggled to pass a comprehensive marriage law. In 2000 domestic partner benefits were offered to state employees but the partnerships were not legally registered.

Employment protections in the private sector include protections based on sexual orientation but not on gender identity. A bill that would have extended the anti-discrimination laws, including protections against employment discrimination, to include gender identity passed the Senate (30-4) and was sent to the house. However S.B. 1044, failed to get a recorded vote and died at the close of the legislative session on June, 6, 2007. On May 30, 2007 Senate Bill 1109 extended and strengthened existing laws preventing the deprivation of rights granted in the Constitution, state laws, or United States law on the grounds of sexual orientation and labeled such events as discriminatory. The bill passed both the senate and the house with an astounding (36-0) and (147-0) vote respectively. The vote on this bill clearly shows that Connecticut is a state that does not wish to discriminate against its gay and lesbian citizens. The statement of purpose for the bill reads as follows:

To include sexual orientation as a protected class under the statutory protection against the deprivation of rights, thereby enabling the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities to receive and process complaints that allege violations of other state statutes under which such rights have already been extended and that the commission has a duty to enforce (SB 1109 Connecticut).

The act was taken into effect on October 1, 2007.

In Connecticut homosexual partners are allowed to enter into civil unions. However, the state has enacted a DOMA law preventing the unions from being recognized under Federal law. In 2005 a civil unions bill passed the legislature and granted many of the obligations and rights of marriage to same-sex couples however the law also expressly defined marriage as an institution between one man and one woman within the state jurisdiction. Same-sex marriages granted in other states such as Massachusetts are not transferable or legally binding within Connecticut.

Parenting laws are affirmative in Connecticut and allow for second parent adoption for gay and lesbian couples. The statute (Conn. Gen. Stat. §§46a-81c and 46a-81ac) was passed in 2000 and it expressly permitted second parent adoptions and this statute overruled a previous court decision that did not allow for second parent adoptions. The laws passed in Connecticut show a willingness to protect homosexual citizens from discrimination both in the public sphere and in the private sphere to some degree. However, there does not seem to be a complete willingness to allow homosexual couples the same rights as heterosexual couples. This is clearly reflected in the adoption of the DOMA law and the express definition of marriage, as being between a man and a woman, attached to the 2005 bill which allowed for civil-unions.

Massachusetts became the first state in the United States to grant full marriage licenses for homosexual couples. The decision was rendered by the states highest court in the verdict of *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* in November of 2003. The case was brought to court by a division of the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) based in New England on behalf of 7 same-sex plaintiffs who sued because they

were denied a marriage license by the Department of Public Health in Massachusetts. The state senate of Massachusetts requested that the term civil unions be used instead of marriage, however, friend-of-the-court briefs were filed by Lambda Legal Defense and Congressman John Lewis and the court ultimately decided that the term marriage did not “fulfill the promise of equality” (Lambda Legal *Goodridge v. Department of Health*, 1). The court cited *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) which negated several sodomy laws and supported gay couples’ rights to privacy. Lambda Legal wrote that the case “reiterated the point that whether and how to establish a family is ‘among the most basic of every individual’s liberty’” (Lambda Legal: *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*). The court, however, had to write a second opinion in order to attain the cooperation of the state legislature. In May of 2004 the state began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

The legislature continued to fight the ruling as did an interest groups, Massachusetts Family Institute. The MFI attained 170,000 signatures and drafted an amendment that would circumvent the courts ruling and ban same-sex marriage (NYT *Massachusetts Gay Marriage to Remain Legal*, 1). The amendment succeeded in the first round of voting in the legislature with a 62 votes supporting the amendment with only 50 votes, or one-quarter of the legislature were needed. The amendment failed the next round 151-45 and was successfully killed. There was intense lobbying on both sides of the issue and many legislatures who originally voted in favor of the amendment were persuaded to change their minds due to constituent pressure and moving personal testimonies by numerous couples who had recently been married under the law. Representative Paul Kujawski a Democrat of Uxbridge met with many gay and lesbian

couples and was quoted by the New York Times, “I couldn’t take away the happiness those people have been able to enjoy...So many people said, ‘I didn’t ask to be gay, I was born this way’...Our job is to help people who need help, and I feel the gay side of the issue needed more help than the other side” (NYT Massachusetts Gay Marriage to Remain Legal, 2).

Although the decision in Massachusetts granted couples the full benefits of marriage under state law. The state is powerless however to change or address the federal government law DOMA which explicitly does not recognize gay marriages, unions, or partnerships and as a result couples in Massachusetts are not granted the full benefits of marriage under federal law. This hurdle does not allow for federal benefits such as: survivor benefits, pensions, and Social Security.

The preservation of gay marriage in Massachusetts has been a victory for gay rights advocates who, with this verdict, succeeded in attaining “the first unqualified victory in a marriage equality case, and it catapulted the battle for marriage equality and LGBT civil rights forward” (Lambda Legal, *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, 1). The importance of an unqualified victory cannot be understated. The battle over gay marriage has been a fierce cultural battle and up until this point had granted some concessions to gay couples under the forms of civil unions and domestic partnerships however the victories were bitter sweet at best in that they couples were still not “married.” The difference between the terms is huge, the terms civil unions and domestic partnerships do not grant the full status of equality to homosexual couples but the term marriage does. The controversy over the wording of same-sex unions, marriages, and

partnerships reflect the deep tension surrounding this issue within the consciousness of Americans.

Despite the controversy surrounding the ruling, and the fear of the proposed amendment, over 8,500 gay and lesbian couples have married under the law since May of 2004 (New York Times, Massachusetts Gay Marriage to Remain Legal, 1). A new amendment cannot be returned to the ballot until 2012 and it is unclear whether the group Massachusetts Family Institute will try the amendment again. In the New York Times article Kris Mineau the group's president said "We're not going away" (NYT Massachusetts Gay Marriage to Remain Legal).

In July of 2004 New Jersey enacted the New Jersey's Domestic Partnership Act. Those who were joined under the Act had access to joint state tax status, exemption from state inheritance tax, hospital visitation, medical decision-making rights, and some insurance benefits, but stopped short of demanding private businesses extend equal rights benefits to homosexual couples. The Domestic Partnership Act was not nearly as comprehensive as it could have been and would soon be replaced. The Civil Unions law was created in response to the unanimous ruling of the states Supreme Court in *Lewis v. Harris* in 2006 that "committed same-sex couples must be afforded on equal terms the same rights and benefits enjoyed by married opposite- sex couples" (www.state.nj.us/treasury, 1). The Court ordered the legislature of New Jersey to draft a law that effectively grant the same rights and benefits to homosexual couples that were afforded to heterosexual couples. The legislature cooperated but termed the partnerships civil unions and not marriages. The Civil Union Act (P.L. 2006, Chapter 103) was signed in to law by Governor Jon S. Corzine on December 21, 2006, and took effect on

February 19, 2007. New Jersey was the fourth state to legalize civil unions for same-sex couples. The law provides for all benefits, rights, and responsibilities of heterosexual marriage to apply equally to homosexual couples. The New Jersey Supreme Court wrote in section 4 of the law that, “all of the same benefits, protections and responsibilities under the law, whether they derive from statute, administrative or court rule, public policy, common law or any other source of civil law, as are granted to spouses in a marriage” (www.state.nj.us, 1). Corzine said of the law:

We must recognize that many gay and lesbian couples in New Jersey are in committed relationships and deserve the same benefits and rights as every other family in the state...I believe very fundamentally in equal protection under the law and this legislation is about meeting that basic responsibility and honoring the commitments that individuals have made to each other (Office of the Governor State of New Jersey, 1).

As of June 2007 there were 1,092 civil unions granted to homosexual couples in the state of New Jersey.

Since its enactment into law there have been complaints made to different gay and lesbian advocate organizations by homosexuals who are discovering their unions are not afforded the same rights as heterosexual marriages. The chairman of Garden State Equality, Steven Goldstein, was quoted in the New York Times about the complaints he has received, “Couples have expectations, but they find that the law is not the panacea they thought it was...we encourage people to get civil unions, to get what they can, but the law is deeply flawed and it’s not working” (New York Times, New Jersey Civil Union Board Hears Bias Charge, 1). A commission meets every six months to hear complaints about the law and they met for the first time on June 18, 2007 to hear the first

official discrimination complaint filed against the state. The complaint was filed by Robert S. Kleid who was refused the extension of his medical benefits to his partner of seven years because the company was based in Manhattan, New York and their state law did not recognize their union legally. (Since this complaint was filed, New York has changed its law and now recognizes marriages, unions, and domestic partnerships granted in other states.) Kleid is quoted in the New York Times saying, “This is the law now, and people have spent years on this, going to court and planning strategies, finally getting the Supreme Court to recognize it...I felt I just can’t walk away from this” (New York Times, New Jersey Civil Union Board Hears Bias Charge, 1).

The law does grant statewide employment protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity in private employment and protections based on sexual orientation in state employment. The adoptions laws in New Jersey do not discriminate against homosexuals either and the atmosphere is tolerant toward gay adoption, second parent adoptions, and un-married couples adoption. New Jersey Hate Crimes law does encompass sexual orientation but does not offer protection based on gender identity (N.J. Stat. § 2C: 16-1 (2002)). In addition protections are offered in the New Jersey Public Education system that prohibits the harassment or discrimination against students for their sexual orientation or gender expression (2002 N.J. ALS 83). New Jersey is also a state that enacted the federal DOMA law and so all benefits offered under the Civil Union Law are not applicable to federal law.

The New Hampshire legislature has gone back and forth on the debate concerning homosexual unions since the 1980s. In 1987 the legislature amended its marriage laws to expressly specify that marriage could not be between two men or two women

(LambdaLegal.org). In 2004, New Hampshire passed a law that created a commission that would study “all aspects of same sex civil marriage and ‘legal equivalents thereof’” (LambdaLegal.org). In addition the 2004 law expressly denied legal recognition of same-sex marriages granted in other states or jurisdictions (Title XLIII, Ch. 457:1-4). The study marked a mid-way point between not conferring rights and conferring them by creating the commission to study the aspects of same sex civil marriage. In 2007 the New Hampshire legislator moved forward to extend marriage benefits to homosexuals in the form of civil unions.

New Hampshire approved same-sex civil unions in April of 2007, and the bill was signed into law by Governor John Lynch on May 31, 2007 (BBC NEWS, Map: Gay marriage across the US, 3). The law will go into affect January 1, 2008. The state also honors homosexual marriages from other states, such as Massachusetts, as civil unions reversing the earlier stipulation of the 2004 law. The text of the law is addressed in Title XLIII §§ Sec. 457-A: 1-8 of New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated. In addition to offering civil unions, there are some employment protections for homosexuals in New Hampshire. The state of New Hampshire offers job protection in both state and private employment regarding sexual orientation; however, protections are not offered in private employment for gender identity. Second parent adoptions are not yet provided for in the state but the ban on lesbian and gay adoptions was repealed in 1999.

New Hampshire has moved in the direction of other New England states in providing both employment protections and granting civil unions. It is possible that the state will eventually allow for second parent adoptions and this is an area of law that may change in New Hampshire. In the article Map: Gay Marriage across the US, it is noted

that Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly gay Episcopal Bishop, wants to be “among the first gay couples in New Hampshire to officially unite under the civil unions law” (BBC NEWS, 3). In addition to the Episcopal Church, there are many other churches and denominations that openly welcome homosexual parishioners and do condone homosexual partnerships, unions, and marriages.

While there have been major victories in these five states the movement for homosexual equality in the United States has a long way to go. A uniform protection on the federal level is needed and the Employment Non-discrimination Act (HR2015), if it passes, could be the first federal protection offered to homosexuals. Employment protection is another area of law that is extremely different in the United States. As of now there are thirty-one states that do not have any employment protection for homosexuals and this can result in the firing of homosexuals solely based on their identity as a homosexual. The ENDA has been split into two separate versions, one dealing with homosexuals, and one dealing with transgendered people and gender preference. The splitting of the bill by openly homosexual Congressman Barney Frank has been very controversial and the move has been openly criticized by leading movement advocacy groups such as Lambda Legal. The debate over policy shows that the debate is still alive and well and that this movement is not likely to slow down or go dormant barring any unforeseen radical shake up of the existing social and cultural atmosphere.

Movement advocates are still advancing and pushing for change in many different areas of the law. On February 1, 2008 an appellate court decided in *Martinez vs. County of Monroe* that the state of New York would recognize homosexual marriages attained in

states and countries where they are legal. Looking into the future there are already plans in the works to legalize gay marriage in New York. Legislation has been crafted and is currently awaiting a vote in the senate with the expectation that it will pass and be signed into law by the Governor.

In June 2006 the New York State Assembly passed, by a vote of 85-61, a bill sponsored by the Governor [Eliot Spitzer] that would allow New York same-sex couples to marry in their home state. The New York State Senate must now pass the bill so that the Governor can sign it into law (www.LambdaLegal.org, Update: Marriage Recognition for Same-Sex Couples in New York).

It is of note to mention that Governor Eliot Spitzer was in favor of the bill, however, he has resigned due to a political scandal. It is still expected that the new Governor, David Patterson, will support the bill and sign it into law if it passes.

The government's refusal to protect homosexuals so far has encouraged the society at large to view homosexuals as being of less worth than heterosexuals. "We become so socialized to normative structures, customs, and attitudes that perpetuate discrimination and oppression that we do not recognize them as discriminatory" (Swigonski, 24). In addition Nava and Dawidoff state, "American society still automatically accepts homosexuality as a sufficient cause for deprivation of normal civil rights, and American culture promotes the prejudice that sustains this second-class citizenship" (1).

Hate crimes against homosexuals are violent acts of prejudice propagated by citizens echoing the oppression of the dominant government in regard to homosexuals. Over the past decade, hate crimes have ended the lives of Matthew Sheppard and Teena Brandon and other homosexuals in horrific and gruesome manners. According to the

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, “Anti-LGBT crimes are characterized as the most violent bias crimes; homosexual murder victims are more likely than heterosexual murder victims to ‘die brutal deaths characterized by dismemberment, multiple stabbings and severe bludgeoning, and their killers are less likely to be caught’” (Swigonski, 2).

Recently another possible hate crime has further demonstrated that a positive social attitude of homosexuals is needed. In a story published in the New York Times it was revealed that a fifteen year old boy named Lawrence King was shot and killed at school by another classmate. Prosecutors are calling it a hate crime and are seeking to try the perpetrator as an adult for the murder of King. The apparent motive for the crime was King’s open homosexuality and defense of his identity. He was reportedly harassed by several students one of whom was the shooter. The murder of King shows that harassment of homosexuals should be discouraged at all ages and tolerance should be encouraged.

Small victories have been won by homosexuals here and there, and in some states but not in others. In the United States only ten states protect the right of homosexuals to work, nine protect their rights in regard to housing credit, seven ban discrimination in government employment, leaving thirty-one out of fifty states providing no protection whatsoever for homosexuals (Swigonski, 103). Until there is national legislation protecting the rights of homosexuals on fundamental levels, hate crimes will not stop; discrimination will squander resources and intellectual power; and homosexuals will be relegated to a second class status.

Ultimately the movement for gay rights seeks to protect individuals. “At stake in the movement for lesbian and gay equality are established constitutional protection of a

species of individual liberty, called by the courts the right of privacy, and the more familiar guarantee of equal protection of the laws” (Nava and Dawidoff, 7). In response to the argument that homosexuals are protected as regular citizens in the United States, Nava and Dawidoff brilliantly state that, “The line between private and public life overlaps for everybody, not just heterosexuals, the effort to compel gays to lie about their lives and deny their own human experience is itself a deprivation of liberty” (Nava and Dawidoff, 4). Homosexuals are a minority not uniformly protected within the United States under any federal laws.

CHAPTER III

THE ARGENTINE MOVEMENT

Recently in Latin America there has been a diffusion and dissemination of a homosexual identity. Many factors have contributed to this phenomenon including homosexual civil rights movements in other western cultures, higher occurrences of homosexual visibility in the media, a seemingly systematic demand for human rights following periods of authoritarian rule, and the recognition of homosexual identity. This section will examine some of the factors contributing to the development of a successful Argentine gay movement that has accomplished the monumental task of securing civil unions for homosexual couples in the capitol city of Buenos Aires. The three factors that directly led to the adoption of civil unions in Buenos Aires were: the nationwide desire to support social justice legislation, the impact of the media's participation in the events surrounding the legislation, and the inclusion of heterosexual partners within the legislation.

The path to such monumental civil rights practice is very complex. In order to understand where the movement is going, we must first understand how it has progressed. The monitoring of homosexual activity within Spanish Colonial America began when, "as part of the conquest of the Americas, the Catholic Church imposed its ban against sodomy on indigenous cultures while monitoring the sexual behavior of Spanish and Portuguese colonizers" (Green and Babb, 5). Throughout the Spanish

Colonial era and the Portuguese Inquisition, which spanned 300 years, denunciations of homosexuals occurred, which lead to arrests and trials. Many of those accused by their neighbors were executed. Green and Babb record that “there has yet to be a complete tally of the number of people in Spanish Latin America who died by the flames...the sodomites considered most perverted and incorrigible were burned at the stake” (5). The harshness of the penalties was borne of fear—a visceral reaction of society to homosexuality. Over time there was an eventual relaxation of conservative policy and views in Argentine society, especially in Buenos Aires, toward more equitable treatment for its gay and lesbian citizens.

As the Latin American states began to break away from Spanish and Portuguese control, new criminal codes were created. The new codes were influenced by “the ideas of Jeremy Bentham, the French Penal Code of 1791, the Neapolitan Code of 1819, and the Napoleonic Code of 1810, which had decriminalized sexual relations between consenting adults” (Green and Babb, 5). Though the new criminal codes in Latin America decriminalized sexual relations between adults, a deep social stigma still remained within Latin American society regarding homosexuality. During the twentieth century gender roles were still highly polarized, and homosexuality was seen as a perversion of gender roles and, above all, immoral.

As the sciences developed many began to believe that homosexuals were medically defective human beings. Psychology was a developing field that thought it could “cure” homosexual behavior. “In the first three decades of the twentieth century, eugenicists, physicians, psychiatrists, and jurists in Argentina, Brazil, and other Latin American countries engaged in campaigns to ‘medicalize’ what increasingly became

known as homosexuality, arguing that the issue was no longer merely a moral, religious, or political matter, but one that required the expertise of professionals whose goals were to attempt to cure this personal and social disease” (Green and Babb, 6).

Argentina and other Latin American countries were acting upon a string of thoughts that developed early in the twentieth century throughout the West. The United States shares an extensive history of carrying out the same campaigns to “re-socialize” homosexuals. Homosexuality was viewed as an abnormal psychological condition. Although efforts were made to cure homosexuality the practice remained and communities of homosexuals began to form in major cities in the West.

Social conditions for gay men provided more opportunity for interaction and resulted in a budding social system. Green and Babb write, “Men, who as a rule had greater access to public space and sexual partners, created a complex, semi clandestine world of desire in the major urban cities in Latin America” (6). Men were able to construct an enclave for themselves due to their access to the public sphere. Lesbianism was not criminalized in Argentina. However, strict patriarchal controls on women kept lesbianism secretive and consigned to the fringes of society. The existence of long-standing gay male communities inside of urban areas provided a network for the development of political activist groups. It is also of note that rural areas do not often develop a homosexual subculture because they do not frequently come into contact with one another.

Unfortunately the decriminalization of the sexual act of homosexuality did not eliminate societal prejudice and discrimination directed toward homosexuals. Being gay was no longer a crime, but dangers and threats for lesbians and gay men still existed.

Sometimes the greatest dangers were the police and other members of society. The threat of danger gave activists further cause to demand enfranchisement and more equality for homosexuals. In addition, Brown reminds us that [even today] “in Argentina, lesbians and gay men do not receive equal treatment before the law” (Brown, 123). Changing the perceptions of long-ingrained social norms has proved to be a more difficult task than merely changing legislation.

In spite of the physical dangers, lesbian and gay movements have persisted. One of the most remarkable time periods marking the advance of homosexual movements came at the end of a politically volatile decade in the United States, the 1960s. During the 1960s and 1970s, gay and lesbian movements in the United States and Europe encouraged activism within Argentina. In addition, the movements in Argentina were highly influenced by the symbols and rhetoric of the movements in Europe and the United States. During the period following World War II, urban cities flourished, and, as a result, gays and lesbians living in urban centers began to establish subcultures.

Regrettably, political action was not yet possible due to a social condemnation of homosexuality, or of any subversion of societal norms. Green and Babb concur adding that, “In the 1950s’ and 1960s’ forms of political organization to resist or change social prejudice against homosexuality did not easily coalesce” (7). The difficulty of mobilizing a fearful, necessarily secretive, and marginalized population was becoming more and more obvious in Latin America. The need for a cohesive and collective voice was becoming obvious as well.

Homosexual movements in western cultures seem to develop and progress in the same ways in spite of geography and demographics. The variables that affect their

progression are political opportunity, the level of social tolerance, and the time period in which they originate. The development of a homosexual identity as distinguished from a heterosexual identity began in Germany with Magnus Hirschfeld and the Institute of Sexology, and later it was disseminated to Europe, Latin America, and the United States. The progression of a homosexual identity often moves from the establishment of identity, to the development of a subculture, which leads to the formation of political activist groups. Once these groups are formed, a split often occurs along gender-specific lines. Women will usually leave the male dominated groups citing that they are leaving because they do not feel represented within the group. The gay and lesbian groups will separately establish what they feel to be the most important set of goals for their groups and begin to pursue those goals through activism. Once the groups possess an understanding of their core values and can sustain memberships, they are once again ready to cooperate with one another to fight together for mutually beneficial gains such as civil unions, medical benefits, etc. Though there is not a direct link between the homosexual movements throughout the Americas, there is an underlying pattern in the development of homosexual movements.

The catalyst that ignited homosexual movements in the Americas was the Stonewall riots in 1969. The Stonewall riots were the first large-scale response to police harassment of homosexuals in U.S. history. While the Stonewall riots were the first of its kind they did not receive major media coverage; however, they were covered in the *New York Times* and homosexuals across the world became aware of the first rebellion of homosexuals (Faderman, 194). “Several months after lesbians and gay men battled the police on the streets of New York City, ten homosexuals met in a *conventillo* (tenement

house) in a Buenos Aires working-class suburb to found the first Argentine gay political organizations, El Grupo Nuestro Mundo (the Our World Group)” (Green and Babb, 7). Though Green and Babb write that it is not clear whether the group was established in direct response to Stonewall, it is clear that it marked a change in how homosexuals reacted toward the established status quo.

The founders of the El Grupo Nuestro Mundo were Leftists and were members of the Communist Party. Green and Babb write, “It is significant that a man who had been a member of the Communist party led Nuestro Mundo. No doubt this was related to the fact that Argentine leftists had extensive experience in operating clandestinely or semi-clandestinely in a country that moved between short periods of democratic rule and military governments” (8). This is critical to the group’s ability to operate, despite being under the watchful eye of the government, while at the same time escaping violent police repression. Homosexual groups that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s were often founded by members of the Left that had been expelled for homosexuality or left the group because they felt that their identity was not recognized. This was the case in the United States and is the case in Latin America. Green and Babb add, “As the histories of the early gay and lesbian movements throughout Latin America are written, we will likely discover that virtually all of the initial groups of the early 1970s and 1980s had among their initial founders and leaders former members of the Communist party, dissident groups that had split from the Communist party, or other Left-wing formations” (8).

During the decade of the seventies additional homosexual groups formed but soon became threatened. “In 1971 a strong activist group was formed in Argentina; it was

called the Frente de Liberación Homosexual (Homosexual Liberation Front, or FLH)” (Brown, 120). The FLH was developing at the same time that the homosexual movements, civil rights movements, and women’s movements were coming to fruition. “From the 1970s to the present, gay publications in Argentina show a close identification with the lives, struggles, and cultural activities of lesbian and gay men around the world, especially in the United States and Europe. Argentines likewise use the same symbols and representations (such as pink triangles and rainbow flags) that reclaimed historical figures, further diffusing a global, essentialized identity” (Brown, 125).

From 1971-1974 the FLH was a strong organization and growing to a hundred members (Brown, 121). However, as North American homosexual movements flourished, the destabilization of the Argentine government caused groups such as the FLH to flounder. In 1974 President Juan Perón died, and Isabel Perón assumed the presidency. During her presidency there “was a rapid upsurge of right-wing paramilitary attacks on homosexuals” (Brown 121). It is important to note here that Perón herself was not directly responsible for these right- and left-wing paramilitary attacks on homosexuals. As a result of the surge of paramilitary attacks on homosexuals the FLH was unable to continue, due to the fact that overwhelming numbers of their members were being tortured and murdered. The two-year period from 1974-1976 was politically unstable and in March of 1976, Gen. Jorge Videla led a military coup against the government and seized control. The beatings and torture of homosexuals under authoritarian rule was a regular occurrence for detainees. Brown writes, “Under the brutal military dictatorship, formal lesbian and gay activism disappeared” (121). “The deep economic, political, and social crisis that shook the country had a profound effect on

the FLH. By mid-1975 the group was reduced to no more than 30 militants, and it dissolved in June 1976 in the aftermath of the March military coup d'état" (Green and Babb, 10). Under the military dictatorship, repression resumed, and, as a result, the human rights discourse was silenced. The fierce elimination of dissent transgressed all sectors of society and ultimately led to the deaths of up to 30,000 people, including many homosexuals.

From 1976 to 1983 Argentina was under military rule and entered into a period known as the Dirty War (Country profile: Argentina, 1). During this period political opponents of the ruling government were kidnapped by the military. The "vanished" or "disappeared" were held in detention centers, interrogated, tortured, and often murdered. An article by the BBC news organization reported the following:

Once kidnapped, they would be taken to one of more than 300 detention centers. The most notorious of these was the Naval Mechanical Center in the capital, Buenos Aires – known by its initials in Spanish as Esma. Many were tortured using electric shocks and other methods. Children were tortured in front of their parents and parents in front of their children. The ordeal could last for weeks or even months, usually ending in the death of the victim (BBC Q & A: Argentina's Grim Past, 1).

The atrocities and human rights violations are nearly unfathomable. An article reporting on the trial of Adolfo Scilingo in January of 2005, brought to light other horrifying aspects of the human rights atrocities that occurred during the Dirty War. The article states that, "In 1995, Mr. Scilingo told a journalist of so-called 'death flights', during which drugged political prisoners would be stripped naked and flung, 'one by one, out of aircraft flying over the ocean'" (Spain tries Argentine ex-officer, 2). Mr. Scilingo was tried in Spain due to a new Spanish law allowing the government to prosecute cases

involving human rights abuses, even if they were outside of Spanish jurisdiction. He was convicted and sentenced to 640 years for the crime of killing political prisoners. He and his lawyer have filed an appeal (Q&A: Argentina's grim past, 2).

Despite the success of the conviction of Scilingo in Spain, the process of bringing to trial many of the military personnel connected with the abuses during "the dirty war" were not immediately addressed after the return to civilian power. There were trials on an on-again off-again basis. However, the push to pursue legal recourse succeeded in 2003. "Finally, in August 2003, Congress voted to scrap the amnesty laws, paving the way for fresh trials...The final Supreme Court ruling to uphold the overturning of the amnesty laws came nearly two years after the original vote in Congress" (Q&A: Argentina's grim past, 2).

In 1983 authoritarian rule ended and elections were held reinstituting democracy in Argentina. Homosexuals hoped that the return to democracy would allow for an expression of their identities. After the end of authoritarian rule, many new gay bars were opened in the hopes that they would no longer be social targets. However, gays still faced repression and persecution. "In April 1984, soon after police officers arrested approximately 200 people in the raid of a gay club, 150 activists met in the gay bar Contramano and formed the Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (Argentinean Homosexual Community—CHA)" (Brown, 121). Activists may have been inspired to political action not only by the raids but also by gay movements that were growing in the United States and in Europe. In addition, Brown writes that, "Activists were apparently influenced by the mass rallies that took place at the end of military rule and the desire for new understandings after the discrediting of traditional institutions such as the military,

the state, and the church, which had collaborated with the dictatorship” (121).

Throughout the decade CHA remained one of the foremost groups representing gays and lesbians. Although they are based in Buenos Aires they do have chapters in other locations in Argentina.

The human rights discourse expanded during the 1990s, and as a result lesbian and gay groups proliferated. New organizations that came into existence during this decade were, “the Sociedad de Integración Gay-Lésbica Argentina (Argentinean Society for Gay and Lesbian Integration—SIGLA), the Grupo de Investigación en Sexualidad e Interacción Social (Research Group on Sexuality and Social Interaction—Grupo ISIS) and Gays y Lesbianas por los Derechos Civiles (Gays and Lesbians for Civil Rights, known as Gays DC)” (Brown, 122). The introduction of feminist thought into the South American discourse led many lesbians to the realization that their experiences as women differed from their gay male counterparts regarding fundamental issues of their sexuality. As a result groups were founded by lesbians to address their grievances. The first of these feminist splinter groups was “Las Lunas y las Otras (an untranslatable pun literally meaning ‘The Moons and the Others’), which met for the first time in July 1990” (Brown, 122). Although many lesbian-feminists split from male-dominated organizations, not all cut their ties completely. “Many lesbians have had various degrees of contact and involvement with CHA, several having left the organization over the men’s sexism. The lesbian-specific groups, though, trace their origins more to the feminist movement” (Brown, 123).

Despite the splintering of the movement into a variety of issue-specific groups, the groups were able to work together to achieve common goals. Brown comments that,

“Although over the years like-minded groups have formed temporary alliances (for example, the Lesbian Front), it was only in 1995 that male-dominated groups and women-only groups began to meet on a regular basis and cooperate on short-term projects” (123). Brown cites three events that were brought about by group cooperation: (1) a national gathering at Rosario in March of 1996, which brought together lesbian, gay, and transgender organizations that now runs annually, (2) the fifth-annual pride march held on June 28, 1996, and (3) a “campaign to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the new Buenos Aires municipal charter” (123).

These successful collaborations led to a new power that could be translated to the political sphere. The first major political success resulting from the rise of gay and lesbian movements in South America was secured in Argentina in 2002. “On December 13, in the midst of a massive social justice movement, Buenos Aires became the first city in Latin America to declare civil union rights for gay and lesbian couples” (Getting hitched in Buenos Aires, 1).

The CHA was the group that pushed for and was instrumental in the success of the legislation. The president of the group, Cesar Ciglutti, and his partner Marcel Suntheim, who was the secretary, were the first to receive a legally recognized union in Argentina. “Under the law, same-sex couples will receive health insurance and pension rights given to married spouses. The law recognizes the civil union of same-sex couples but does not term the union a marriage” (Buenos Aires legalizes same-sex unions, pg 1). The actual wording of the law incorporates the term “civil union” and does not use the term “marriage,” which may in itself have had a positive effect on the adoption of the law because it avoids the use of a term that many feel is controversial due to its religious

connotations. It is also crucial because it avoids getting into an ideological battle with the Roman Catholic Church, which has actively condemned this social reform.

The legislation was successful in Buenos Aires because of the nation-wide understanding for the need for social justice, media coverage of the proceedings, and the inclusion of heterosexuals within the documentation. Pedro Paradiso, CHA's legal advisor stated, "The year of protests has really brought out in Argentina the idea of social justice. The middle class, with their savings vanishing in the banks, understood how the state can meddle in your private life in a way that gay people have been living with for years" (Getting Hitched in Buenos Aires, 2). Ciglutti also argues that the media played a crucial role in the success of CHA, "when we presented the project to the city's commission on human rights—the first official step—we contacted the media so that they would be there. We didn't know at the time, [but] the commission didn't want to consider the project at all. But with all the media around, they had to" (Getting hitched in Buenos Aires, 1). The final reason for the success in Argentina was the inclusion of heterosexuals in the legislation allowing for civil unions within Buenos Aires. Suntheim explains that "to create a civil union law just for gays, lesbians, and transsexuals is to create a 'blacklist'—a register of homosexuals. Given the history of Argentina under the dictatorship of the 1970s, that's very dangerous" (Getting hitched in Buenos Aires, 1).

In addition to the three principal factors mentioned above, there are other historical factors that may have contributed. The development of a homosexual identity, subculture, and organizations occurred first in the city of Buenos Aires and is where the movement has achieved success. It also is of note that the worst of the detention centers operating during the military rule was in Buenos Aires. Because the citizens of Buenos

Aires were at the capital, the epicenter of the government, and because the worst of the detention centers operated within it, the resulting concern after the return to civilian government was to ensure that those abuses did not happen again. The need to protect all human rights was accentuated in the minds of the people of Buenos Aires in a more profound way than what one would find in other nations that had not suffered such violent repression. This may be one of the reasons that the airing of grievances related to human rights violations that occurred during military rule may have been so successful in this particular location. The result was that public opinion was in favor of granting civil and human rights to groups that were susceptible to repression.

After the success in Argentina, a flurry of similar legislation circulated throughout South American. Legislation affirming the relationships of homosexuals were successful in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (March 2004) and Mexico City, Mexico (2006). The Brazilian legislation has gone a step further than the groundbreaking legislation passed in Buenos Aires in 2002, “The order allowing civil unions gives same-sex couples in Rio Grande do Sul broad rights in areas such as inheritance and child custody and legal grounds to seek insurance benefits and pensions” (Gay couples tie the knot in Brazil, 1). The exception to the progress being made in South America is Honduras. Legislation denying homosexuals the right to marry and to adopt children was passed in Honduras (March 2005) (Honduras bars gays from marriage and adoption, 1).

In 2005, civil unions for gays were legalized in Spain. The Catholic Church again was critical of the development:

More reporters than guests attended the first wedding of two women in Spain on Friday under the country's new law allowing same-sex marriages, news reports said. Spain, a predominantly Catholic country, last month became one of

four countries in the world to allow same-sex marriages. The measure, which paves the way for gay couples to adopt, has been fiercely criticized by the Roman Catholic Church and the leading conservative opposition Popular Party. The first same-sex marriage took place between two men July 11 in Tres Cantos, outside Madrid (More reporters than guests show up for Spain's first lesbian wedding, pg 1).

Although the Church has not been supportive of homosexual relationships, the influence the Church once wielded is dropping; by some accounts, less than fifty percent of the population attends mass regularly.

Due to the diffusion of the homosexual groups and the broadening of the conversation around South America and the world, it looks favorable that homosexual groups will have continued success within Argentina. "The issue of discrimination against homosexuals in Latin America is no longer relegated to 'etc.' status but debated in the national media and among social activists from Mexico City to Buenos Aires from Managua to Havana" (Green and Babb, 4).

Currently, Argentina is still pushing for reforms in other areas of the social sphere. It was reported in the Advocate on September 01, 2006, that Argentina intends to repeal the military ban on gays:

Argentinean government officials announced they would repeal their country's ban on openly gay military personnel, reports the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a U.S. watchdog group attempting to repeal the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Argentina's government plans to modernize its code of military justice, and part of that plan will include ending the nation's prohibition on gay soldiers (Argentina vows to repeal military ban on gays, pg. 1).

The homosexual movement in Argentina has achieved success in securing basic rights for homosexual couples within Buenos Aires. CHA has grown as an organization and has achieved successes that are the vanguard of the movement. Throughout Latin America, Europe, and the United States, the discourse is growing and legislation both for and against civil unions is finding its way to the halls of government for debate. There have been as many successes as setbacks. Latin America has made great strides to legitimize the relationships of homosexuals. Through the combined forces of the nationwide desire to support social justice legislation, the impact of the media's participation in the events surrounding the legislation, and the inclusion of heterosexual partners within the legislation, Buenos Aires became the first South American city to legalize homosexual civil unions. The fact that this legislation pertains only to the city of Buenos Aires would seem to limit its impact, however, the city of Buenos Aires is home to one third of the entire population of Argentina so the scope of the legislation is actually larger than one might assume.

In the film, Lesbians of Buenos Aires, released in 2004, six main characters discuss being lesbians in Buenos Aires. The interviews are rich in information about how the women view the influences of the movements in the political arena, how they live their daily lives, and what struggles are still faced. The main character is a former militant who does not agree with the present tactics of marches to call attention to their struggles. She argues that, "There's nothing to celebrate here...There have been casualties in these episodes, people who one must be proud of. In any case, I'm proud of being free, not of the title they hung on my neck, right?" (Lesbians of Buenos Aires, Ch. 6). Some of the women in the film do not feel represented by the parades. Although

there are some dissenting opinions on how to best achieve political advancements, the dialogue in Argentina is active. The youngest lesbian featured in the documentary is an activist who attends the parades and loudly supports the call to organization. Differences in political voices provide that the debates are dynamic and progressive not static and indifferent.

While concrete political advances have made huge impacts on how homosexuals live their lives according to the state, social discrimination is still prevalent and activist groups should target this area of discrimination next. While some view the parades as divisive, many find them liberating and self reaffirming. As gay characters on television, movies, and literature emerge, societies' exposure to homosexuality grows. As society begins to become more familiar with images of homosexuals, they, as a population, become more visible and more tolerated. The dramatic change in the state/ homosexual relationship, regarding conferring equal partner benefits, must occur for homosexuals to be considered truly equal citizens in democratic nations.

CHAPTER IV

THE BRAZILIAN MOVEMENT

During the past few decades homosexual liberation movements have sprung up in Northern and Southern America. Argentina and Mexico were the first two Latin American countries to experience homosexual rights movements with Brazil following closely in their footsteps. Many reasons can account for the late beginning of the Brazilian movement, the most prominent being the lack of political opportunity due to the military regime that controlled the country from 1964 to 1985. This paper will examine the emergence of homosexual groups seeking political gains, the struggles those groups experienced while trying to assert their collective voice, the impact of the HIV/AIDS virus on the homosexual community, and the successes of the movement in Brazil.

Anthropologists have pointed out that there is not a single gay identity, but, in fact, many separate gay identities. When comparing the experience of homosexuals within even a small community, one will find variation among identities of homosexual behavior. When one looks at the homosexual population within a country as large as Brazil, gay and lesbian identities become unique and diverse. In addition, when one begins to compare the identities developed by homosexuals in separate countries across the world, an even greater diversity of identity exists due to the cultural variances that

occur. Symbols popularized by the United States movement have been adopted by many other homosexual movements world-wide including the pink triangle and rainbows.

Generally speaking Brazilian gays and lesbians proudly display these political resistance symbols during parades, celebrations, and privately within their homes.

In an essay *Why the Rule of Law Matters*, Guillermo O' Donnell argues that the "rule of law" must include formal equality which is defined by two key factors.

O' Donnell writes:

First, it is established and by legal rules that are valid (at least) in that they have been sanctioned following previously and carefully dictated procedures, often ultimately regulated by constitutional rules. Second, the rights and obligations specified are universal, in that they attach to each individual considered as a legal person, irrespective of social position, with the sole requirement that the individual in question has reached competent legal adulthood and has not been proved to suffer from some (narrowly defined and legally prescribed) disqualification (O' Donnell, 33).

When we apply his theory to the plight of homosexuals to gain civil and legal rights, one can agree that they do, in fact, deserve equal status including partnership benefits similar to marriage regardless of religious or civil intolerance. If a group of people are systematically discriminated against by the government in regard to legal benefits, one can claim they are treated as less than a full-citizen and are thus a second-class citizen within the democracy.

In 1964 the Brazilian military overthrew the civilian government and ushered in a period of authoritarian rule. Political action such as the March of the 100,000, the wildcat strikes, and other movements by Brazilians were crushed by the military government. Under these conditions it was impossible to establish any sort of

oppositional movement or minority movement. While the gay liberation movement began to develop and flourish in the United States, the same could not be done in Brazil. From 1969 to 1974 Garrastazu Medici (former head of the secret police) was the president of Brazil and presided over one of the most violent and bloody periods of military rule of the twentieth-century in Brazil. In 1974 he was replaced by General Ernesto Geisel, and while he did not end authoritarian rule, he did relax the extreme brutality that was occurring. From the beginning of his program *distensão* (decompression), the strength of the oppositional movements began to grow. Following an oil crisis, student mobilization, and massive strikes, the military government realized that it had to either neutralize the situation or begin to return power. “In June 1978, Geisel announced the first steps toward institutional reform and a ‘slow and gradual’ return to democracy” (Green 41). The return to democracy was to be completed in 1985 with the transition formally taking place. Under Geisel, the former head of National Security and Intelligence, João Batista Figueiredo was named to be his successor. Figueiredo began to relax the tension in Brazil by easing up on censorship, stopping the torture of political prisoners, providing amnesty to political prisoners in tandem with pardons for the tortures, allowing exiles to return, and creating political reforms that abolished the ARENA and MDB parties (Green, 41). In this new political environment, the left, consisting of various workers’ parties, began to expand again and practice political disobedience.

In 1975 and 1976 Brazil was trying to establish its own gay liberation movement (lesbians had not yet mobilized), but a democratic environment was still a decade away. Government censorship and brutality towards homosexuals rendered any attempts at

action useless. The first “meeting” of Brazilian homosexuals was announced in a flyer, but was never held because of the enormous police presence at the location where it was to be held. However, it did give other homosexuals who heard of the highly publicized event the thought that organizing was a good idea (Green, 4). Furthermore, Green writes, “Although it is unclear who actually called the event and whether there were indeed willing participants thwarted by the police’s show of force, the publication of the story indicates an interest in organizing among some Brazilian gays” (43).

A short time later within the same year, João S. Trevesian, who had spent time in the United States while the homosexual movement was in full force, formed a small discussion group to discuss homosexuality among gay university students (43). The group met a few times but eventually fizzled out. A possible reason for the demise of the group was an inability to move beyond the negative feelings of self. These discussion groups could not sustain their purpose politically if the members could not positively assert their identity.

Despite several early setbacks and a politically hostile environment, homosexuals continued to assert and develop their identity and community. As the result of a meeting between gay intellectuals and Winston Leyland of the San Francisco-based Gay Sunshine Press, the impetus developed to create a homosexual newspaper that would discuss topics such as “sexuality, racial discrimination, the arts, ecology, and *machismo*” (Green, 44). In April of 1978, *Lampião da Esquina*, a homosexual publication, released its first issue. In the work, *Urban Trials, Human Traps: the Construction of Territories of Pleasure and Pain in the Lives of Male Homosexuals in the Brazilian Northeast in the 1970s and 1980s*, Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell write, “*Lampião* protested against this

twilight in which homosexuals uselessly tried to hide, because, in one way or another, their names would be exposed in the tabloid crime sheets, always ‘marching toward the sound of gunfire’” (155). The name of the magazine was a combination of two identities, Green writes, “[the title] had a double meaning ‘lamppost on the corner,’ in reference to gay street life, and *Lampião*, a Robin Hood-type bandit figure who roamed the Brazilian Northeast in the early 20th century” (44). One of the most interesting features of *Lampião* were the letters sent in from homosexuals from all over Brazil describing life and airing grievances. Albuquerque et al. write, “These letters, written on the pretext of listing places in each city where homosexuals meet, end up constructing a new picture of an urban space, a different city” (140). These letters were a vivid depiction of early gay life in the public sphere during the end of the seventies and the beginning of the 1980s. The collective impression of the letters revealed which cities had public space for homosexuals and which cities did not. In addition they revealed which places were dangerous and which were relatively safe. Albuquerque et al. relate, “The letters also listed bathhouses, hotels, motels, and, especially, nightclubs and discotheques where the customers dance to the rhythm of the latest craze” (141). In addition to this information “streets, city squares, bathhouses, alleyways, and beaches are also mentioned as places where homosexuals were constructing their spaces of social contact and homoerotic lifestyle” (Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell, 141). In addition to the positive aspects of gay life, *Lampião* also reflected the violence inflicted on homosexuals during the 1970s and 1980s. Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell, write:

The principal function of *Lampião da Esquina* was to bring these obscure, macabre, and unwholesome creatures (as homosexuals were regarded) into the light—make them visible and the subject of serious discussion—through

discourse that showed people happy in their homosexuality and to provide a 'guidebook for gays' that would point to good and bad places for amusement and for finding the best partners for a life together (156).

Lampião expanded the dialogue between the different regions of Brazil and facilitated a discussion on homosexuality uniting many different homosexual voices from all over the country.

Despite the "liberalization" and easing of censorship regulation, many writers discussing homosexual issues and rights and gay publications were routinely harassed. In 1978 *Lampião da Esquina* was charged by the government of "offending morality and propriety." At the end of the trial they were convicted of the charges. However, the sentences were never issued and the charges were later dropped due to pressure from the journalists' union and the Brazilian Press Association as well as other prominent figures (Green, 45). Green notes that the cited law was written in 1946 as a censorship law (44).

Despite the very real threats of prosecution and court trials, the media in Brazil continued to run stories on homosexuality, and the debate began in the larger society. In 1978 the first stable gay political organization, Núcleo de Ação pelos Direitos dos Homossexuais (Nucleus for Action for Homosexuals' Rights) was created. The group quickly garnered attention due to letters reprinted in *Lampião* and decided to hold a public meeting. Green writes, "As a result of that meeting, the group set up six or more subgroups that were to meet separately, with diverse objectives and activities in accordance with the wishes of their members, and periodic general meetings" (45). Later that year the drive to expand membership led to the desire to change the name of the group. It was decided that they would change their name to Somos: Grupo de Afirmação

Homossexual (We Are: Group of Homosexual Affirmation). Although it is not definitive that this was done specifically to pay tribute to the magazine, *Somos* was issued by the pioneer Argentine homosexual group Frente de Liberación Homosexual (FLH), but many contend that it “had been seen by several of *Somos*’s original members as an example to follow” (Green, 45).

The first large debate open to the public that *Somos* participated in was on February 8, 1979 at the social science department at the University of São Paulo (Green, 45). While the debate quickly focused on women’s issues and the splintered nature of the left, it did help to broaden *Somos*’s base, and it increased the public awareness of their presence. As a result in São Paulo, the numbers of women participating increased until it approximately equaled the number of men in the organization. As this was occurring in the gay community, several other movements were sweeping through Brazil such as worker’s rights, feminism, and black movements. Groups such as *Somos* began to experience intense in-fighting among group members who were beginning to air grievances connected to feminism and racial tensions. As in Argentina and the United States, shortly after lesbians joined the male dominated homosexual political groups, they left to start their own consciousness raising groups and to discover their different identities and political voices.

As the 1970s came to a close, *Somos*’s membership expanded yet again and came to include blacks, older people, and lesbians (Green, 46). While the group’s demographic did help to enhance their connections with other ideologies, when it came to connections with groups representing other movements, there was a mostly symbolic solidarity rather than a concerted drive to work together toward specific political goals. After the success

of Somos and the “liberalization” program of Figueiredo, many other homosexual groups began to form all over the country. As a result *Lampião* called a meeting on December 16, 1979 in Rio de Janeiro, and delegates from the various groups attended; from this it was decided to hold a conference in São Paulo in April of 1980 which brought together all of the different groups (46).

The national meeting which lasted three days included many new homosexual groups that had started up within the past year. They were: AUE (Rio de Janeiro), Eros (São Paulo), Beijo Livre (Brasília), Libertos (Guarulhos), Somos (São Paulo), Somos (Sorocaba), and the *Facção Homossexual da Convergência Socialista* (São Paulo) (Green, 46-47). The first two days of the National Meeting brought together representatives of all the groups. Within the movement there were two main ideological slants vying for dominance. The first was the autonomist wing who believed that they had to fight for homosexual rights in and of itself and were not willing to join up with other leftist or socialist causes. The left wing wanted to join up with other political and social movements, and thus an ideological rift was created between the two opposing factions. As a result of the two different ideological goals, the movement split apart. Green writes, “The catalyst and scapegoat for the split that was to occur in the movement because of these two divergent political perspectives was the *Facção Homossexual da Convergência Socialista* (Homosexual Faction of the Socialist Convergence)” (47). The third day of the national meeting was the largest and was attended by over 800 people, this was the largest gathering of the public that supported gay rights that had ever been held in Brazil.

After the split that occurred during the national meeting between the autonomous wing and the left wing, a split occurred within Somos itself. A majority of Somos’

members who wanted to show solidarity with the socialist left cause eventually left the group over the issue of attending the May Day celebration and started a new organization, *Otra Coisa* (Something Else) (Green, 48). After the split that divided *Somos*, those that remained in the group decided to adopt the position that the group would not formally align with other leftist socialist causes, however, members were allowed to affiliate with other organizations and participate in any demonstration they wished. This move helped *Somos* to expand ideologically as an organization regarding their individual members while at the same time ensuring that their organization would be autonomous from other social movements.

Despite rivalry between *Otra Coisa* and *Somos*, the two groups came together to plan another rally in 1980 in response to frequent police harassment. Green writes, “On May 24, 1980 at the second anniversary celebration of *Somos* held in a local gay club, one of the members announced that the police had begun to round up gays, lesbians, transvestites, and prostitutes in downtown São Paulo” (49). As a result of this, *Otra Coisa* and *Somos* planned a massive rally to be held on June 13, 1980 at the Municipal Theater (a traditional free-speech area) to protest the actions of the Police Chief Richetti who had ramped up arrests of homosexuals resulting in the arrest of over 1,500 the previous month (Green, 49). The rally was extremely successful given the political climate in Brazil at the time. Over 500 attended the rally at the Municipal Theater, and the numbers soon swelled to over 1,000 as the activists marched through the streets of São Paulo. Soon after the protest, the police raids and roundups tapered off.

In addition to the decrease in police harassment, there was an increase in public exposure to the homosexual community, and as a result, anti-homosexual groups began to

threaten the major groups. Gays became the targets of an angry population that were reacting against cultural changes. Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell write, “The number of gangs that hunted down homosexuals was on the rise; groups of ‘homophobes’ prowled the city, setting on and beating up anyone who fit the usual stereotype of a homosexual in gait, speech, or dress” (158). Shortly after Somos moved into their new headquarters, a threatening letter was sent to them in October of 1980 from a group calling itself Cruzada Anti-homossexualismo (Antihomosexual Crusade). A passage in the letter read, “clean up the ‘oil spot’ of cheap perfume that is masculine prostitution... [that] prostitutes the Sacred Brazilian Family, weakening the foundations of the Nation” (Green, 50). In November of that year Somos responded to the threatening letter with a banner at a demonstration in São Bernardo do Campo that read “STOP TERRORIST ACTS: SOMOS GROUP DE AFIRMAÇÃO HOMOSSEXUAL” (Green, 50).

A month later in December a meeting was called to plan another national meeting. While sixteen groups attended the movement and membership levels seemed to have leveled off, and even though the various groups wanted to work together to advance the movement, the direction or path to take seemed vague; as a result a second national meeting was never planned.

Despite the failure to organize a national meeting four homosexual groups from São Paulo- Ação Lésbica-Feminista, Somos, Alegria-Alegria, and the Homosexual Faction of the Socialist Convergence -held a meeting to re-think the direction of the movement, try to improve the movement, and figure out ways to keep the movement going (Green, 50). The group which met on April 14 and 15, 1981 decided to plan a yearly celebration of the June 13th incident to commemorate the demonstration that

followed the police raids in 1980. In addition they also encouraged monthly meetings between lesbians of the different groups to address their own specific issues and grievances within the larger movement.

Some success followed in the wake of the first national meeting and the various demonstrations. Lula, head of the Workers' party, spoke in favor of homosexual rights at the Workers' Party National Convention in September of 1981 stating, "we will not permit that homosexuality will be treated as a sickness, and much less a case for the police, in our party" (Green, 50). Homosexual candidates were fielded in eight elections in 1982, and the media had begun to discuss homosexuality, so it seemed as if the movement was gaining ground. During this period between 1978 and 1982 both the alternative and the mainstream press were addressing homosexual issues. Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Halleswell write, "The mainstream press also printed some reports on the topic that led to the journalists' prosecution for their 'unhealthy apologies for homosexuality,' and TV Tupi's Flávio Cacalcanti used his program to bring into public debate the sex-change operation performed by Dr. Farina on the transsexual Valdir" (140). It seemed as if the homosexual movement was gaining social acceptance, but just as the movement began to crest, it crashed in upon itself.

Lampião decided to cease publication in July of 1981, Green writes, "According to Trevisan (1986: 150-151), who became one of the board's most outspoken opponents of the gay movement's left wing and of the participation of organized socialists in the movement, *Lampião*'s 'divergence from the general direction of the gay movement became more and more pronounced' as it 'radicalized its repudiation of gay activists'" (51). Another opinion is offered by Albuquerque et al. who contend that by trying to

depict and represent the entire community, they were vulnerable to criticism from the various opinions of the homosexual community. Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell write, “Gays themselves classified and criticized each other and exhibited a whole gamut of practices not all of which were even accepted among all homosexuals. The split that occurred among those running *Lampião* and its eventual closure in 1981 were the result of such conflicts” (156).

After the collapse of *Lampião*, many additional factors served to undermine and eventually disrupt the movement so severely it could not endure. A severe economic recession hit in 1981 and 1982 which hurt many national movements and limited political opportunities from a multiplicity of groups. The many groups competing for political opportunity were the left, the black movement, the women’s movement, the worker’s movement, the student movement. Therefore, the homosexual movement couldn’t get their message through the menagerie of grievances and as a result there was a political bottleneck.

Only one group managed to continue operating after the collapse of the early Brazilian homosexual movement: Grupo Gay da Bahia which is still in operation today (Green, 51). Currently the GGB is the oldest “association for the defense of the human rights for homosexuals functioning in Brazil” and is based in Salvador the capital city of Bahia in Northeast Brazil (ggb.org.br). The GGB is a member of the International Lesbian and Gay Association and participates on the staff of the International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission. The GGB’s three main objectives are: to defend the rights to full citizenship for gays, lesbians, transvestites and transsexuals, to spread accurate information about homosexuality, and to promote awareness (ggb.org.br).

The members of the GGB are primarily blacks and mestizos (70%), poor, and usually fall between the age range of 15 to 25 (ggb.org.br.). In addition there is the Lesbian Group of Bahia that works in tandem with the GGB. The GGB has been incredibly active in Brazil, and it currently publishes two bulletins per year in addition to many pamphlets targeting health concerns. Since its inception in 1980 the group has published books on homosexuality, held conferences, lead media campaigns, participated in a successful campaign to remove homosexuality from the list of sexual deviances dictated in the International Classification of Illnesses of the World Health Organization (1985), defended people living with HIV/AIDS, promoted AIDS awareness, and has succeeded in passing anti-discrimination legislation in three State Constitutions and seventy-three Municipal Statutes (ggb.org.br.). The GGB was instrumental in sustaining the homosexual movement during the 1980s and is now a robust group that has effected dramatic change within Brazil.

During the early years of the 1980s, gays and lesbians were beginning to improve their image within the media and the public sphere in Brazil. During this same time period HIV/AIDS began to circulate the globe, and the virus would forever be attached to the word “homosexual.” While the United States and Europe bore the brunt of the explosion of the AIDS epidemic in 1981 and 1982, Brazil did not experience a documented case until 1983 (Parker, 156). When AIDS first appeared in Brazil in 1983, it was immediately associated exclusively with homosexuality. Parker in his article, *Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in Urban Brazil*, writes, “Virtually all the AIDS victims, who were uniformly classified as ‘homosexuals,’ had spent some time in New York City before contacting symptoms of the disease, and it was thus assumed that the

virus had been imported into Brazil from New York [by homosexuals]” (156). The disease was most prevalent in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In 1984 reported cases of AIDS increased; there were 113 confirmed cases, 43 of which were in São Paulo. At this point other segments of the population began to encounter the disease, but the stigma that AIDS was a homosexual disease remained. By 1985 the number of cases increased dramatically with 462 reported cases and 224 confirmed deaths (Parker, 157). At this point the Brazilian government began to realize it was on the brink of a health crisis. Parker writes that in 1985 Brazil “moved into fourth place (behind the United States, France, and Haiti) in the list of nations with the highest number of confirmed AIDS victims” (157). It must be noted here that the HIV/AIDS crisis did not affect Argentina, and Argentine gays, in the same manner. Brown writes, “Surprisingly, AIDS played little or no direct coalition-building role, despite the fact that about three-quarters of the cases of HIV infection were the result of homosexual contact” (131).

The early fears generated by the AIDS epidemic were enormous. In addition to the social fear already surrounding the disease, the application of the conceptual model developed in the United States and Western Europe further impeded the ability of the Brazilian public to understand the disease. The conceptual model used to understand the transmission of the disease in the United States and Western Europe was faulty in the way it constructed “at-risk groups.” Shortly following the outbreak of HIV/AIDS, the media within the United States and world-wide quickly released the list of at-risk groups in order to ease fears and warn against possible exposure. However, the danger with releasing the list of at-risk groups was that it stigmatized those groups as likely to have the disease. Parker adds that the U.S. and Western European model focuses on “apparent

homosexual and bisexual transmission of AIDS... [and as a result the] nature of the relationship between sexuality and AIDS in Brazil seems to have been taken for granted, rather than carefully examined” (157).

In Richard K. Herrell’s article *HIV/ AIDS Research and the Social Sciences* he argues that the very construction of at-risk groups demonizes those groups. Herrell writes, “Representations of the scapegoat and definitions of ‘risk groups’ versus the ‘general population’ evidence the imposition of cultural constructions of stigma, deviance, and illegality on unequally empowered persons, classes and races” (Herrell, 201). Due to the media’s depiction of homosexuals as carriers of HIV, another social stigma was attached to homosexuality, and they were again portrayed as outsiders. Herrell adds that when “‘Populations’ are seen atomistically, as collectivities of individuals ‘choosing life-styles.’ ‘Behaviors’ are considered the consequence of willful, unmediated decisions. Categories of epidemiology are used to create an ‘other,’ usually a disapproved ‘other,’ as opposed to the general population”” (202).

The problem presented focuses on whether or not anthropology and the media can actually shape how a disease is perceived by a culture and how that culture will react in accordance to the framework of the “risk groups.” The greater problem comes in when, “Correlation becomes causation; promiscuity is used to define gay men as a ‘risk category’” (Herrell, 202). In addition Parker writes, “This perception has been reinforced in a number of ways: medical authorities have irresponsibly disseminated untrue information about the disease at the same time as they have called for the reduction of civil liberties for homosexuals” (168). For the gay community to establish itself as part of the overall culture, anthropologists argue that the positioning of an entire subculture as

an “at risk group” that may endanger the “dominant group,” by the medical community for the purposes of disease control may further inhibit the acceptance of the homosexual community into the greater culture.

Despite early stigmatization and the slow reaction to the virus by the Brazilian government, steps were eventually taken to combat the virus. The *Programa Nacional de Combate á AIDS* (National Program to Combat AIDS) was created to facilitate interactions between researchers, to monitor the spread of the disease, to organize treatment strategies, and to educate the public at large, although funding proved to be a impediment (Parker, 168). After the inception of Brazil’s National AIDS Program in 1985, Brazil became a global leader in the fight against AIDS. Mario Osava reports that, “It reduced the mortality rate of the disease by 50 percent (between 1995 and 1999) and slashed AIDS-related hospitalizations by 80 percent (from 1997 to 2000)” (ipsnews.net). Despite scientific successes the deep social stigma was already attached to AIDS and homosexuals were still considered the carriers and victims of the virus in general. As late as 1987 treatment was still refused to AIDS patients at private hospitals forcing them to rely on help from government and university hospitals.

Violent crimes against homosexuals reflect the deep stigma held in Brazil toward the act of homosexuality that stemmed from the widespread social condemnation of it. Violence against homosexuals continued to be a problem throughout the end of the 1970s to the present day in Brazil. The ILGA website reports a message from GGB spokesman, Luiz Mott, stating that over 1,600 homosexuals have been murdered in Brazil between 1980 and 1997 with only 5% of the killers being tried (<http://www.ilga.info/>). “Putting gays outside the protection of the law and killing them had been going on before these

incidents came to light, and when they were reported to newspapers like *Lampião da Esquina* it became apparent that violence was a constant in the daily lives of homosexuals” (Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell, 151). Within the article by Albuquerque, Ceballos, and Hallewell there are countless stories which were published in *Lampião* of vicious murders committed against homosexuals. Time after time the murders of homosexuals receive little to no critical police attention and as a result convictions are rare at less than five percent. In addition to this police are themselves the perpetrators of crimes against homosexuals. Following a message from Luiz Mott of the GGB the ILGA reported that:

Four military policemen in the city of Salvador (Bahia, Brazil), after humiliating and torturing two transvestite sex workers, forced them to undress and throw themselves into the sea, on the night of August 4th. One of them, "Luana" (Junior da Silva Lago) drowned and his body was found three days later in an advanced state of decomposition. The witness to the crime, the transvestite Joyce, is being protected by human rights organizations as her life is at risk. The same applies to the President of the Salvador Transvestites Association, Lena Oxxa (<http://www.ilga.info/>).

When the mainstream media reports the murders of homosexuals, they often sensationalize the deaths in a never ending stream of headlines that connect the terms: homosexual and violence. Albuquerque et al. write, “It is easy to find reports in the most diverse news media: sensational stories of bodies found stabbed in the buttocks, with their penises cut off, their eyes gouged out; bodies that have been found only in an advanced state of decomposition...” (159).

Violence is a part of many homosexuals’ lives. A large percentage of homosexual men are prostitutes in cities scattered throughout Brazil. Brazil’s highly structured

gender system has ridged definitions of socially acceptable gender roles. However, the roles are malleable in regard to sexual acts in a manner that is not comparable to the United States. Due to their highly structured gender system, one's homosexuality is determined by effeminate behavior and by being the submissive or penetrated partner. A male who is macho and the penetrating partner during a homosexual act is not considered to be a homosexual. In contrast those who are the effeminate partner or the penetrated partner are considered to be homosexuals. Those who are effeminate homosexuals often work as prostitutes, and this may be because it is a slightly acceptable social role for them to occupy.

Kulick writes in his article, *Causing a Commotion: Public Scandal as Resistance among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*:

As homosexuals and as transgendered street prostitutes, travesties find themselves obliged to reassert continually their rights to occupy urban space, and they lead their lives aware that they may, at any moment, suddenly become the target of verbal harassment and/ or physical violence from anyone who feels provoked by their presence in that space (Kulick, 4).

Attackers can take many forms and harassment can be doled out from policemen, passers-by in cars or busses, or gangs of young men (Kulick, 4). While most harassment is limited to verbal slurs the forms of abuse run the gambit. Kulick writes:

Much of this harassment takes the form of verbal abuse, but policemen also assault, rob and brutalize travesties; gangs of young men sometimes severely bash them; and people speeding by in cars often throw at them objects such as rocks and bottles. Sometimes they even shoot them (4).

Violence in Brazil is a problem in general, however, the violent death rates of homosexuals in major cities in Brazil are quite staggering. According to a dossier

Violação dos Direitos Humanos e Assassinatos de Homossexuais no Brasil no ano de 1997 (Violation of Human Rights and Killings of Gay People in Brazil in 1997), created by the GGB, Brazil is the world leader in the murder of homosexuals with *travestis* as the most vulnerable sub-group due to their proportionately lower numbers, 10,000 compared to 15 million homosexuals (<http://www.ilga.info/>). In addition, according to the GGB “Many of these crimes are committed with excessive cruelty, with many stab wounds, strangulation, suffocation and torture whilst still alive” (<http://www.ilga.info/>). Pedro Almeida told AFP news agency in 2005: “A homosexual is murdered here every two days- just for being homosexual” (BBC, Brazil hosts huge Gay Pride march, 1). The media in Brazil, one of the largest markets in the world, often reports on the horrific and sensational murders of homosexuals and portrays the victims in a poor light. Kulick writes, “Generally speaking, whenever travesties do appear in the news, they are featured there as dangerous criminals...or as corpses (often photographed in lurid close-up)” (4). In addition, when homosexuals are the perpetrators of crimes, they are homosexuals first and criminals second; whereas a heterosexual individual is portrayed as a criminal but no reference is made towards their sexual status as a heterosexual. Here Kulick provides a crucial insight:

An interesting linguistic difference between these two journalistic depictions of travesties is that whenever they are accused of committing violence, this is always clearly spelled out in headlines. In stark contrast to this, reports of violence against travestis are often either without agents or the agentive, subject position of the sentence is filled with an instrument- a knife, or a gun, or a blow- not a person (Kulick, 4).

Thus crimes are portrayed as part of a homosexual's life in that they are identified as secondary only to their sexuality. Furthermore, when the crime is committed by homosexuals, they are active in the assault's portrayal, but when they are the victim of the crime, they are negligible objects removed from the act itself.

When the accounts of crimes perpetrated by homosexuals are coupled with the frequent accounts of murders of homosexuals, the link between homosexuality and violence is firmly established in the mainstream culture. Kulick argues, "To be a travesti, so the story goes, is to lead a violent life, live in a violent, criminal milieu, commit violence against others, and risk being the victim of violence oneself" (5). Kulick concludes his argument by stating that contemporary social resistance theory cannot account for the strategies adopted by Brazilian *travestis*. Instead of attacking the systematic social de-humanization they face, they successfully navigate within the structures that oppress them. A common hazard that all *travestis* face is violence; in addition, they commonly attack their own clients robbing and assaulting them, becoming the perpetrators of violence. The practice of robbery is so wide spread their clients typically stash extra money so that they can pay off the *travesti* with little incidence. Finally, many *travestis* give a "scandal" and dish-out the routine social harassment they face out to their clients. Clients will then often pay off the *travesti* to avoid the scandal or further embarrassment. In all the *travestis* in Brazil fight their oppression by using it to the best of their ability through prostitution, robbery, and giving a scandal. The ILGA also reports that according to Zora Yonara, Vice-President of the GGB, "there are three solutions to overcome all this violence and gay murders: scientific sexual education in schools; a more rigorous investigation and punishment of criminals by the police and

justice system; more care by homosexuals themselves, avoiding sex with unknown partner” (<http://www.ilga.info/>). Clearly something must be done in order to drastically lower the number of assaults and murders committed against homosexuals.

Before the passage of the civil rights legislation in Rio Grande do Sul, there was a flurry of activity in the gay community in the preceding decade. After the lull in political activity and demonstrations that occurred during the later half of the 1980s, and early 1990s, the homosexual community began to enter the public arena again. From 1991 to 1994 the number of homosexual groups formally in existence in Brazil jumped from 13 to 52, however, the majority of the groups were financially struggling with only two groups operating out of formal offices (<http://www.ilga.info/>). The first annual Gay Pride Parade was held in São Paulo in June of 1996 and drew about 2,000 participants. During the next decade the annual event would multiply dramatically in size. During the fifth Annual Gay Pride Parade in 2001 held in São Paulo, an estimated 180,000 revelers turned out for the celebration. The mayor of São Paulo, Marta Suplicy, a former sexologist, was quoted by the BBC saying that, “She was proud that the city had a reputation for accepting gay people. People may be different but they have equal rights” (BBC, Record Numbers Join Brazil Gay March, 1). The marches were designed to bring a greater public awareness to homosexuals and their right to exist as freely as others in Brazilian society.

The following year in 2002 the size of the march doubled to over 400,000 participants. The march took place against the backdrop of promised reforms. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso had recently announced his pledge of support for a draft law that would allow for same-sex marriages (BBC, Huge Gay Pride march in Brazil, 1).

Unfortunately a similar reform would not come until 2006, and it was not implemented on a national level. The BBC article further relates, “Addressing the crowd at the start of the march, Miss Suplicy said she was proud to be mayor of a city that was the gay capital of Latin America” (BBC, Huge Gay Pride March in Brazil, 1).

In an article by BBC News the scope of Gay Pride marches in 2005 is revealed. During the ninth annual parade along Avenida Paulista it was reported that “Hundreds of thousands of people have convened for a huge Gay Pride parade in the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo” (BBC, Brazil hosts huge Gay Pride march, 1). The number was confirmed at 1.8 million attendants making it one of the largest parades of its kind in the world. Although the march was a celebration of the homosexual identity, it was also a demonstration demanding the passage of civil-unions legislation that has been stalled for decades in Brazil.

Despite the amazing turnouts at gay pride celebrations and the shift in some segments of the community towards acceptance of homosexuals, many of the organizers commented to BBC reporters that the movement still had a lot to accomplish in regard to the safety of homosexuals in Brazil. Organizer Antonio Carlos da Silva stated, “This is a very macho country, especially some parts of the country; we also rank first in violence against gays so from gay bashing to murder we have a lot of problems in this country” (BBC, Brazil hosts huge Gay Pride march, 1). Another organizer Pedro Almeida told AFP news agency: “A homosexual is murdered here every two days- just for being homosexual” (BBC, Brazil hosts huge Gay Pride March, 1).

The following year at the tenth annual Gay Pride Parade, the numbers of participants expanded yet again in size to an astounding 2.4 million people (BBC,

Crowds celebrate Brazil Gay Pride, 1). Costumes have now become a tradition in the annual parade, and during the 2006 parade some attendees dressed as “Batman, Elvis Presley, Cinderella, Marie Antoinette, and the characters from the Award-winning American film *Brokeback Mountain*...while others also gave a nod to the football World Cup, dressing in the team colors of yellow, green, and blue” (BBC, *Crowds Celebrate Brazil Gay Pride*, 1). Loud music blared from speakers as floats made their way down Avenida Paulista in São Paulo. While the influences of American styled parades are apparent, seen in the symbols of the rainbow flag, pink triangles, and the like, there is a uniquely Brazilian quality to the parade that distinguishes it from its European and American counterparts.

At this demonstration parade planners and participants again commented on the violence homosexuals are faced with across Brazil. A participant in the celebration, Juliana, interviewed by the BBC comments that while tolerance in the major cities has expanded there is still pronounced intolerance in other areas of the country. She states, “Here I guess we are privileged, in São Paulo because here we can be open almost every day. But for most of the people, they can’t be open every day at all” (BBC, *Crowds Celebrate Brazil Gay Pride*, 2).

The Catholic Church has long opposed gay marriage and has played an integral role in demonizing homosexuals in the world’s largest Catholic country. Despite the legalization of civil unions in Rio Grande do Sul, the Catholic Church has historically been vehemently opposed to homosexuality and has opposed gay unions in Brazil and abroad. Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world, and as such the political and religious sway that the Church holds is pronounced and affects the possibility of

extending the civil-unions legislation to the other states of Brazil. Pope John Paul II repeatedly condemned all forms of homosexuality and barred homosexuals from becoming clergy despite a lifelong vow of celibacy. In 2000 the Vatican went as far as to try to ban a planned march to be held during the celebration of World Pride Week in Rome (BBC, Pope Condemns Gay Rights March, 2). While addressing a crowd of pilgrims in St. Peter's Square in 2000, the Pope vigorously denounced homosexuality and homosexual acts while also calling for tolerance towards homosexuals from the Catholic community at large. The BBC quotes Pope John Paul as he spoke to the crowd in the Square: "In the name of the Church of Rome, I must express sadness for the affront to the great jubilee of the year 2000 and the offence to Christian values of a city that is so dear to the heart of Catholics of the whole world" (BBC, Pope Condemns Gay Rights March, 2). In his speech he went on to describe homosexuality as unnatural and evil. The Church in Rome tried to stop the march, distance it self from the march, and condemned the Italian government for allowing the rally to proceed.

While the traditional Catholic Church rejects homosexuality, there are splinter churches that are now opening their parishes to homosexuals. Pastor Justino Luis tells the BBC, "The traditional church doesn't want us...I know [God] loves me the way I am, and I know when he made me he planned for me to be the way I am" (BBC, Crowds Celebrate Brazil Gay Pride, 2). Pastor Luis has opened a church serving mostly homosexual worshipers. During the past few decades many major religions have wrestled with the decision to accept or reject homosexual parishioners. The Catholic Church has clearly and repeatedly defined its condemnation of homosexuality both within Rome and abroad.

A momentous achievement occurred during 2006 in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul. In 2006, civil unions were legalized in a decision emanating from a panel of judges in the southern state who were ruling on the issue of pension rights in a law-suit filed by a professor at the University in Rio Grande do Sul who was seeking partner benefits. The ruling quoted in the New York Times read as follows, “Notwithstanding the ethical, philosophic, anthropological and religious discussion, the fact is that homosexual relations exist and, therefore, in the name of judicial security, deserve to be regulated” (Rohter, 1). The decision grants same-sex couples broad rights in inheritance, insurance benefits, pensions, and child custody. Although the Unions are not recognized on the national level, the achievement sets precedence for other Brazilian states to follow. The BBC reports that, “The ruling binds all judges and justices-of-the-peace in the state to approve civil unions ‘between persons of sound mind and independent of sexual orientation’” (BBC, Brazilian go-ahead for gay unions, 1). The ruling came in response to a request for a decision made by Rio Grande do Sul’s Human Right Commission on behalf of many gay rights groups within the state.

In conclusion, this political victory is of enormous importance in that it will help to redefine homosexuals as equal to their heterosexual compatriots in the eyes of the state. In addition this recognition of the inherent equality between citizens will hopefully begin to ease the rampant social discrimination frequently experienced by homosexuals. The statement issued by the judges that decided the case reflects the inherit equality among citizens.

The fact that this decision was rendered in the traditionally more conservative state of Rio Grande do Sul shows promise for the advancement of the movement in other

parts of the country. For Brazilian homosexuals to escape the cycle of constant violence they are exposed to social acceptance must increase. By allowing homosexuals to enter into legal civil-unions the Brazilian government will endow homosexuals with the same rights and privileges that heterosexual couples already have. By doing this the government will demonstrate tolerance towards homosexuals and this will hopefully begin to ease the social condemnation they face. Until the government sees homosexuals as equal to heterosexuals there is little hope that the people of Brazil will accept them as equals.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

While it is clear through the reading of the text that there are considerable similarities, it is also evident that there are points at which all three movements differ considerably. We will begin our comparison of the three different movements by first examining the three progressions needed for a successful “identity based” homosexual movement. They include: first, establishing a separate and distinct homosexual identity from the prevailing heterosexual identity and norms; second, to then form a subculture; and third, for this subculture to develop into homosexual political action groups.

The three variables that have affected how all three countries’ homosexual movements have progressed are as follows: the political opportunity for a movement to coalesce and assert itself, the level of social tolerance afforded the minority group of homosexuals, and third, the time period in which they originate. Although the movements in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil have differed on when they formed and what form of government was ruling the state during the formation, all three movements do follow the outlined progression.

There are many other similarities all three groups have experienced between one another. First, all three nations experienced a desire to “medicalize” homosexuality during the first three decades of the twentieth century. This meant that they initially

classified homosexuality as a “social and personal” disease to be cured by medical professionals such as doctors, psychologists, and psychiatrists.

Second, despite the removal of formal laws against engaging in homosexual behavior, the prevailing social attitudes were relatively unreformed from changes in legal codes regarding homosexuals. Although arguments are made that legislative reforms are the best way to end discrimination of homosexuals, it is clear that this must be in tandem with the changing of social norms regarding homosexuality. It is also important to note that while the reformation of police codes may not broadly change public opinion, decriminalizing homosexual activity does remove legal discrimination and helps homosexuals become secure in their identities by not criminalizing homosexuals as a group.

Third, these movements were initiated by male homosexuals. This was due to the fact that women were not yet allowed in the male-dominated public sphere. When the movements in Argentina and Brazil began, women were under strict patriarchal rule and were not frequently allowed into the public sphere. As a result of this, they were not able to meet other lesbians. In the United States women did not appear in the homosexual political movement until they had gained access to the public sphere. As women have defined their own space in the public sphere they have asserted their voices in the varying movements.

Fourth, all three movements experienced police and governmental harassment. Homosexual individuals were often harassed, and as homosexual groups formed, the police and specific governmental agencies began to collect the names of their members

and even infiltrate the groups. Harassment of homosexuals by police included bar raids, interrogation, taunting, arrests, rapes and murders.

Fifth, the broad mobilization that led to two of the three movements were all precipitated by a raid on an established gay bar. The raids resulted in anger and a desire on behalf of the homosexual community to strike back at the government. In the United States, the broad homosexual movement was triggered by the riot at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. In Argentina, authoritarian rule ended in 1983 and a return to democracy was beginning. Many homosexuals hoped they would enjoy new freedoms and security due to the new political climate. However, following a bar raid 150 activists met and formed the CHA. In Brazil, the movement did not have a specific catalyst but the split between the left and right wing was ultimately mended when the groups decided to band together to combat police harassment. This development is interesting because these movements did not become broad until antagonism pushed them into formal organization and mobilization.

Sixth, in all three of the countries, homosexual movements experienced a gender split shortly after women joined the male dominated groups. As a result of these splits, women created their own women-centered lesbian groups. Interestingly, in all three movements, the gender split would usually last only a few years and then both men and women's homosexual groups would realize they had to work together to further their own causes. As a result the split would usually lessen and groups would begin to interact with one another on specific projects.

Seventh, after the first sustained groups were started they would issue publications. Through these publications the groups defined and communicated where

the safe and unsafe public spaces were. In addition to this, they also listed homosexual run, or friendly establishments to the larger homosexual communities that did, or did not, reside in the major cities.

Eighth, the media in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil slowly began to embrace both fictional and non-fictional homosexual characters in media and the arts after homosexual identities were established in their respective countries. Furthermore, it is reasonable to expect that as the number of positive depictions of homosexuality increase in the media and the arts, social tolerance will increase as well within each country.

Ninth, as the Brazilian and American movements gained political momentum, their causes were taken up for and adopted by major political parties within each country. In the United States the Democratic Party has absorbed homosexual rights as a plank in their parties' platform. In Brazil, the Workers' Party headed by Lula adopted homosexual rights and fielded homosexual candidates during the 1980s.

Tenth, all three groups have managed to secure protections in either, cities and states, but neither the United States, Argentine, or Brazilian movements have managed to achieve marriage or civil unions on a federal level. It seems that it is reasonable that these groups will continue to achieve success as they refine and hone their techniques. While many similarities have been uncovered, there are more similarities waiting to be explored and discovered.

Although there may not be an exhaustive list of differences between the three movements, due to the fact that they started in different geographical regions that had varying religious beliefs, and cultural norms there are important differences that need to

be noted. First, all three movements started at different times. However, all three movements did start as soon as their catalyst, usually in the form of a police raid, was ignited, and this had to coincide with a breadth of political opportunity for the movements' success.

Second, in Argentina and Brazil the fresh memories of brutal periods of authoritarian rule led the heterosexual public to be more tolerant of the homosexual movements and their goals, than the heterosexual public in the United States. The memories of the Argentine and Brazilian public can not be understated in its difference from the American public regarding the reactions to the homosexual movements. However, this does not suggest causation for the movement, it simply provides a quality of public sympathy for repressed or minority groups within the society.

Third, all three of the movements either collapsed or went underground; however, this occurred for different reasons. The United States movement went underground during the McCarthy era and the return to the strict social norms of the 1950s. The Argentine movement collapsed when it experienced a brief return to authoritarian rule. The Brazilian movement stalled due to a financial collapse and political crisis in Brazil during the initial years of the 1980s.

Fourth, there is a glaring difference in the social conceptions of homosexuality in the United States and South America. The rules of social interaction, what constitutes homosexual activity, and the taboos of homosexuality are completely and vastly different in the U.S., Argentina, and Brazil.

Finally, there were differences in what the legislation targeted and the rights that were conferred to homosexuals within them. In the United States there are further

differences in the legislations passed by the individual states. While a uniform policy for the entire country is perhaps ideal, any reforms are welcomed and needed.

Another area of interest is how the individual movements have influenced one another. The first area of interest is in homosexual symbols. The association of homosexuality with the symbol of the *pink triangle* began in the prison camps of Nazi Germany. The triangle was a symbol given to different types of prisoners. Political criminals were given a green triangle patch, petty criminals were given black triangle patches, and homosexuals were given pink triangles patches to wear on their uniform shirts. Homosexuals faced a brutal and short existence in the Nazi camps, and while their numbers were low in comparison to other groups of prisoners, their death rate was higher and their deaths ensued quicker than any other group of prisoners within the camps. In his work *The Pink Triangle*, Richard Plant examines and explores the history of the symbol and information pertaining to their work assignments, abuses endured, and life expectancy of homosexual prisoners within the camps. A further discussion of the history of homosexuals in Nazi Germany can be found in his work.

The “pink triangle” as a symbol of the gay movement has been transferred from its creation in Nazi Germany to the United States, and then transmitted again to Argentina and Brazil. Both of the movements in Argentina and Brazil have adopted the symbols of the American gay movement such as the pink triangle, rainbow flag, and the color lavender for lesbians.

In addition to the adoption of symbols, there was a transmission of rhetoric and tactics as well. In Brazil the first homosexual discussion group was formed by João Trevesian who had spent time working for the movement in the United States. In another

instance of inter-movement influence, one of Brazil's first big groups took as the beginning of their namesake the phrase *Somos*, which was the name of a magazine formerly published by the collapsed FLH in Argentina. Although it is not definitively known whether or not the group specifically switched its name from Núcleo de Ação pelos Direitos dos Homossexualis (Nucleus for Action for Homosexuals' Rights), to Somos: Grupo de Afirmação Homossexual (We Are: Group of Homosexual Affirmation), it is known that many of those in the upper echelons of the group saw the FLH as an example to follow. It is most likely that the members of the newly founded Somos new of their namesake and used the phrase within its new name to attract members and link the movement to the Argentine movement.

The transmission of symbols and tactics from one homosexual movement to another is an interesting facet of the complex interactions of homosexual movements with each other. The homosexual movement has gone international and groups such as the GGB from Brazil, are members of the International Lesbian and Gay Association and are on the staff of the International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission. The international movement will certainly continue to push for new reforms, social acceptance, and civil rights in countless countries.

Overall, one of the biggest changes in the social landscape across the world is the existence of a homosexual identity within the images produced by the media. As a result, it has become more likely that homosexual movements will progress and achieve more victories due to the fact that homosexuals are no longer invisible to the larger society. It is also highly likely that as the individual movements continue to achieve political

success in their respective societies, cultural norms will shift towards limiting discrimination against homosexuals.

Although there are still few protections for homosexuals, it seems that progress is replacing setbacks and attacks. The identity theory of homosexual movements is clearly reflected and reinforced within this work and it is clear that these movements have exploited the lines of political cleavage, targeted broad goals, and used a wide array of political tactics. Some of these tactics are: group organization, the drafting of protective legislation, presenting a positive image for homosexuals within the media, and assembling in massive parades demanding rights.

Other areas of exploration that can be targeted beyond this work are the influence of the internet on the transmission of gay and lesbian cultures and symbols. In addition, one could explore the nexus between political repression and social activism when political oppression lifts, regarding homosexuality. Another area of research interest would consist of a more in-depth look at the failures of various movements. Finally, an interpretation of the psychological pathologies of killers, who violently target and attack homosexuals, may prove to be an interesting topic to investigate. As of now it seems remote that the international push for homosexual rights will weaken.

The individual movements in the United States, Argentina, and Brazil have made impressive reforms and progress, but they are continuing to push for more comprehensive legislation that addresses homosexuals on the federal level. It seems likely, barring any major social changes, that the movement will continue to achieve political and social acceptance.

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This thesis was typed by Julia C. Decker