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Printing Profanity: How the Homophiles Sought to Organize an American Gay Movement

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**Printing Profanity: How the Homophiles Sought to Organize an
American Gay Movement**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

Department of History

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May 15, 2019

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Class of 2019

Dedication

To my parents, who may not agree with me about much in this paper but who have always showered me in their support. They have sacrificed so much from my birth so that I could always make school my top priority. When I was 5 years old, my teddy bear of a dad was already panicking about saving enough for my education, and my parents redistributed their budget to put more money from their paychecks into my college fund than they could probably comfortably afford at the time. Despite going to college some 600 miles away from home, they have had my back every step of the way. From helping me get to a hotel when I missed my train home, to an airport when I missed my train the following year, to driving four hours roundtrip in rush-hour traffic to pick me up when my car broke down at a red light and needed to be towed, my mom and dad picked me up from too many of my clumsy stumbles into adulthood to recount. I simply would not be here without you. I love you both so very much.

To my community, you beautiful wild untamable thing. Being a lesbian felt like such a terrifying burden to me when I first started coming out to myself, but I look upon it now as one of the greatest joys and privileges in my life. The friends, the family I have forged through our shared experiences, the bravery and grace I have seen and felt, I am so grateful for it all. I'm proud to be part of this moment in history, and to have had access to the voices of those whom I consider elders, ancestors before me. I wish they could see us now, standing on their shoulders.

To Dr. Coogan and Dr. Nuñez, who have given me so much of their time these past two semesters helping shape this paper, and these past four years shaping me. You have fostered a lifelong love of history in me and helped me discover the real power of our field.

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Introduction

Gay history, as it is currently taught in America, centers the Stonewall Riots of 1969 as a cataclysm of social change for gay rights, and as the beginning of gay resistance. Most histories of gay resistance in America will mention efforts of early homophile organizations, and credit the Stonewall riots as a culmination of those earlier efforts. But this is an inaccurate interpretation of gay history. The homophile movement deserves vastly more credit for how gay Americans navigate the world today than do the riots at the Stonewall Inn. The riots should not be so easily tied to homophile efforts, when they were instigated and carried out by members of the community that were systemically excluded from homophile organizations, and were denounced by homophile activists. What the riots did was challenge the entire framework by which homophiles were building their resistance. David Paternotte and Manon Tremblay argue that the homophile movement was killed by the new style of “gay liberation” movements.¹ By the 1970s, the homophile movement would fraction over their many differences and cease to be a cohesive or effective voice of change.

Texts that do recognize the distinction between the homophiles and the gay liberationists at Stonewall, discuss the conservatism and assimilationist goals of the homophiles with disdain. In her book *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians*, accomplished and respected gay historian Lillian Faderman organized her chapters on homophile organization under the section “the silent era,” and began discussing gay liberation under the section, “the bold ones.”² This categorization obfuscates the tremendous and rebellious work done by homophile activists in the 1950s. Yes, the 1950s was an era of incredible

¹ David Paternotte and Manon Tremblay, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Lesbian and Gay Activism*, London: Taylor and Francis, 2016, 41.

² Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, vii.

suppression. That is all the more reason for us to appreciate the courage it took for homophiles to publicly organize as a unified community. The gay community today owes so much of its modern freedoms to homophile's resistance in the face of the Lavender Scare. Gay marriage and the right to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces are both accomplishments of early homophile conversations and efforts, as is the ability to publicly exist as a homosexual or engage in acts of public affection with someone of the same sex.³

The term "Lavender Scare" refers to a phenomenon in post-war America that rose out of Cold War pressures and fears; it was the federal persecution of gays and lesbians, and involved witch-hunts to expose and expel homosexuals from employment. America was absorbed in a rivalry with the Soviet Union, a conflict fueled by a nuclear game of chicken, that involved a complex network of spies on both sides. Homosexuals working in federal positions were deemed a threat to national security because of their vulnerability to blackmail; the government assumed that homosexuals leading a very private life would be blackmailed into surrendering confidential information to the Soviets. The story is more complex though, because if that was truly all, the government would be incentivized to make homosexuals feel safe and supported. If there was no reason for anyone to fear being outed, then homosexuals working in the government would not pose a threat to national security. But there was also an ideological and moral battle happening between the United States and the Soviet Union, and long-standing homophobia was exacerbated in this time as America emphasized the importance of its Christian family values to the world theater. So while it had always been somewhat necessary for homosexuals to keep a low profile in America, they had previously been able to exist with more freedom and able to form a subcommunity, sometimes isolated or leading a double life, as long as they adhered to social

³ Paternotte and Tremblay, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Lesbian and Gay Activism*, 41.

codes in public. This new era brought intense scrutiny and suspicion that made it near impossible for homosexuals to commune with one another without facing social exposure, unemployment, or arrest.

The conditions of the Lavender Scare necessitated the organization of a gay community. While many gay Americans felt terrified and isolated in this time, several individuals felt like it was a point of no return. It was no longer safe to lead a quiet, low profile life; these individuals saw no option but to organize and resist the national panic.

This paper will identify these individuals and the several early organizations that make up this “homophile movement.” This is a period of activism and organization preceding the majority of written gay history focusing on the Stonewall riots and Gay Liberation. The term “homophile” was a term created by gay activists in the 1950s who worried that the word “homosexual” would be too off-putting to heterosexuals they sought to gain support from; the suffix “phile” replaced sexual with an emphasis on love. I will be using terminology that people would have used to describe themselves, although that language has evolved with the gay community over the past 7 decades. The word “homosexual” will be heavily used, although it is not in common use today and is now considered a pathologizing word for its association with the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), because it was the language used by gay people in the 50s and 60s to describe themselves. The word transsexual will also appear, but it is similarly important to remember not to apply this word to people today, as “transgender” is the accepted term by trans individuals now.

The homophile movement was by no means a unified front with a unified purpose. It was composed of many individuals all trying to figure out a solution to problems which affected them in different ways. The homophile movement was composed in all directions because there was

not an organized gay community at the time; everyone was starting to organize in response to McCarthyism out of necessity and fear and in response to other civil rights causes organizing for racial equality and women's liberation. But several homophile organizations formed independently out of specific needs that did not align with each other, and people were hesitant to align as a unified LGBT minority because they were divided by class, race, and gender. Radicalization of the gay liberation movement in the late 1960s and 70s was led by working class black and trans activists who had less privilege to lose than their white middle-class homophile counterparts. These gay liberationists were frustrated with the very goals of the homophile movement being assimilation into an ultimately white heterosexual society.

The first chapter, *Discovery in the Darkness*, will examine how national publications in the 50s and early 60s gave gay readers a chance to understand themselves as part of a larger community with similar struggles, and started to encourage them to resist oppression through legal means, and taught them how to facilitate conversations with heterosexuals towards understanding. Magazines fulfilled an important role in the homophile movement in having a national readership that allowed gay individuals to feel less isolated and start forming identity consciousness. Letters written to *ONE* magazine reveal that despite its focus on the issues of white gay men, it was significant to many lesbians as some of the only available literature on gay experiences. It is hard to understand the impact of the magazines outside of letters written to the organizations, because many readers were afraid to subscribe or involve themselves with the homophile movement outside of picking up an issue discretely from the newsstand. These magazines were the target of FBI investigations and censorship laws. Eventually, *ONE* won a supreme court case that forever changed those censorship laws and made it safer for the whole community to openly discuss homosexuality.

The second chapter, Organized Civil Action, discusses how homophile organizations across the country sought to interact with each other to form a national, unified stance on homosexual rights. Earlier victories by homophile organizations made publishing gay content easier and this resulted in a bloom of new publications and more risqué, envelope-pushing content. Homophile leaders were inspired by the Civil Rights movement to engage in civil protest, especially on the issue of the draft and the military's explicit exclusion of homosexuals. Younger activists and organizations joined the cause throughout the sixties, and they brought with them many rebellious, nonconformist notions. Many homophile publications emphasized a newfound pride and joy in celebrating homosexuality as opposed to conforming to a heterosexual mold.

The third chapter, A House Divided Cannot Stand, explores how the homophile movement disintegrated in the late sixties. Younger gay activists were frustrated with the more conservative approach of older homophile leaders, their resistance to flamboyant expression of homosexuality and their desire to fit into the status quo. Meanwhile, the growing desire for gay rebellion in the late 1960s terrified older homophile leaders, who feared that if homosexuals stopped being complacent, the government would come back down on homosexuality with the full force of the Lavender Scare they had suffered under. The formation of a national homophile organization ultimately failed because leaders could not agree with one another on the direction of the homophile movement going forward. After the national impact of the Stonewall riots, many leaders abandoned the homophile movement to support newer gay organizations.

The majority of gay history centers or begins with the Stonewall Riots of 1969. Starting a history of gay activism in the United States at 1969 excludes over two decades of the boundary-pushing, dangerous, gritty work homophile leaders executed to repeal homophobic, oppressive

laws. This paper strives to explain how the homophile movement's evolution under the Lavender Scare of the 1950s to the rebellious climate of social change of the 1960s is essential to contextualizing contemporary conflict existing within the American gay community. Homophile leaders laid the base for a gay community to publicly exist in America. The gay America that we currently navigate is much closer to the homophile's vision than that of the Gay Liberation Front.⁴ In the late 1960s, the homophiles' struggled to simultaneously cater to younger homosexual radicals who craved complete liberation from an oppressive society, and to appease an unfriendly heterosexual world only barely beginning to tolerate homosexuals' existence in the public workforce. The movement collapsed, but younger activists previously affiliated with homophile organizations went on to build new organizations in the 1970s and 80s. The failure of the homophile movement to survive as a driving central force for change in gay rights serves as a reminder that everything we take for granted as a community today has been built by individuals with personal goals and prejudices. If the homophile's failure teaches modern generations of gay activists anything, it is that we must understand and celebrate our individual differences when we try to build community structures; we must resist preoccupation with infighting and hold a united front in the face of state-based oppression.

⁴ Paternotte and Tremblay, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Lesbian and Gay Activism*, 41.

Chapter 1: Discovery in Darkness

It was a crisp spring afternoon in 1952, and a young Dale Jennings was strolling home from the movie theater when a strange man approached him. Jennings dismissed his advances, but the stranger still continued to follow. Worried he was a target for a mugging, Jennings “walked fast, took detours and said goodbye at each street corner.”⁵ Jennings picked up his pace and rushed to his door, but the persistent stranger forced his way past him and barged into his home, where he then wandered straight into Jennings’ bedroom. Terrified for his own life, Jennings called the police to report a break in, when the strange intruder called commandingly for him. Jennings cautiously entered his bedroom to find the intruder stripped down; he insisted Jennings was a homosexual and that he should “let [his] hair down,” that he’d been in the navy and “all us guys played around.”⁶ The invader got agitated when Jennings resisted and urged the strange man out of his home; he then forcibly grabbed Jennings’ hand and stuffed them down his trousers. Then, this menacing perpetrator handcuffed Jennings and revealed his identity as an undercover cop, and arrested Jennings for homosexual conduct. In this decade, homosexuality was a crime and homosexual acts, even in the private home, were an arrestable offense. Gay men seeking sexual intimacy learned to discreetly “cruise” for other gay men in public areas, paying attention to subtle cues to gauge each other’s interest before pairing off to rendezvous. Police officers on the vice squad would go undercover and feign interest with men in popular cruising spots where gay men would loiter in the pursuit of finding a partner for casual sex, and when an unfortunate man would reveal himself and his intentions, the policeman would publicly expose him and arrest him. A public arrest record for homosexual conduct could spell the end of an

⁵ Ph.D. John Dececco, and Vern L. Bullough, *Before Stonewall Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context*, Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2002, 86.

⁶ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 86.

individual's career or relationships. Although what happened to Dale Jennings was an extreme circumstance, police entrapment happened to hundreds of unfortunate gay Americans merely seeking human intimacy.

Why were the 1950's such a terrible decade for homosexuals in America? Following U.S. victory in Europe and Asia at the end of World War II, United States leaders and citizens feared another global military conflict. The United States foreign policy in this era was overextended in aiding devastated Europe's affairs, and severely distrustful toward their former war ally, the Soviet Union. The United States boasted its superior military might when it made the world tremble with the atomic bombs it dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The Soviet Union's development of their own atomic weaponry in 1949 sparked national panic and insecurity about America's military superiority.⁷ No one can really comprehend the full consequences of a nuclear showdown between two superpowers; since the development of the atomic bomb, U.S. foreign policy has been oriented around the prevention of a nuclear holocaust. Neither of the two global powers trusted each other; they both began to mass produce weaponry and employ a network of spies to keep an eye on each other's international affairs. In 1948, American government official Alger Hiss was accused of being a Soviet spy, and by 1950 the court case had fully exposed the benign government office worker's treason that resulted in the direct deaths of American spies, not for a political devotion to communism, but for mere material gain.⁸ The betrayal of Alger Hiss shook the American public to its core; there was no definable characteristic about him that could have identified him as an enemy of the state. This looming, intangible threat produced a culture of conformity within the United States, where each

⁷ "Soviet Atomic Program - 1946." Atomic Heritage Foundation. June 05, 2014. Accessed April 05, 2019. <https://www.atomicheritage.org/history/soviet-atomic-program-1946>

⁸ David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004, 3.

American citizen was held under scrutiny to prove their patriotic devotion lest they be under potential suspicion as a dreaded communist spy.

In February of 1950, two statements made by U.S. government officials concerning security risks in the State Department forever changed the relationship of gay Americans with their government. Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Wisconsin), who is now unilaterally regarded by historians as a self-promoting, untrustworthy charlatan, proclaimed that 205 card-carrying Communists were working within the State Department.⁹ This erroneous claim sparked mass panic among citizens throughout the country, and their fear gave Senator McCarthy a national spotlight to continue to make more unsupported, incendiary claims about the looming threats employed by the state department. A congressional committee met to discuss the potential security threat that McCarthy posed, and Deputy Undersecretary John Peurifoy staunchly defended that the department did not employ any Communists.¹⁰ Despite McCarthy's accusations being unsubstantiated rabble-rousing, Peurifoy claimed that the department had responded to the fears of the public by firing a number of people supposed to be security risks; among them were 91 homosexuals.¹¹ This figure grabbed the attention of the American public. The angry crowd was not concerned with why or how homosexuals employed by the federal government posed a national security risk; their public outcry was in anger and disgust that the government was run by sexual perverts.¹² People demanded to know who had hired the homosexuals, and wanted a full purge of the government to ensure no homosexuals remained in the State Department. Called the "panic on the Potomac" and the "purge of perverts," by that November in 1950, nearly six hundred federal civil servants were dismissed on grounds of

⁹ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 1.

¹⁰ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 1.

¹¹ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 1.

¹² Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 2.

homosexuality.¹³ Homosexuals became America's scapegoat for their fears of global inferiority and vulnerability to foreign threats. It was during this decade of heightened government oppression and systemic exclusion that homosexuals succeeded in organizing resistance.

Henry Gerber founded the first openly gay organization in the United States, the Society for Human Rights, in Chicago in 1924, but it collapsed within months of its establishment after several of the society's members were arrested. However, the Society had a lasting impact in the hearts of gay individuals who knew of it. The social conditions arising out of post-World War II America brought renewed emphasis on American family values, overzealous patriotism, and paralyzing suspicion towards any nonconformists; this focus placed intense scrutiny on homosexuals. Gay activist Harry Hay reflected on the pressure gay Americans felt in the late 40s that made organization of a gay community imperative for survival:

The country, it seemed to me, was beginning to move toward fascism and McCarthyism; the Jews wouldn't be used as a scapegoat this time- the painful example of Germany was still too clear to us. The Black organizations were already pretty successfully looking out for their interests. It was obvious McCarthy was setting up the pattern for a new scapegoat, and it was going to be us- Gays. We had to organize, we had to move, we had to get started.¹⁴

Under this pressure, gay activists rose to the task. From 1950 to 1955, three major national organizations formed to fight for homosexual civil rights: the Mattachine Society, ONE Inc, and Daughters of Bilitis. Why were these organizations successful in forming, when Gerber's society had been shut down in 1924? If anything, conditions for the homosexual in America had become considerably worse by 1950. The intensity of the Lavender Scare and McCarthyism made it nearly impossible for most homosexuals to exist quietly and unviolated in America; whoever was not directly affected by losing their job, arrested for cruising, or caught in a bar raid,

¹³ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 2.

¹⁴ Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012, 19.

certainly knew friends who had, and lived cautiously in fear of being outed. The early homophile movement was a response to rampant, unavoidable homophobia in the United States, and it was built by individuals who hoped that organization would provide strength in numbers. Prior to 1950, no national gay community consciousness existed, but it would by the end of the decade.

The birth of the homophile movement is a story of many individuals facing the same discrimination, conversing with one another, discovering the breadth of their shared experiences, and realizing that they would fare better together than alone. While this chapter will discuss the contributions of several individual activists, it is important to remember that there is nothing particularly remarkable about the actions of any individual in this story; the significance of the movement is in the dialogue individuals held with each other.

One of the main players of the homophile movement was Harry Hay, who was a young homosexual living in California when his personal experience with communist organizing activities led him to consider organizing homosexuals.¹⁵ He felt that homosexuals met the four Stalinist principles of a minority, which were common language, common territory, common economy, and common psychology and culture.¹⁶ The communist party did not accept homosexual members in its ranks, and this caused distress for utopian idealist Hay, who sought psychiatric counseling. In 1938 he entered into a heterosexual marriage with a fellow activist Anita Platky, with whom he adopted two girls.¹⁷ During the campaign of Henry Wallace, running for the Progressive Party in 1948, Hay organized a special interest citizens' group aimed at homosexuals called "Bachelors for Wallace."¹⁸ Although this group was otherwise insignificant, the excitement it generated motivated Hay to refine the concept of a gay

¹⁵ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 73.

¹⁶ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 73.

¹⁷ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 77.

¹⁸ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 77.

organization. Hay started developing a potential plank for the Progressive Party platform on homosexuality, and began working on the idea of a postelection organization to fight for homosexual rights.¹⁹ Two years later he met Rudi Gernreich, who was also enthused about the idea of a gay organization, and began circulating petitions for such an organization. In November 1950 they were joined by Robert Hull, Charles Dennison Rowland, both communists as well, and Dale Jennings.²⁰ These five men formed the first organization of the homophile movement tripecta, the Mattachine Foundation. Hay divorced Anita in 1951 and was expelled at his request from the Communist Party.²¹

A young Hal Call moved to Chicago in 1950 to escape provincial expectations and suspicions in his small town in Missouri. He had written to his friend Bill that spring,

The way is still cleared for my own getting out of here on schedule... Oklahoma City and St. Louis, I see, have just finished local vice²² cleanup campaigns, although the word is they only scratched the surface. I find it [Denver] matches the worst I saw in Kansas City- and I thought that the limit. I've met many persons there one way or another in the past few weeks, and I am more convinced than ever that the axe is about to fall.²³

While in Chicago Call heard stories of Gerber's society, and like many gay individuals, he craved for another organization that could offer a sense of community to homosexuals. Chicago did not offer him the safe haven he sought; in August 1952 he and three companions were arrested for "lewd conduct" in a parked car at Lincoln Park. Call had to borrow money from his mother and explain the situation to her to cover an \$800 fee to get the charges dismissed, but when he told his boss at *the Star* he was forced to resign anyway. He reflected later, "I was one of those people that didn't know that to be accused was to be guilty- as all of us have learned

¹⁹ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 78.

²⁰ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 78.

²¹ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 77.

²² a department or division of a police force that enforces laws against prostitution, drug abuse, illegal gambling, etc; in the 1950s this also applied to enforcing laws against homosexuality.

²³ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 154.

since.”²⁴ Call moved to San Francisco in hopes of finding a more tolerant gay community, and quickly joined the ranks of the Mattachine as one of its leaders.

The name Mattachine was inspired by masked troupes that conveyed vital information across the medieval French countryside.²⁵ The word Mattachine is derived from Arabic *mutawajjihin*, which relates to masking oneself.²⁶ The notion of a mask captured how homosexuals thought of themselves in the 1950s; they did not think of themselves as “closeted,” a term which evokes hiding and isolation, and is more popularly used today in the gay world. Rather, gay people conceived of themselves as masked, walking out and about in society while donning a heterosexual façade. The Mattachine was, out of necessity, an incredibly secret organization, with its leaders shrouded in anonymity. The foundation started off slow, holding discussion groups on safer subjects such as ancient Greece, and members pulled aside visitors who appeared receptive and invited them into the organization. In 1952, when Mattachine Member Dale Jennings was entrapped in a nightmarish sequence of events and assaulted by a police officer, the Mattachine mobilized to defend him, raising money and awareness to his case. With the Mattachine’s support and resources, Dale Jennings became the first gay man to successfully win a case against entrapment while being openly gay. The case gave national attention to the Mattachine; previously confined to Southern California, new chapters emerged in New York, San Francisco, Denver, Chicago, and a handful of major cities throughout the 1950s.²⁷

²⁴ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 154.

²⁵ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 78.

²⁶ James T. Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine: the Hal Call chronicles and the early movement for homosexual emancipation*, Harrington Park Press, 2006, 7.

²⁷ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 19.

However, there were problems and divisions in thought within the Mattachine organization. Call reported that the core group of leaders “wanted an all-inclusive little sub-culture of its own within society- not concerned with being part of total society. We wanted to be assimilated into society and be recognized as distinctive only because of our difference in choice of sex partners.”²⁸ For some, membership in the Mattachine provided a small sense of community and that was enough- not everyone wanted to pursue national, legislative or social change. Call recalled in later interviews that he wanted to see discrimination and ignorance about homosexuality eliminated, and then have the organization disband when it became obsolete.²⁹ This attitude was shared by a fair share of gay Americans; homosexuality was not yet perceived as an intrinsic part of identity for many, but was instead regarded as solely behavior that could be separated from someone’s personhood. This approach caused tension within the Mattachine though, as some members felt conformity to heterosexual standards for mere toleration was not the solution to the needs of the homosexual. The disagreements within the Mattachine organization reveal that the early 1950s was a significant period of discussion and consideration for homosexuals. The movement was in its infancy, and many individuals had differing ideas for how the movement should grow. The divisions in thought and goals within the Mattachine led to the formation of another homophile organization that would be led with a more aggressive dedication to civil rights.

Mattachine members Martin Block, Don Slater, Jim Kepner and Dorr Legg were frustrated with the secrecy of the organization and believed a more open, public approach was necessary to create a national gay community.³⁰ With the addition of two lesbians, Joan Corbin

²⁸ Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine*, 181.

²⁹ Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine*, 182.

³⁰ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 20.

and Irma Wolf, these individuals founded *ONE Magazine*, the first pro-gay magazine.³¹ Merton Bird, an African American member of *ONE*, founder of the interracial homophile social club Knights of the Clock, and lover of Dorr Legg, suggested the name, inspired by the line from a Thomas Carlyle poem, “a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.”³² The format of a magazine allowed for ONE Inc to reach a national base, and had a tremendous impact on gay Americans.

Because readers were often afraid to subscribe, worried that their mail would be investigated or used against them, over two thirds of *ONE*'s sales were made through newsstands.³³ *ONE* was often located amongst male physique magazines which had a high gay readership, although the magazines themselves denied having erotic content. *ONE* unapologetically put gay culture in the public sphere with every cover boldly proclaiming, “*ONE*: The Homosexual Magazine,” and running cover issues like “The Importance of Being Different,”³⁴ “Are Homosexuals Neurotic?”³⁵ and “Are Homosexuals Security Risks?”³⁶ The activists running *ONE* dared to challenge the institutions of their oppression outright. *ONE*'s mission statement declared, “*ONE* does not claim that homosexuals are better or worse than anyone else, that they are special in any but one sense. And in that one sense *ONE* claims positively that homosexuals do not have the civil rights assured all other citizens. *ONE* is devoted to correcting this.”³⁷ This statement reveals that the individuals behind *ONE* prioritized fighting against the violation of civil liberties against homosexuals; they fought for an America

³¹ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 23.

³² Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 29.

³³ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 44.

³⁴ Lyn Pedersen, "The Importance of Being Different," *ONE*, March 1, 1954, 4-7.

³⁵ Albert Ellis, PhD, "Are Homosexuals Neurotic?" *ONE*, April 1, 1955, 8-13.

³⁶ Marlin Prentiss, "Are Homosexuals Security Risks?" *ONE*, December 1, 1955, 4-6.

³⁷ *ONE*, January 1, 1954, 2.

in which gay people could be open with their sexuality and still be respected, successful, protected individuals.

The December 1955 cover article “Are Homosexuals Security Risks?” confronted the justification of the purges of homosexuals from federal employment, which were enforced on the grounds that homosexuals could be blackmailed to give out vulnerable information. In most early issues, *ONE* authors used pseudonyms to protect themselves; a supposed Marlin Prentiss (which was probably a pseudonym) explained that any heterosexuals engaging in unconventional or illegal relationships would also be vulnerable to blackmail, and yet there was little concern about them. Prentiss argued, “the homosexual is a security risk only so long as his homosexuality is unknown. As soon as it is known—as it must be before he can be dismissed because of it—the blackmailer no longer has a weapon to use against him.”³⁸ With this rhetoric, *ONE Magazine* challenged its readers to question the status quo, and also gave them tools to engage in discussion with heterosexuals about the ridiculousness of the law, that it did not actually protect national security. Prentiss drew comparisons to Nazi Germany, and the measures taken to strip citizens of their rights in the name of national security too. Then he posed the question, “Of what value is national security if we ourselves adopt and employ the very evils from which we are supposedly striving to keep our nation secure?”³⁹ Articles such as this one armed readers with ways to engage in national conversation; *ONE* appealed to patriotic rhetoric and American nationalism in a way that allowed the inclusion of homosexuals and the defense of their rights and liberties.

Other issues in *ONE* magazine centered around informing gay readers of their civil rights, to help them protect themselves in a court of law. An article appearing in the April 1954 issue,

³⁸ Prentiss, “Are Homosexuals Security Risks?” 4.

³⁹ Prentiss, “Are Homosexuals Security Risks?” 6.

“The Law: A Discussion of Entrapment” defined entrapment and laid out the circumstances under which an accused defendant of homosexual crimes could plea against it. Unfortunately, the circumstances are very specific and require a strong degree of proof; the undercover vice officer must propose the act to the defendant, and proceed to overcome the defendant’s genuine reluctance and unwillingness by appeals to sympathy, pity, and friendship; the proposal for the act must be proven to have come from the officer and be proven to be initially rejected by the defendant.⁴⁰ *ONE* received a lot of mail from readers requesting legal advice, and on several occasions requested in their magazine, “Do you know an attorney? If so, please send us his name and address. We often have inquiries from those needing legal services, and would like to have names in all areas.”⁴¹ *ONE* provided a platform for homosexuals to see themselves as a larger connected group with the power and means to resist their oppression in America.

The members of *ONE* were prepared to defend their own civil liberties in the face of government suppression. *ONE* did garner federal attention; the FBI tracked their every move. The November issue in 1955 ran an article called “How much do we know about the homosexual male” by David L. Freeman which spoke of the wide diversity of careers and life paths of homosexuals in America. One proclaimed, “They work for TIME magazine or the NEW YORKER. They are in the diplomatic service; they occupy key positions with oil companies or the FBI (it’s true!).”⁴² Agents appeared unannounced at *ONE* headquarters in February 1955 searching for the editor who they had identified as William Lambert. According to FBI documents, “this person refused to identify himself or acknowledge that he was a responsible official of “*ONE*” nor would he furnish any information concerning [redacted]. Lambert

⁴⁰ “The Law: A discussion of Entrapment,” *ONE*, April 1, 1954, 8.

⁴¹ *ONE*, September 1, 1955, 7.

⁴² David L. Freeman, “How Much Do We Know About the Homosexual Male?” *ONE*, November 1, 1955, 6.

continually said in answer to questions, “you will have to see our attorney.”⁴³ The so-called William Lambert was actually Dorr Legg, and this interaction shows that the members of *ONE* were prepared to deal with the pressures of the police-state; no one in the office cooperated or gave in to the pressures of the FBI’s intimidation tactics. Instead, Legg offered his own challenge, “What would you gentlemen say if this had been taped.”⁴⁴

ONE fortunately was prepared to face such circumstances. The very nature of their magazine was under threat from censorship from the U.S. Post Office from its very inception; the creators behind the magazine had a very thin line to walk without promoting homosexual behavior and thus mailing “obscene” material and committing a federal crime. *ONE* had its attorney Eric Julber explain this legal hurdle to its readers in the October 1954 issue with an article, “The Law of Mailable Material.”⁴⁵ The issue explained the laws pertaining to mailable material, what was obscene, and what was printable in *ONE magazine*. Julber explained, “I must in frankness say there is one extreme school of legal thought which would say that *ONE*, merely by its existence, is illegal.” Julber continued with reassurance that the courts had been taking more moderate stances, “a discussion of the social, economic, personal and legal problems of homosexuals, for the purposes of better understanding of and by society, is permissible; but appeals to the lusts or salacity or sexual appetites of *ONE*'s readers are not permissible. *ONE*, in other words, can appeal to the heads, but not the sexual desires, of its readers.”⁴⁶ Julber also emphasized that each issue was read over thoroughly by the organizations attorney, him, before publication. *ONE* was prepared to fight for a gay magazine’s right to exist, and they did.

⁴³ FBI Freedom of Information / Privacy Acts Release, Subject: Mattachine Society, Part 02 of 03, 27.

⁴⁴ FBI Freedom of Information / Privacy Acts Release, Subject: Mattachine Society, Part 02 of 03, 27.

⁴⁵ Eric Julber, “The Law of Mailable Material” *ONE*, October 1, 1954, p4

⁴⁶ Julber, “The Law of Mailable Material,” 6.

Ironically, the same issue that ran this story came under fire with the U. S. Post Office as obscene and unmailable for a story in the issue, “Sappho Remembered,” a story of a lesbian’s affection for a 21-year-old woman who leaves her boyfriend to be with her, a poem “Lord Samuel and Lord Montague” about homosexual cruising, and an advertisement for *The Circle*, a magazine containing homosexual pulp romance stories.⁴⁷ *ONE*’s attorney Eric Julber brought the suit to U.S. District Court seeking an injunction against the Postmaster, but in March 1956 Judge Thurmond Clarke ruled “The suggestion advanced that homosexuals should be recognized as a segment of our people and be accorded special privilege as a class is rejected,” a decision which three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld unanimously in February 1957.⁴⁸ Julber then filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court on June 13, 1957, and on January 13 1958, the court reversed the decision. This was a landmark case for homosexual civil rights and liberties. *ONE*’s persistent bravery in challenging the oppressive censorship of McCarthyism earned it the admiration of many Americans interested in democracy, not just homosexuals. A distributor of *ONE Magazine* based in Costa Mesa California said in 1961 that he carried the magazine more for principle than for profit, “I find in *ONE* more real thought and coming-to-grips with THE problem of our time- the proper relationship between individual and society- than in almost any other magazine with which I am acquainted.”⁴⁹

The *Mattachine* and *ONE* had both been broadly aimed at a homophile community but were largely focused on the circumstances surrounding gay men. In 1955 a lesbian counterpart organization emerged on the scene, *Daughters of Bilitis*. Martin and Lyon took inspiration for the organization’s name from a collection of poems written by Pierre Louÿs, *Songs of Bilitis*; *Bilitis*

⁴⁷ "One, Inc. v. Olesen," Wikipedia, October 29, 2018, Accessed November 18, 2018.

⁴⁸ "One, Inc. v. Olesen."

⁴⁹ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 50.

was a fictional character romantically involved with famous ancient Greek poet Sappho.⁵⁰

Lovers Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon sought out other lesbian couples after complaining that they hardly knew any, and in October 1955 they started Daughters Of Bilitis as a social club that was safer than gay bars, which were frequently raided.⁵¹ The club soon focused its aims, however, on educating other women about lesbianism and trying to reduce their self-loathing. Historian Marcia Gallo wrote, “They recognized that many women felt shame about their sexual desires and were afraid to admit them. They knew that...without support to develop the self-confidence necessary to advocate for one's rights, no social change would be possible for lesbians.”⁵²

Daughters of Bilitis sought to reach more potential members, but realized local newspapers would not print their advertisements. Martin and Lyon, who both had journalism degrees, began printing their own newsletter, *The Ladder*.

The Ladder mostly included poems and book reviews; in its early years it hid under the guise of a literary magazine. Still, *the Ladder* ran articles similar to *ONE* which informed its readers of potential dangers and of their rights. The November 1956 issue features such an article, about the raiding of the Alamo Club on September 21st, in which 36 women were arrested: “At the hearing the following Monday we understand only four of those arrested pleaded not guilty. We feel that this was not due to actual guilt on the part of the so pleading but to an appalling lack of knowledge of the rights of a citizen in such a case.”⁵³ The article mentioned that the Daughters of Bilitis discussion meeting topic had been changed to allow attorney Benjamin M. Davis to discuss citizens’ rights in the case of arrest. The very next month,

⁵⁰ Rebecca Barnes, "Daughters of Bilitis," Encyclopædia Britannica, November 21, 2013, Accessed May 14, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Daughters-of-Bilitis>

⁵¹ Kay Tobin and Ray Wicker, *The Gay Crusaders*, Arno Press, 1975.

⁵² Marcia Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*, Carrol & Graf Publishers, 2006.

⁵³ “San Francisco Police Raid Reveals Lack of Knowledge of Citizen’s Rights,” 5.

the Ladder featured an article, “A Citizens Rights in Case of Arrest” which encouraged readers to not plead guilty, to call their attorney, and not volunteer any information.⁵⁴

These three organizations arose out of the need in the 1950s to address specific federal policies threatening gay Americans amidst a hostile conservative social landscape. While the Mattachine, ONE, and Daughters of Bilitis all formed for different reasons, and their members had different aims and visions of a gay community, what they all knew was that they needed to organize nationally, to assert their voice after being silenced by the purges and police raids. As gay America exited the 1950s, it did so with much more than it had entered the decade: a national civil rights consciousness.

⁵⁴ “A Citizens Rights In Case of Arrest,” *The Ladder*, December 1, 1956, 2-4.

Chapter 2: Organized Civil Action

If the 1950s was a decade of discovery for the LGBT community, the 1960s was a decade of political mobilization. The homophile movement expanded across the country and new organizations were born within it. Early homophile action in the prior decades had successfully established a mailing network that enabled nationwide communication, brought together an American gay community through shared publications, and made the next step of the movement, political activism, feasible.

While in the fifties, gay activists were few and far between, and even fewer were willing to openly stand for the cause with their real name and face attached, in the sixties more people publicly aligned themselves with gay rights. It became a more popularly accepted belief within homophile publications that taking up civil rights activism was something gay individuals in the community ought to do, and that real tangible progress could only be achieved from such efforts. But what had changed in American society to ease the fear of being publicly homosexual? It was still illegal to have consensual homosexual relations in private; homosexuals were still being fired from positions in the federal government and often elsewhere, and still dishonorably discharged from the military. Despite the persistence of these obstacles to justice, the American social attitude towards sexuality was changing rapidly. Historians refer to this change as the sexual revolution, “a social movement that challenged traditional codes of behavior related to sexuality and interpersonal relationships throughout the United States” that began in the 1960s on through the 1980s.⁵⁵ Heterosexuals openly questioned and challenged the strict sexual norms imposed on them by American society. Premarital sex became far more prevalent after the first

⁵⁵ "The Pill and the Sexual Revolution," PBS, Accessed February 22, 2019.
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/pill-and-sexual-revolution/>

oral contraceptive, Enovid, was approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 1960.⁵⁶ This shifting cultural landscape created room for homosexuals to speak in a national dialogue about sexual values.

The homophile movement had fought for in court and won more freedom of expression by the mid-sixties, and this opportunity allowed for a burst of new gay literature. When the homophile movement first went public, members were careful to present themselves as respectable. They could only playfully hint at sexual undertakings due to strict mailable content laws. But the many victories persistently fought and won in court by homophile activists allotted homosexuals new freedom to their expression of sexuality. The Supreme Court Case *One Inc. v. Oleson* in 1958 finally asserted on a federal level that content describing a love affair between two members of the same sex was *not* obscenity, which meant homophile publications could finally publish explicitly gay content.

This new freedom was quickly taken advantage of. The Janus Society was a homophile organization founded in Philadelphia in 1962, and member Clark Polak founded its magazine, *Drum: Sex in Perspective*. Unlike *ONE*, *the Ladder*, or *the Mattachine Review*, *Drum* was an explicit erotica magazine, featuring layouts of nude photographs of men in suggestive poses. The publication and distribution of such a magazine would have been impossible five years prior, but the homophile movement, specifically *ONE*, had been successful at fighting discrimination against printing and distributing gay content through the judicial process. *Drum*'s motto revealed, in the words of poet Henry David Thoreau, a change of heart within the gay community: "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away." This

⁵⁶ "A Brief History of Birth Control in the U.S.," Our Bodies Ourselves, Accessed February 22, 2019. <https://www.ourbodiesourselves.org/book-excerpts/health-article/a-brief-history-of-birth-control/>

motto expressed a shift from the concern with conformity seen in earlier homophile publications, instead embracing the idea that there is both merit and joy in leading a homosexual lifestyle.

A special contribution of *Drum*'s embracing of positive homosexuality was the inclusion of the first gay-themed comic strip. "Harry Chess, That Man from A.U.N.T.I.E.," was a gay comic by Al Schapiro, pseudonym "A. Jay" that allowed *Drum* readers to see themselves not depicted as an effeminate butt of a joke, but as an action hero amidst a familiar gay underworld.⁵⁷ Harry Chess was a former trapeze artist and secret agent for "Agents Undercover Network to Investigate Evil," which was both a play on The Man from U.N.C.L.E. and a term of endearment for older gay men.⁵⁸ Publisher Clark Polak allegedly wanted to put the 'sex' back in 'homosexual' and used this comic strip to do just that.⁵⁹ Rugged, virile, sensuous top agent Harry Chess went on zany secret missions with his younger sidekick Mickey Muscle, and together they encountered villainous characters Oily Buns, Brownfinger, and Belowjob, crossdressers, BDSM dungeons, and parodies of Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Spiro Agnew, Andy Warhol, and other popular figures. The comic shows Harry ogling, flirting, showering at the YMCA, smoking in bed and in the throes of 'erotic wrestling' with other men in the comic [Figures 1 and 2]. Harry Chess is an unabashedly sexual, masculine gay man in the comic. Perhaps more significantly, Harry Chess is unashamedly homosexual and this is an intrinsic aspect of his identity. *Drum* was more comfortable asserting homosexuality as a personal identity than earlier homophile publications that sought to frame homosexuality as merely a behavior separate from the person; homophile publications in the 1960s starkly contrast with earlier homophile

⁵⁷ Michael J. Murphy, "The Lives and Times of Harry Chess," *The Gay Lesbian Review*, March 2014, Accessed February 22, 2019. http://www.glreview.org/wp-content/uploads/DigitalEditions/762900_Digital_Edition/files/assets/basic-html/index.html#22

⁵⁸ Murphy, "The Lives and Times of Harry Chess."

⁵⁹ Murphy, "The Lives and Times of Harry Chess."

publications such as the article the *Mattachine Review* ran in 1955, “Because I am a homosexual woman, Must I Be Different?” which resoundingly answered, “No.”⁶⁰ One of the earliest issues of *ONE* printed in 1954 declared, “To describe a person as heterosexual is to say nothing about him which conveys meaning. To say he drinks water conveys nothing and to label him homosexual describes nothing about his age, mind, physique or talents [...] Homosexuals do not and cannot share a culture.”⁶¹ This sentiment from a decade prior vastly contrasts with the clear gay subculture expressed and explored in the Harry Chess comics, where the characters enter clearly gay spaces that most likely mirrored the actual gay underground of Philadelphia. There was a growing sentiment among gay Americans in the 1960s that they could and should be proud of their homosexuality and its distinct community and way of life.

Homophile magazines questioned mainstream religion and challenged the way religious institutions ostracized homosexuals. After all, it is on the basis of religious doctrine defining sodomy as a sin that homosexuals are still perceived as morally deviant. Despite the supposed separation of Church and State, the United States is an overwhelmingly Christian nation. Dorr Legg wrote in a 1963 issue of *ONE* that many homosexuals were raised in the church, but found that clergy and other members of the church made it impossible for them to negotiate their sexuality with their faith and were painfully pushed out into further isolation. Some of the more tolerant churches embrace homosexuals with the mentality, “hate the sin, love the sinner,” but Legg argued that for many homosexuals this was unsatisfactory, “They [homosexuals] charge the churches with harboring far too many scribes and pharisees and expect the church to face the whole homosexual question squarely and fairly. This, religion must do or else relinquish its

⁶⁰ A. H. Sherman, “Because I am a homosexual woman, Must I Be Different?” *Mattachine Review*, July/August 1955, 20.

⁶¹ Jeff Winters, “Can Homosexuals Organize?” *ONE*, January 1954, 6.

claim to universality, is their demand, feeling that if the church is unable to supply adequate answers to ethical questions why then honor it any longer?”⁶² Homophiles did not accept the charge that their behavior was deviant or sinful, and they demanded that the church live up to its promises of acceptance and love.

Homophile organizations often made connections with local priests, ministers, and rabbis who were more sympathetic to homosexuals, to provide their members with an opportunity to heal from their alienation from religion and find spiritual validation. A 1962 issue of *the Ladder* mentioned featured words from Reverend Robert W. Wood, Congregational minister from Spring Valley, New York, and author of “Christ and the Homosexual.”⁶³ Reverend Wood revealed that there were many individuals doing ministerial counseling for homosexuals unbeknownst to their superiors or congregations, and he himself criticized the obstinacy of the Church to open its arms to so many of God’s children, “gentiles did not first have to become Jews to become Christians; likewise we are now learning that homosexuals do not first have to become heterosexuals to become Christians.”⁶⁴ This concept is still radical today as conversion camps persist and adopting a heterosexual lifestyle is viewed as a prerequisite for homosexual salvation in many churches; it was an incredibly radical declaration in 1962. Reverend Wood also spoke of his hope that the church would come to realize that marriage was not solely for procreation but rather “the giving and receiving of two free spirits” and should also be open to same sex couples.⁶⁵ Homophile organizations were questioning the most unquestionable institutions in American society to counter the assumption that homosexual relations were immoral and thus deserved societal persecution. Homophile organizations also formed these

⁶² Dorr Legg, “A Moral Imperative,” *ONE*, 12/1/1963, Volume 11, Issue 12, 7.

⁶³ “Changing Religious Attitudes,” *The Ladder*, October 1, 1962, Volume 7, Issue 1, 7.

⁶⁴ “Changing Religious Attitudes,” 9.

⁶⁵ “Changing Religious Attitudes,” 7.

relationships with clergy to provide healing to their members who had been thrown out of their churches and carried with them a lifetime of shame and guilt; many homosexuals had been raised in the Church and still put great faith in its teachings, and thus internalized a lot of self-hatred when their own religion told them they were condemned to hell for their intimate relations. By providing these homosexuals with access to more welcoming and understanding voices, homophile organizations were helping to change the way homosexuals felt about themselves and giving them access to form more connections to a broader community.

Homophile organizations tried to connect their members with other civil rights organizations to both form a broader net of support for the community, and to ally themselves with a larger base of activists to push for changes to the legal system. Another important new homophile organization to arise out of the 1960s was the Phoenix Society, which was formed in Kansas City Missouri and claimed to be the “Midwest Homophile Voice.”⁶⁶ Its publication *The Phoenix* asked its readers if the community would benefit from a referral service, that is, a 24 hour phone service for gay people to seek help with finding gay-friendly lawyers, clergymen, doctors, and counselors.⁶⁷ *The Phoenix* explained that several homophile organizations had already set up such services in their cities, but if they were to institute one for Kansas City they would need funds from their readers.⁶⁸ The issue also included information on the aims of the National Legal Fund, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Student Homophile League, and how both the Phoenix Society as a group and individuals could contribute to their causes.⁶⁹ After praising the hard-won success of the Student Homophile League of Columbia University, finally being granted permission by the University to organize as a student organization, *The*

⁶⁶ *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 1.

⁶⁷ “Referral Service,” *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 3.

⁶⁸ “Referral Service,” *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 3.

⁶⁹ “Referral Service,” *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 3.

Phoenix asserted to its readers, “We, of Phoenix are standing by ready to help in any way we can. We feel this action will set a precedent for other Universities to also form student homophile organizations. This should again prove to the homosexual non-believers, that there are many responsible homosexuals, who "dig" in and achieve worthwhile goals.”⁷⁰ The Phoenix Society and other homophile organizations believed that formal legislative changes provided the path to gay liberation and encouraged their members to take up the activist cause for themselves.

Of course, the homophile movement still faced resistance from homosexuals who resented the national attention activists brought upon homosexuality and thus to their discreet lives. Leo Ebreo wrote a piece for *the Ladder* confronting the feelings of hostility such homosexuals had for the homophile movement. Ebreo conceded that for some, association with a local homophile organization would hamper an individual’s assimilation into a community that discretion might otherwise allow, but to isolate and hide only provided an individual solution, and quite a lonely one at that.⁷¹ Ebreo made multiple connections to the civil rights plight of Black and Jewish Americans, and emphasized that racial minorities could not ‘pass’ in a violently racist United States but instead must organize and join in numbers to fight for acceptance and equality. Homosexuals, she continued, must follow this lead. She declared, “The drive to eliminate discrimination against homosexuals (sex fascism) is a direct parallel to the drive to eliminate discrimination against Negroes (race fascism). These minority movements are not attempts to overthrow the white race, or to destroy the institution of the family, but to allow a fuller growth of human potential.”⁷² Ebreo named racism and homophobia as forms of fascism as patriotic rhetoric to call readers to action, to assert that the state of injustice in America

⁷⁰ “College Students Organize,” *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 12.

⁷¹ Leo Ebreo, “A Homosexual Ghetto?” *The Ladder*, Volume 10 Issue 3, December 1965, 7.

⁷² Ebreo, “A Homosexual Ghetto?” 8.

demanded fixing, and then she explained that could only be achieved through civil protest. Ebreo asserted, “This acceptance that the homosexual minority needs, wants, can only be gotten when it is asked for- if need be, demonstrated for through groups like ECHO and their picket lines.”⁷³

This article reveals that the homophile movement was still not universally accepted or liked by homosexuals in the 1960s. There were still great numbers of homosexuals who resisted the notions of homosexuality as an identity, who were isolated from larger communities, and vulnerable to the homophobia stirred up by homophile resistance. The article also reveals that homophiles believed they were organizing to change the way of life for all homosexuals, and that it was a movement that demanded the bravery of those who could afford to put themselves on the frontlines of civil resistance to protect and ensure an accepting future for all. A 1963 editorial in *ONE* asserted that homosexuals were the only minority left which it was fully acceptable to mock, “Times have changed, and at a big political gathering today, nobody tells a joke against a Jew or a Negro- and for a damn good reason. Each minority organized. It organized money-wise, press-wise, and political-wise. And fought. ‘Times’ just don’t change. It is done by people.”⁷⁴

White homophiles may have grossly overestimated the racial progress in the nation, but they looked to black civil organization for inspiration and sincerely believed that similar organized civil action and resistance was the only path to ending the systemic oppression they faced.

The homophile movement pushed back hard against discriminatory laws that still belittled and excluded homosexuals from being full-fledged members of society. A big issue discussed in homophile publications in the mid-60s was whether or not gay men should disclose their sexuality to the draft board. The April 1966 issue of *Drum* published a question, “Should I tell the draft board I am gay when I go down for my physical next month? J. B., West Palm

⁷³ Ebreo, “A Homosexual Ghetto?” 7.

⁷⁴ K. O. Neal, “Editorial,” *ONE*, 4/1/1963, Volume 11, Issue 4, 4.

Beach, Fla.”⁷⁵ The Ask Drum columnist responded by describing and weighing the dangers of being caught lying, versus the risk of being denied future employment, asserting:

The combination of an average amount of discretion on the homosexuals’ part and above average difficulty in spotting makes the armed forces’ policy virtually unenforceable. Discovery, however, can lead to a wide variety of unfortunate employment difficulties in future years if, as noted above, you expect to join the Federal service[...] All things being equal, it is better in this situation as in all of life to conform to the standards of society and serve your allotted time.⁷⁶

Nearly every homophile publication printed their stance on how homosexuals should approach the decision to disclose themselves to the draft board. *The Phoenix* echoed that thousands of homosexuals already were in the military and would continue to join regardless of the law. They professed that “There is absolutely no basis for the U.S. Government’s stand, that the presence of the homosexual in the service would impair discipline, good order morale and the security of the Armed Forces.”⁷⁷ *ONE* ran a cover issue “What of the Draft?” in their March 1966 issue. The article emphasized the greater danger of disclosing one’s sexuality to the government, and described the relative success of most homosexuals to discretely thrive in the military. While *ONE* and other homophile publications offered advice to their readers on how to make best of a no-win situation, they also continued to make a staunch argument against the legality of the military’s discriminatory policy:

Where, in legal theory and precedent is there support for judging individuals as to their class or status? Law may never be permitted to concern itself other than with acts. It may not, it cannot, rule upon matters of religion, of political or social views, of skin color or any other factors which are the mark of an individual’s status and condition. The question as to his sex orientation is, therefore, wholly illegal, quite without Constitutional support within our American system of government and is a disgraceful blot upon our military services. Yet, these services expect us to accord them both honor and confidence [...] Homophiles today are asking such questions. They expect to have honest answers from their government. So far, these they have not had.⁷⁸

⁷⁵“Ask Drum,” *Drum*, April 1966, 9.

⁷⁶ “Ask Drum,” 9.

⁷⁷ “Our Position,” *The Phoenix*, May 1967, 13.

⁷⁸Richard Conger, “Editorial,” *ONE*, 3/1/1966, 5.

The article ends on such a demanding tone; the government has failed to uphold its Constitution and will be held accountable. *ONE* had great success even as a fledgling organization in the 1950s fighting for homosexual civil liberties judicially, but it and other homophile organizations now had a much stronger readership and an established homosexual social network across the country. The homophile movement had the resources, momentum, and ambition to fight legislatively.

In order to utilize the true strength and power of the homophile movement, its many localized organizations had to join forces for a united stance against homophobia. One of the homophiles' first efforts to combine their organizational strengths was the formation of the East Coast Homophile Organizations (ECHO), which was formed when representatives of Daughters of Bilitis, Mattachine Society of New York, Janus Society, and Mattachine Society of Washington met in Philadelphia, January 1963.⁷⁹ ECHO was formed to create a space for Eastern homophile organizations to meet and collectively discuss an action plan as a more uniform body. The fact that East Coast homophile organizations felt the need to organize first speaks to the large presence and voice of Western homophile organizations; eastern organizations felt outspoken and joined forces to have more sway in guiding the direction of the homophile movement. The 1964 ECHO conference theme was explicit: "Homosexuality: Civil Liberties and Social Rights."⁸⁰ A detailed description of the conference reported in the January 1965 issue of *the Ladder* revealed that leaders discussed recent failures to influence politics in California, and J. C. Hodges, the president of Mattachine Society of New York, emphasized a course of action inspired by recent grassroots actions taken by black Americans fighting for

⁷⁹ Kay Tobin and Barbara Gittings, "ECHO Report '64" *The Ladder*, February-March 1965, Volume 10, 13.

⁸⁰ Lily Hansen and Barbara Gittings, "Part Two: Highlights of ECHO," *The Ladder*, January 1965, Volume 9, Number 4, 7.

racial equality. Hodges encouraged homophiles at the conference to focus on asserting their influence as voters, and insisted, “It doesn’t take a lot of votes at the local level to make your influence felt there.”⁸¹ Hodges was one of many homophiles who believed that the path to achieve equal rights for homosexuals in America was through utilizing their power as citizens and making it known to politicians that they were a large enough group of constituents to care about serving or displeasing. Although Hodges argument held some sway, there was a basic division amongst homophiles on the approach they should take in seeking change.

The 1964 ECHO conference ended with a debate: was it a more effective approach to seek direct legislative action to change the disposition of homosexuals in America, or try to change the negative cultural attitudes surrounding homosexuality through education?⁸² Dr. Franklin E. Kameny, physicist and astronomer, and president of the Mattachine Society of Washington, spoke in favor of a legislative approach; he argued “the Negro tried the education/information approach for 90 years and got almost nowhere. In the next ten years, by a vigorous social-protest, social-action, civil-liberties type of program, he achieved in essence everything for which he had been fighting. Let not this lesson be wasted on us.”⁸³ Dr. Kurt Konietzko, a psychologist and member of the Philadelphia Board of Parole, spoke in favor of an education-based approach, and claimed, “Prejudices are learned. And if they are learned, they are taught. If you can change the teaching, then you can change the society.”⁸⁴ Dr. Konietzko clarified that Dr. Kameny’s approach was suitable to achieving legal rights, but stressed that “You will only establish a lot of legal rights nobody is going to give you because they don’t grant them to you emotionally. And when you want to get hired, you will have to return to the

⁸¹ Hansen and Gittings, “Part Two: Highlights of ECHO,” 9.

⁸² Tobin and Gittings, “ECHO Report ‘64” 13.

⁸³ Tobin and Gittings, “ECHO Report ‘64” 14.

⁸⁴ Tobin and Gittings, “ECHO Report ‘64” 15.

courts and stress your rights again and again, and you will still face the same basic ostracism and hostility.”⁸⁵ This specific ECHO debate offers a glimpse into the broader schism within the homophile movement; there were members who wished to pursue more aggressive legislative and civil action, and those who were obsessed with respectability politics and sought broader “acceptance” from heterosexual society. Despite ultimately disagreeing, Dr. Kameny and Dr. Konietzko were engaging in conversation with one another, and were both invested in making a better future for homosexuals.

ECHO was the first but not the only homophile attempt to combine organizational efforts. *Drum* mentioned that on February 19th and 20th of 1966, 40 leaders of 14 homophile organizations across the country gathered in Kansas City, Missouri, to come to a consensus on the direction and philosophy of the movement.⁸⁶ The joint statement they agreed on can be found in its entirety in the appendix. In their three-paragraph statement, the homophile organizations denounced laws against homosexual conduct in private and demanded equal treatment from all federal institutions.⁸⁷ Their second paragraph specifically defended the rights of homosexual citizens to serve in the Armed Forces, and claimed that at the very least, those dismissed from their service on grounds of homosexuality should be issued an honorable discharge. This statement reveals that in 1966 the homophile movement was an organized and cohesive social movement across the United States, and that it sought to change the discriminatory anti-homosexual laws of the United States. The homophiles agreed to focus their efforts on changing discriminatory practices against federal and military employees, because it was homosexuals employed by the U.S. federal government that were most vulnerable to punishment and

⁸⁵ Tobin and Gittings, “ECHO Report ‘64” 16.

⁸⁶ “Homophile Conference,” *Drum*, April 1966, 25.

⁸⁷ “Homophile Conference,” 25.

ostracization in American society. The homophile activists writing the statement claimed that homosexuals had been “deprived of these rights,” invoking the protections of the constitution that American law had failed to uphold. Their joint statement ended with the assertion, “A substantial number of American people are subjected to a second-class citizenship, to the Gestapo- like “purges” of governmental agencies and to local police harassment. It is time that the American public re-examine its attitudes and laws concerning the homosexual.” Some homophiles were displeased and frustrated with the statement because they felt it was too tepid and only sought assimilation into heterosexual society without challenging the oppressive nature of America’s institutions. Still, it showed the beginning of smaller local homophile organizations coming together to form a more united front.

These major homophile organizations from across the country recognized themselves as part of one larger, more powerful movement and gathered to form a statement of intent of action. *The Ladder* also published news of the meeting in Kansas City and the unified statement, and outlined the impact of the meeting into four major accomplishments: 1) the adoption and release to the press of a firm position statement, 2) an agreement to sponsor simultaneous, nationally-publicized town-hall meetings in major cities across the country on Armed Forces Day, May 21, 1966, to protest the discriminatory screening of homosexuals in the military, 3) an agreement to cosponsor the publication of a series of informational pamphlets on homosexuality to be made available to the general public, and 4) an agreement to consider the “proposal for a national legal fund to provide financial support in important legal cases concerning homosexuality.”⁸⁸ Not only had the organizations met, discussed and formed a statement of purpose, but they had also

⁸⁸ “U.S. Homophile Movement Gains National Strength,” *The Ladder*, Volume 10 Issue 6, April 1966, 4.

planned a national civil protest, sought to inform the general public of their stance, and were planning to raise funds to protect homosexuals across the country.

The homophile movement was a united, organized national social movement with specific, outlined goals to fight discriminatory legislation that prevented homosexuals from participating fully in American life. The homophile movement that rose out of the sixties reflected a broad, national conversation between local organizations that served the specific needs of their cities and communities that chose to unite with each other for national change. Most leaders in the homophile movement sought specific legislative goals to improve the lives and safety of the homosexual in America, and were directly influenced and inspired by the momentum of the civil rights movement's fight for racial equality in America. Homophile publications reveal that leaders consistently saw parallels between the plight of homosexuals and the fight for racial equality, and they borrowed from black activists their methods to organize civic protests demanding legislative action. While homophile leaders did not agree on all courses of action, they did agree that their fates were connected and that they needed to pursue their activism with a united, national front.

Chapter 3: A House Divided Cannot Stand

The leaders of the homophile movement sought to organize nationally in the mid-sixties, but these efforts ultimately failed because of petty infighting between organizational leaders and because regional organizations could not agree on a unified position on homosexuality or on how to move forward as a movement. The homophile movement was left in the dust by the Gay Liberation Front, a new movement born out of the Stonewall riots. In the late nineteen-sixties homophile organizers tried to hold several national conventions with the goal of forming a national organization. They succeeded, partially, in the foundation of the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations, NACHO, as an umbrella organization in 1966.⁸⁹ But by the end of the sixties the homophile movement was left behind by activists young and old as a group of outdated, stubborn gays who were more concerned with their status than sincerely representing the changing voice of gay America. The Stonewall riots of 1969 created the Gay Liberation Front, and a new social movement that appealed to marginalized peoples' expression of anger against the United States. Gay identity, henceforth, would not be defined by victimhood.

The homophile movement alienated gay Americans who were not male, white, or upper-class, and those who chose nonconforming self-expression. While isolated gay individuals were perhaps happy and amazed with any supportive literature on homosexuality in 1953, by 1965 gay Americans who were lesbians, black, trans or involved in drag were tired of homophile publications continuing to only discuss issues relevant to a small portion of the community.

From the very beginning of homophile organization, male leaders expected lesbians to take a back seat. ONE Inc had had two lesbians in its initial team, long-term lesbian couple Joan Corbin, the magazine's primary illustrator, and Irma "Corky" Wolf, *ONE*'s chief editor from

⁸⁹Martin Duberman, *Stonewall*, New York City: Plume, 1993, 153.

1954 to 1957 and frequent contributor to its recurring column, “The Feminine Viewpoint,” who used the pseudonyms Eve Ellore and Ann Carll Reid. Wolf quit *ONE* in 1957 and expressed the frustration that the journal was unable to attract more lesbian readers and contributors. Corbin continued to draw for *ONE*, although less frequently during the 1960s than in the 1950s.⁹⁰ Although there is ample evidence that male homophile leaders of ONE Inc and the Mattachine wanted more lesbian readership and participation, they wanted it on their terms; they wanted lesbian support of issues surrounding police entrapment in bars and parks, which were issues that largely did not affect lesbians at all. Lesbian activist Karla Jay complained of the rampant sexism in homophile circles, “I was appalled by the behavior of the men, I could see that left-wing men were not any different.”⁹¹ Women who sought to participate in homophile meetings were expected to silently support their male peers and make coffee. In 1965 *ONE* published an editorial, “Where are the Women?” which sought to understand the lack of female participation in the organization.⁹² Editor Don Slater began by identifying the women who had worked for the magazine in its early years, and proposed that male and female homosexuals shared the same oppression and it was only logical that they should share the same resistance. But in recognizing that in 1965 *ONE* was a primarily male organization, Slater seemed to push the blame onto women themselves, “Have we lost the women to the Daughters of Bilitis and its Chapters throughout the United States—or to the Minorities Research Group of London? Is this what our lesbian friends really want—to be only with other women? [...] We keep expecting some women to come along again who believe as we do in unifying the aims and purposes of homosexuals no matter which sex they belong to.”⁹³ Rather than examine ways in which *ONE* could have

⁹⁰ Craig Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 23.

⁹¹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 122.

⁹² Don Slater, “Where are the Women?” *ONE*, 3/1/1965, Volume 13 Issue 3, 5.

⁹³ Slater, “Where are the Women?” 5.

possibly alienated a lesbian audience, Slater chastised women for not devoting themselves to a broader homosexual mission. Male homophiles expected lesbians to take a back seat and focus their energy on issues that male homosexuals faced like the draft or police entrapment; they viewed lesbian-specific issues secondary to the cause. Homophile leaders hesitated to incorporate or involve themselves in other social issues, namely feminism and racial equality.

White middle-class male homophiles responded to complaints from their more marginalized counterparts by insisting that the effectiveness of homophile organizational efforts hindered their sole focus on explicitly homophile issues, and thus rejected calls to include racial equality and feminism in its activism. Richard Inman, founder of the Mattachine of Florida, wrote to Foster Gunnison of Mattachine New York that for homosexuals to affiliate with other groups or issues was “a VERY dangerous course,” and that homophile goals should never be “contaminated” with the agenda of any other movement- be it pro-black or anti-war.⁹⁴ Dick Leitch of Mattachine New York warned any overt association with the Black Panthers could “endanger the liasons we have made with civil-rights organizations who disagree” with the Panthers philosophy. In a private letter, he wrote “Panthers are none of our damned business, as homosexuals.”⁹⁵ Homophile leaders like Leitch insisted on the separation from other civil causes because they feared to lose the resources of more conservative civil organizations and the tepid support that homophile organizations had slowly won from political leaders in their cities by aligning themselves with other controversial causes amidst an incredibly tense national climate. Older homophiles who had survived and worked under the harsh homophobic policies of the 1950s struggled to take more radical leaps, feared what the government could do, and thus stuck

⁹⁴ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 103.

⁹⁵ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 216.

to a more conservative platform of seeking gay acceptance in society without challenging its pillars.

Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) largely formed because of ONE and the Mattachine's inability to incorporate women into their activism, although DOB still only focused on issues pertaining to the lives of white middle-class *discreet* lesbians and suffered from classism and racism as well. Some DOB meetings were known to have had a dress code; homophile leaders wanted to present themselves as still able to meet the standards of heterosexual society and thus wanted to present their members as respectable, feminine women. This attitude excluded the majority of working-class lesbians who were much more visible than their middle-class counterparts. In a feminist magazine, *Motive (Feminist)*, DOB leaders Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon sought to explain lesbianism to a feminist but primarily heterosexual audience. In their attempt to dismiss negatively perceived stereotypes about lesbianism, they dismissed butch presentation and butch-femme dynamics. They wrote, "It is only with painful experience that she learns the Lesbian is attracted to a woman- not a cheap imitation of a man."⁹⁶ DOB sought to convince heterosexual women that lesbians were not a menace to the women's movement. Heterosexual feminists distanced themselves from lesbians as undesirable radicals because they believed their feminism would not be taken seriously if they were aligned with such outrageous women. Thus Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon strove to cultivate the image of a lesbian that was nonthreatening to heterosexual women and in the process denounced more obviously expressive lesbians, namely butch women.

Male homophiles similarly made pariahs out of effeminate-presenting homosexual men. There was a strong anti-"swish" sentiment in homophile publications, "swish" being a term that

⁹⁶ Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, "The Realities of Lesbianism," *Motive*, March 1969, 66.

referred to a continuum of male effeminacy. The “swishier” one was, the more outwardly expressive of their sexuality they were, and subsequently the more resented they were by the community of homophiles hellbent on convincing the heterosexual world of the homosexual’s wholesome equality as outstanding presentable citizens. In the 1960s, the *Lavender Lexicon* defined “nelly” merely as “an effeminate, affected homosexual who makes public his display of homosexuality,” but defined “faggot” as

the one who parades his homosexuality on the streets with off the shoulder sweaters, jackets, and wears makeup. Usually is scorned by all except his own crowd. Usually this is confined to the younger groups but sometimes continues a lifetime. This type of homosexual is not allowed in most establishments because of the fear that their presence will bring retaliation by police. This is probably the stereotyped homosexual.⁹⁷

Homophiles, gay and lesbian alike, policed gay presentation and expression in an attempt to find respect and approval from the heterosexual world. This policing alienated many homosexuals who then did not feel like the homophile movement represented or welcomed them. Isaac from Chicago wrote to *ONE* in 1964 how hurt he had been to read in the magazine that “the infernal display of effeminacy” by some homosexuals should be abolished. Isaac proclaimed, “Anyone who really knows effeminate homosexuals knows that the effeminacy is as natural to them and as integral to their personalities as is the homosexual act itself which the editorial defends. Effeminacy serves as an integrating, tension-releasing, often enjoyable part of many homosexuals’ lives.”⁹⁸ The mere amount of space in homophile publications dedicated to berating or defending the “swish” reveals just how large a portion of gay men presented effeminately. The homophiles’ insistence that homosexuals were just as masculine as any heterosexual did not fully represent the entire gay community as it was, but rather how homophiles felt the community should present itself.

⁹⁷ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 206.

⁹⁸ Loftin, *Masked Voices*, 214.

God forbid transsexual⁹⁹ individuals even dared to exist. A 1965 issue of *ONE* published a review “London Drag Show ‘Revolting’” which mocked, “the incumbent Queen, who, according to Hall, clambered aboard a table, sheathed in glittering lame and with a gold-cardboard crown, and “mimed and wriggled his way through a pop-song.”¹⁰⁰ Most homophile publications dismissed and denied any affiliation with them; transsexuals were often denied access to gay spaces. A rare issue of *ONE* featured an article, “Silks and Satins,” that actually offered the perspective of a self-described transsexual.¹⁰¹ Charles Elkins, who described himself as a huge, powerful man in his mid-forties with a fondness for wearing satin, explained that the transsexual community was composed of men gay and straight, from all walks of life and all across the world, but that all transsexuals lived in fear of the shame of discovery, and almost all were incredibly isolated from any sense of community.¹⁰² He lamented,

Ours is a lonely lot. The homosexuals we sometimes meet bewilder us by asking ‘But why the need for women’s clothing?’ Our psychiatrists, usually unsuccessful in freeing us of our desires because we rarely really seek this release, counsel us to maintain our secrets locked inside. The society that could forgive us sexual promiscuity or even homosexuality scorns this oftentimes greatest need we have.¹⁰³

Elkins stressed that transsexuals felt rejected and misunderstood by the mainstream gay community. Gay men denounced and belittled the effeminate and those otherwise obviously recognized by heterosexuals for their behavior and dress because they felt it reflected on them as a whole community. Homophiles were invested in defending gay men’s masculinity to be taken seriously by heterosexual society and thus responded to nonconforming members as a threat.

⁹⁹ I use this term in reference to how I find individuals identified themselves in the 50s and 60s, but this term should not be applied to transgender individuals in contemporary context.

¹⁰⁰ “News from Britain: London Drag Show ‘Revolting’” *ONE*, 9/1/1965, Volume 13 Issue 9, 17.

¹⁰¹ Charles Elkins, “Silks and Satins,” *ONE*, 3/1/1965, Volume 13 Issue 3, 19.

¹⁰² Elkins, “Silks and Satins,” 19.

¹⁰³ Elkins, “Silks and Satins,” 19.

Vicious infighting amidst homophile leaders in the mid-sixties disintegrated their own organizations and prevented them from achieving any substantial progress like they had made in the late fifties and early sixties. ONE Inc collapsed in 1965 from internal disagreements between members, namely between Dorr Legg and Don Slater. Dorr Legg, *ONE*'s publisher, was also one of the founders of the Log Cabin Club, the core of his Republicanism being his well-earned distrust of the government. Legg was steadfast in his methods and leadership of ONE Inc, but some members found him to be authoritarian and inflexible to changing his approach, and feared he might use the ONE elections of 1965 to extend his power over the organization.¹⁰⁴ Legg and Slater provided conflicting accounts of the actions that led to the disbandment of ONE Inc. According to Don Slater, after Legg acquired funds and a grand new headquarters from Reed Erickson, he tried to focus ONE Inc's efforts as an education center, an Institute of Homophile Studies, and was no longer interested in using resources to run the magazine. Legg stepped down from the magazine's editorial board and took on the new title, "Dean of Studies."¹⁰⁵ Slater claimed that after Legg did win the election, on the eve of Easter, Legg barged into a work session of the magazine's editors and fired them all.¹⁰⁶ On midnight of Easter Sunday, 1965, Don Slater lead a group of dissidents in the removal of every file and the entire library from the Venice Boulevard headquarters to a new location in Hollywood.¹⁰⁷ On Monday morning Legg appeared for work to find almost everything gone, including the full membership list with its addresses.¹⁰⁸ Dorr Legg had an uncanny ability to memorize great chunks of information and reconstructed many of the names and addresses, informing members through

¹⁰⁴ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 99.

¹⁰⁵ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 110.

¹⁰⁶ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 111.

¹⁰⁷ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 99.

¹⁰⁸ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 100.

mail and phone that a revolution had taken place, but that ONE Inc was still in business. An ugly battle quickly ensued. A judge allegedly dismissed the case as a “squabble between a couple of hysterical queens.”¹⁰⁹ Legg’s “tenacious and unyielding” tactics alienated the judge who might have otherwise ruled in his favor; instead the judge ordered that the material be divided.¹¹⁰ Dorr Legg retained the name ONE, although he soon ceased to publish the magazine. Don Slater and his dissidents changed their publication’s name to *Tangents* and adopted the official name the Homosexual Information Center.¹¹¹ Los Angeles then had two competing gay organizations with deep-seated personal animosity between them. In an act of petty spite, Slater never returned Legg’s draft of his master’s thesis on the sociology of homosexuality, and Legg never received his degree.¹¹²

The divisions within the homophile movement hampered their efforts to effect meaningful change. Craig Lee of New York wrote a rather scathing evaluation of the movement published in the March 1966 issue of the recently divided *ONE*, in which he concluded the homophiles had ultimately failed.¹¹³ Like many homosexuals before him, he compared the movement to the plight of the black American’s fight for racial equality in America; they too had tried to appease white society with a leadership of refined “professionals,” and had slowly won several battles through the courts. Lee argued that it was not until “amateurs,” namely college students, began to protest openly and loudly that segregation was ended in the United States.¹¹⁴ Lee brought this point up to insist that the homophile movement should include members under 21; the movement specifically did not to avoid accusation that it was corrupting youth. But the

¹⁰⁹ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 111.

¹¹⁰ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 100.

¹¹¹ Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 100.

¹¹² Dececco and Bullough, *Before Stonewall*, 100.

¹¹³ Craig Lee, “Readers on Writers,” *ONE*, 3/1/1966, Volume 14 Issue 3, 24.

¹¹⁴ Lee, “Readers on Writers,” 25.

larger, more pressing reason Lee deemed the homophile movement a failure was its leaders' inability to form a unified front; divisions hurt overall membership thus handicapped the movement's ability to wield its weight as a significant population in the United States. Lee remarked, "It seems to me that it should not be impossible to unite unless the "leaders" involved are petty, bitchy, two-bit emperors more jealous of their prestige and position than concerned with the success of the movement."¹¹⁵ It is easy to see where Lee was coming from; Dorr Legg and Don Slater had allowed petty grievances to undermine and eventually destroy what had once been one of the loudest homosexual voices for change.

Homophile leaders failed to work collaboratively. In August 1966, homophile organizations gathered in San Francisco to follow up on the discussion of forming a national organization in Kansas City earlier that April. This "Ten Days in August" conference gathered a crowd double the size of the Kansas City conference; in fact it was the largest homophile gathering ever held in the U.S. at the time, but of some eighty delegates, less than a dozen were women.¹¹⁶ The "Ten Days in August" conference offered a panel discussion of law reform with a roster that included California state legislators Willie Brown and Jon L. Burton, a theatrical presentation envisioning a future "Gay 90's Night," and a picnic that one gay paper claimed more than six hundred people attended.¹¹⁷ There was contention about which organizations should be accredited, and how many votes should be delegated to each. The convention produced a proliferation of resolutions, but produced even more arguments. Participants of the conference had very little respect for one another. Guy Strait, the founder of San Francisco's first gay newspaper and a prominent child pornographer who would be arrested in 1973, whose own

¹¹⁵ Lee, "Readers on Writers," 25.

¹¹⁶ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 150.

¹¹⁷ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 150.

resolution was voted down at the conference, snidely commented that “never before in the history of mankind has so much time been wasted by so few people in order that they may hear their own voices.”¹¹⁸ Clark Polack, the Philadelphia leader of the Janus Society and editor of *Drum* magazine, accused some leaders in the movement of “failing to rid themselves of their own anti-homosexual sentiments” and of caring only for the welfare of the “good” homosexual; he named this attitude as “Aunt Maryism.”¹¹⁹ Dorr Legg, one of the leaders to whom this comment was most certainly directed, dismissed Polack as an “arrogant and insufferable boor,” whose “conduct throughout the entire Conference alienated most of the delegates.”¹²⁰ Homophile leaders essentially failed to put aside their differences to work together. Rather than focusing on the direction of the movement, delegates fought over their personalities and egos.

The conference did succeed in the creation of a national homophile organization in concept with the foundation of the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations (NACHO), but this organization never reflected a consolidated, cooperative community. Del Martin and other lesbians were wary of dedicating their resources to another male-centric organization and insisted on the primary importance of the Daughters of Bilitis maintaining their autonomy.¹²¹ NACHO held its first conference in 1967 in Washington DC; leaders decided that homosexual organizations would qualify to participate only if they agreed to the central aim of establishing the homosexual in society as “a first-class human being and a first-class citizen.”¹²² Dorr Legg’s fraction of ONE Inc boycotted, as did the Mattachine of New York (MSNY). Dick Leitsch, leader of the MSNY, scoffed, “The so-called ‘homophile movement’ ... too often an

¹¹⁸ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 150.

¹¹⁹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 152.

¹²⁰ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 151.

¹²¹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 153.

¹²² Duberman, *Stonewall*, 156.

albatross around the necks of those who are trying to be effective in the cause for which we are all supposedly working.” Leitsch determined to avoid the movement “as much as possible... If this means MSNY is isolationist, so be it. I believe it is better to be alone and effective than to be part of an ineffective crowd.”¹²³ While the *Advocate* optimistically reviewed the conference as “the most productive and beneficial” of the meetings thus far, this should perhaps only emphasize the ineffectiveness of all of the meetings homophile leaders held in the late sixties to organize on a national scale. The statement of purpose NACHO delegates finally agreed on at the convention was anticlimactically vague; delegates merely pledged themselves to “the improvement of the homosexual,” and “intergroup projects and cooperation,” were “encouraged.” Ultimately delegates were too hesitant to take any real action or commit the resources of their organizations, as the national conference was specifically described as merely “consultative in nature and function.”¹²⁴ Daughters of Bilitis pulled out of NACHO in 1968, and San Francisco’s Society for Individual Rights (SIR) complained “no action program had been discussed” and implied their further participation was in doubt.¹²⁵ Founded in 1964, SIR was more democratically run than earlier homophile organizations and encouraged any activity its members had the initiative to organize, including parties, dances, bowling leagues, bridge clubs, meditation groups, and art classes, and in April of 1966 SIR had opened the first gay community center in America.¹²⁶ Arthur Warner, a member of the Mattachine and lawyer dedicated to repealing America’s anti-sodomy laws, lamented, “We must be doing something wrong if SIR,

¹²³ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 156.

¹²⁴ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 160.

¹²⁵ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 222.

¹²⁶ Bill Brent, “Society for Individual Rights (SIR),” *Black Sheets magazine*, 1998, Shaping San Francisco’s Digital Archive @ FoundSF. [http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Society_for_Individual_Rights_\(SIR\)](http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Society_for_Individual_Rights_(SIR))

the largest organization, was unhappy and Mattachine New York, the second largest, was not even present.”¹²⁷

In the late sixties and early seventies, the homophile movement was largely replaced and overshadowed by the growing momentum of a new social movement, the Gay Liberation Front. In New York, on June 28, 1969, riots broke out at the Stonewall Inn, a somewhat sleazy gay club run by the Italian mafia.¹²⁸ Local police from the Sixth precinct regularly raided the Stonewall Inn and other gay clubs, although they had corrupt relations with the mafia owners and would usually tip off the club beforehand so that the majority of alcohol would be hidden. The Stonewall was somewhat of a cash-cow for corrupt police who were not interested in shutting it down, merely in taking advantage of the vulnerable crowd it procured. The sixth precinct raided the Stonewall about once a month. The raid was usually staged early in the evening to cause minimal commotion, and most of the time it only consisted of the police “striding arrogantly through the bar and then leaving.”¹²⁹ Few arrests were regularly made, and when they were, they were limited to the staff of the bar, those who did not have a valid ID, and anyone crossdressing.¹³⁰ But this particular raid was led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which had discovered this local partnership, and they intended to make a public example.¹³¹ A group of gays ushered out of the Inn began to throw nickels, dimes, pennies, and quarters at the police, a mockery of the payoff they received from the mob.¹³² Inspector Pine allegedly panicked, not having expected any resistance from the usually pliant and easily abused

¹²⁷ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 222.

¹²⁸ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 181.

¹²⁹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 194.

¹³⁰ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 195.

¹³¹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 194.

¹³² Sylvia Rivera "Sylvia Rivera Discusses the Stonewall Riots in a Never-Hard-Before Interview (Exclusive)," Interview by Eric Marcus, 1989, Out, October 13, 2016.

homosexuals, he had no backup.¹³³ The crowd fighting back against the police was composed largely of the homophile movement's undesirables; working-class, black transsexuals including Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, two individuals who could not even guarantee their own entrance into Stonewall on a regular evening due to their outwardly and unapologetic effeminate presentations. Rivera explained that the Stonewall Inn was not accessible to most individuals in drag, "you could get into the Stonewall if they knew you and there were only a certain amount of drag queens that were allowed into the Stonewall at that time[...] We are the ones that went out there and we didn't take no shit from them. We didn't have nothing to lose."¹³⁴ At 2:55 AM the Feds called in the Tactical Patrol Force, a crack riot-control unit that had been set up to subdue the many anti-Vietnam protests. The formidable TPF appeared on the scene wearing helmets with visors, carrying billy clubs and tear gas, linked arm in arm up Christopher Street in a wedge formation, but rioters did not break and run.¹³⁵ Protestors actually managed to reform behind the TFP, at one point in a grand Rockettes-style formation singing at the top of their lungs,

We are the Stonewall girls
We wear our hair in curls
We wear no underwear
We show our pubic hair
We wear our dungarees
Above our nelly knees!¹³⁶

Clearly, the protestors at the Stonewall Inn were not invested in the same respectability politics as their homophile counterparts.

News of the protest spread across America like wildfire. Gays from coast to coast were enthralled with the story of the fags that fought back, of homosexuals that did not allow

¹³³ Rivera, "Sylvia Rivera Discusses the Stonewall Riots in a Never-Heard-Before Interview (Exclusive)."

¹³⁴ Rivera, "Sylvia Rivera Discusses the Stonewall Riots in a Never-Heard-Before Interview (Exclusive)."

¹³⁵ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 200.

¹³⁶ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 201.

themselves to be the passive victims of routine police violence and humiliation. Sylvia Rivera, a black street hustler and later founder of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) stayed up all night after the riots walking the streets and setting garbage cans on fire. She explained, “I wanted to do every destructive thing I could think of to get back at those who had hurt us over the years. Letting loose, fighting back, was the only way to get across to straight society and the cops that we weren’t going to take their fucking bullshit anymore.”¹³⁷ A new path opened for the homosexual. The Gay Liberation Front that formed out of the Stonewall riots presented the homosexual with the new option of rejecting conformity, openly rebelling against oppressive forces, rejecting an inherently evil and unjust system, and radically loving one’s homosexuality.

While for many gay Americans the Stonewall riots signaled a welcomed trumpet call for homosexual rebellion, to homophile leaders they meant embarrassing publicity that tarnished the image of the polished compliant homosexual citizen they had built. The Sunday following the riots, a sign was found on the boarded-up I of the Stonewall club that read, “We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the street of the village- Mattachine”¹³⁸ This message made it clear that the homophile leaders disapproved of the radical open resistance of the Stonewall rioters. Homophile leaders struggled to adjust to understand or compromise with the goals of the gay liberation front. In the August-September 1969 issue of *Tangents*, the magazine created by Don Slater’s split of ONE Inc, Don Slater offered some insight in the editorial published following the riots at the Stonewall Inn. Although he did not explicitly mention Stonewall, Slater addressed the rising tide of the younger gay

¹³⁷ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 203.

¹³⁸ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 207.

liberation movement, “We wonder about the Homosexual Revolt. We welcome it.”¹³⁹ Slater encouraged the continuation of protest, picket-lines, petitions, and demonstrations and sought to show how the homophile movement was also striving to change society for the homosexual. However, Slater made a firm stance against what he perceived to be a desire to foster a separate gay culture, “We don’t need more separatism. Homosexuals want to be part of the mainstream of American life, not an undercurrent. Beware the ghetto mentality!”¹⁴⁰ Homophiles were sympathetic to the desires of gay liberationists, but drew a line at their rejection of assimilation into mainstream society.

It is puzzling that so few homophile publications discussed the implications of the Stonewall riots in explicit terms. *Tangents* provided a brief description of the events in its news section that discussed cases of police brutality across the United States, but did not treat it as a significant instance.¹⁴¹ *The Ladder* made no mention of the riots at Stonewall until almost a year after the riots. It seems as though homophiles avoided valorizing the riots at Stonewall as a significant turning point, because many older homosexuals feared police confrontation, and did not want to encourage similar acts of public, violent resistance. Leo Skir, a gay man, attended a vigil on July 19, 1970 in the Village of NYC, intended to combine Gay Liberationist efforts with the Black Panthers, although despite the high hopes of the GLF there was very limited black representation at the actual event.¹⁴² At the vigil, Skir expressed his concern for GLF, “I think the kids are wobbly about it. I think there’s going to be pressure and they’re going to crack. They have no firm center, no leader, no ideology, or even single aim.”¹⁴³ Older homophiles were concerned

¹³⁹ Don Slater, “Editorial,” *Tangents*, August-September 1969, Volume 3, Issue 11&12, 2.

¹⁴⁰ Slater, “Editorial,” 2.

¹⁴¹ Leo Skir, “Gay Liberation,” *The Ladder*, February 1, 1970, Volume 14, Issue 5/6, 10.

¹⁴² Skir, “Gay Liberation,” 10.

¹⁴³ Skir, “Gay Liberation,” 13.

that younger activists were not carefully organizing their movement, and that this would ultimately hinder their success and hurt the public perception of all homosexual activism. However, Skir recognized the importance of youth involvement, “they ARE the movement today, young-young kids. You see them. And they faced the police at the Stonewall. Friends of mine, only ten years younger, can face police clubs. I can’t. I was at a rally against the cut in Welfare grants and when the police horses backed on us, I panicked.”¹⁴⁴ Skir admired the bravery and commitment of younger activists, but his fear was well earned. The generational gap was defined by older homosexuals’ experiences of police brutality under the Lavender Scare. Younger gay activists wanted to openly resist against the oppressive institutions of the United States, but older homophiles were terrified that such resistance would shatter the image homophiles had ardently crafted of themselves as good, cooperative citizens. Homophiles feared that if this new homosexual organization posed a public nuisance, the state would subsequently respond with a return of the brutal, McCarthyistic policing of the homosexual community and undo over a decade of progress.

The homophiles criticized younger activists for not being organized, but those young activists initially attempted to use the resources and unity of existing homophile organizations, and were systemically prevented from doing so by older leaders of those organizations. The October-December issue of *Tangents* featured an interview with young activist Gale Whittington, who expressed that he and his peers had been encouraging other homosexual activists to join SIR, the Society for Individual Rights, to make effective use of the money and resources the older organization had.¹⁴⁵ The young activists attended and voted that SIR would

¹⁴⁴ Skir, “Gay Liberation,” 13.

¹⁴⁵ Gale Whittington, “The New Gay World of Gale Whittington,” *Tangents*, October-December 1969, Volume 4 Issue 1-3, 4.

support a petition “to put before the Board of Supervisors on the June ballot a statement of policy that will make it the official policy of the City of San Francisco to oppose the present laws against private, consensual, adult sexual behavior and to oppose discrimination against persons because of homosexual orientation.”¹⁴⁶ The young activists got the vote passed that SIR would put top priority on the petition drive, but to Whittington’s dismay, “in the next membership brochure that they sent out, the vice president urged every conscientious homosexual not to sign the petition. And they succeeded in getting all the old conservatives back into the next membership meeting and they voted to rescind our resolution.”¹⁴⁷ Homophile leaders sabotaged younger homosexual activist’s efforts to shape or lead existing homophile organizations, leaving them no option but to break off on their own.

Even when younger homosexuals formed their own organizations like GLF, they were not invited to homophile conferences. The Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations (ERCHO) was held in November 1969, in the aftermath of the October 15 Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam and just before the November 15 Mobilization convened in the capital to protest the war’s continuation.¹⁴⁸ Although the conference was closed off to approved and vetted homophile organizations, Craig Rodwell, a young and radical member of the Mattachine New York and founder of Homophile Youth Movement in Neighborhoods (HYMN) “found a loophole in the ERCHO procedural rules that allowed any member organization to bring representatives of other organizations as guests” and thus made it possible for over half a dozen GLF members to attend.¹⁴⁹ These GLFers actually took over much of the conference with their ideas. One of the GLF members in attendance, Jim Fournatt, reflected, “We

¹⁴⁶ Whittington, “The New Gay World,” 4.

¹⁴⁷ Whittington, “The New Gay World,” 4.

¹⁴⁸ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 227.

¹⁴⁹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 227.

wanted to end the homophile movement. We wanted them to join us in making a gay revolution. We were a nightmare to them. They were committed to being nice, acceptable status quo Americans, and we were not; we had no interest in being acceptable.”¹⁵⁰ But homophile leaders clung to their stance that the movement must only focus on achieving homosexual equality within society through their peaceful if compliant methods.

Homophile leaders were not just being judgmental of GLF for pettiness’s sake, they were terrified of the consequences that might come from homosexuals getting too loud and visible. Part of their success had come from appealing to the institutions of family values and patriotism, and they feared that the GLF would take all of their progress down with them. Mattachine leader Foster Gunnison bewailed that his heart was breaking over those “wild eyed kids” who thought “they are going to take over America and the world.” He predicted that instead that they “will trigger a right-wing reaction in this country that will sink all of our ships together.”¹⁵¹ At the Western Homophile Conference in 1970, Jim Kepner introduced the key note speaker Harry Hay, and he took the opportunity to defend the homophile movement’s reformist attitude, “I don’t think those of you who are under thirty can begin to appreciate just what it was like for homosexuals two decades ago, and some you older ones have forgotten. [...]Until the homosexual cause began to be a bit respectable, it was only the revolutionaries that had time for it. Everybody else was afraid of their shadow.”¹⁵² Older homophile leaders pleaded with younger revolutionary-oriented homosexuals to take heed of their warnings and tone down their approach, but the homophiles could not stop the momentum of the GLF and the newborn movement they had caused.

¹⁵⁰ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 229.

¹⁵¹ Duberman, *Stonewall*, 232.

¹⁵² Jim Kepner, “Western Homophile Conference Keynote Address,” *The Ladder*, June 1970, Volume 14, p 13.

The homophile movement did not continue into the 1970s as a driving force for gay activism. It did not have enough coherency as a movement in the late sixties to enact meaningful change. The homophile movement had asked all homosexuals to volunteer their efforts towards the movement without consideration for the needs of its black, women, gender non-conforming, or working members, who by the late sixties were involved and devoting themselves to multiple causes, living in America marginalized and oppressed by multiple axis of power. The homophile movement did not offer a solution to their pains, but merely helped gay people more easily access their other privileges, therefore it had nothing to offer to those who never had a seat at the table in American society regardless of their homosexuality. Without the labor and support of its black, working class, and female members, and even its middle-class white male members unable to agree on how to go forward, the homophile movement died and gay America fractured.

Conclusion

The homophile movement died because it had achieved its purpose in combatting the Lavender Scare and the harsh anti-gay laws of 1950s McCarthyism, but leaders could not agree on new goals. In the sixties, the social context of America dramatically shifted, but homophile leaders did not shift with it. The homophile movement did not adapt to the changing national climate; leaders remained riddled with the same fears born out of their experiences, and did not agree with each other on how or what to resist. When the homophile movement fractured, there was not another stable organizational framework to replace it. The Gay Liberation Front only attracted a small minority of members and did not have a sizeable force behind it. Just as the homophiles had feared, the GLF attracted public scorn. In the years following the Stonewall riots, the vast majority of gay people remained closeted, wanting to avoid affiliation with the loud and unapologetic queens of the GLF.¹⁵³ Gay historian Martin Duberman has studied the GLF extensively and he attempted to explain why it failed to gain larger support. Essentially Duberman explained that life is hard and short, and each of us as individuals are constantly aware of the inevitability of our own death.

In the brief interlude preceding [death], we need all the comfort we can get, and that includes for most of us the comfort of being certified and approved- accepted as a human being in good standing. It should therefore come as no surprise that most gay people, too, yearn to fit in, to belong, and to that end are happy to pledge allegiance to whatever the going institutional structure is and whatever official formula for happiness reigns.¹⁵⁴

The GLF was ambitious in seeking to fight against the intersections of racism, sexism, and classism in their combatting of institutionalized homophobia, but unfortunately it seems that only the most marginalized members of society are consistently willing to fight for something other than their own access to privilege. The GLF did not appeal to middle-class gay Americans, and

¹⁵³Martin Duberman, *Has the Gay Movement Failed?* Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018, 77.

¹⁵⁴Duberman, *Has the Gay Movement Failed?* 77.

gay activism suffered without the political investment of the larger gay community. Over the next decade the gay community lacked the centralizing force of support that the homophile movement had been able to rally.

The AIDS crisis and the rise of rampant conservatism under President Reagan gave the gay community another centralizing mission. But AIDS claimed over 194,476 American's lives by the time the first clinical trial of combination antiretroviral therapy even began in 1992, and claimed 529,113 Americans' lives by 2004.¹⁵⁵ The AIDS crisis was allowed to proliferate for years in the 1980s because of a false public perception that it only affected homosexuals and drug users, and because the majority of heterosexual America accepted that those individuals, the undesirables of society, should die. AIDS decimated an entire generation of gay voices. In the face of the U.S. government's virulent indifference to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of its gay citizens, gay activism coming out of the AIDS crisis mirrored the gay activism under the Lavender Scare in that activists had to convince the broader population of their own worth to society.

Slowly but surely, the gay community has risen out of the ashes. Despite contemporary gay literature's emphasis on the Stonewall riots as a "starting point" for gay activism in the United States, the gay activism of the early 2000s more closely resembles the homophile movement than that of the Gay Liberation Front. Major victories have been won for gay rights in the past decade, with the end of the discriminatory policy of Don't Ask Don't Tell in the military, and the Supreme Court's ruling on *Obergefell v. Hodges* which finally made same-sex marriage legal in all fifty states. Both of those national victories reflect a desire to participate publicly in America's existing institutions as they are, rather than tearing down unjust systems as the GLF

¹⁵⁵ "Thirty Years of HIV/AIDS: Snapshots of an Epidemic," AmfAR, Accessed March 24, 2019. <https://www.amfar.org/thirty-years-of-hiv/aids-snapshots-of-an-epidemic/>

sought to do. Duberman questioned the direction of contemporary gay activism in his book, *Has the Modern Gay Movement Failed?* “We’ve come full circle, back some fifty years to the debate that consumed GLF and set it apart from groups that followed, such as the Gay Activists Alliance: Where do we want to place the emphasis- on liberty or on equality?”¹⁵⁶ The contemporary LGBT community’s focus on marriage equality and access to the military has been a conformist enterprise to assimilate into a white classist heteropatriarchy; Duberman reminds us that the Gay Liberation Front of the 1970s envisioned more for us.

We are once again facing another rise of rampant conservatism and a return of traditional family values under the Trump administration. Discriminatory anti-LGBT laws are being put on the books under the guise of religious freedom. History is repeating itself as Trump has enacted a ban on transgender individuals serving in the military. I implore the community to take heed of the lessons learned by both the homophiles and the GLF. The impact of LGBT activism today depends on the willingness of our white, middle-class members to listen to their more marginalized LGBT peers and be politically invested in more than their own access to privilege. The homophiles managed to provide a platform where white, middle-class gay people could build themselves up under the crushing weight of the Lavender Scare; unfortunately, they did this by stepping on top of the black, trans, and women members who were struggling with multiple axes of oppression.

We, the contemporary American LGBT community, must decide as a community if we really want to use our resources and strength to fight for participation in the U.S. military industrial complex that continues to profit from the dismantling of other people’s governments. We must decide if in the face of hatred and bigotry, we will once again strive to prove our value to a

¹⁵⁶ Duberman, *Has the Gay Movement Failed?* 70.

society that has barely managed to tolerate us in the past decade. The GLF had noble goals, but little support from the broader community. White middle-class gay Americans felt alienated from LGBT political activism because they did not see themselves as sharing the same fates or identities as the black trans bodies on the frontlines of social justice. Regardless of how they fancied themselves, we are all bound by fate. White middle-class gays can scrape by during more progressive liberalist periods, but history has shown that the LGBT community quickly becomes the scapegoat during times of political strife, and the policing of homophobic laws will come crashing down eventually regardless of how much we may try to conform. We are so much easier to exploit and oppress when we are divided. Unfortunately, today I see our community suffering from the same divisions the homophiles failed to mend. Grindr is littered with bios that proclaim, “No Fats, No Fems, No Asians!”¹⁵⁷ LGBT blogs are consumed with in-fighting over whether or not hetero-romantic asexuals should get a place in the LGBT acronym, meanwhile one in ten transgender people in the United States are evicted from their homes because of their gender identity.¹⁵⁸

If we are to successfully resist oppression as an American gay community, we must learn to do what the homophiles would not in the 1960s, and what the GLF could not in the 1970s. We must have strong, unified leadership, a clear set of goals, and the willingness to listen to all the voices in our community. We must value the voices of our most marginalized members and recognize that the way they experience homophobia is shaped by their race, sex, and class, not just because it is right but because without their support, we are too divided to stand. While the

¹⁵⁷David Hudson, "Grindr Will Stop Profiles from Stating 'No Fats, No Fems, No Asians'," *Gay Star News*, September 18, 2018, Accessed April 27, 2019. <https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/grindr-profiles-no-fats-kindr/#gs.7tn39x>.

¹⁵⁸ "Housing & Homelessness," National Center for Transgender Equality, Accessed April 27, 2019. <https://transequality.org/issues/housing-homelessness>.

homophiles viewed racism, classism, and sexism as separate issues to be tackled later, we must see them as different faces of the same evil that we must resist and overcome together.

Figure 1: Schapiro, Al. "Harry Chess: That Man from A.U.N.T.I.E." Pittsburg: *Drum*, June 1965. Volume 5. Number 4. Page 7.



Figure 2: Schapiro, Al. "Harry Chess: That Man from A.U.N.T.I.E." Pittsburg: Drum, June

1965. Volume 5. Number 4. Page 8.



Statement from page 33:

Laws against homosexual conduct between consenting adults in private should be removed from the criminal codes. Homosexual American citizens should have precise equality with all other citizens before the law and are entitled to social and economic equality of opportunity. Each homosexual should be judged as an individual on his qualifications for Federal and all other employment. The disqualification of homosexuals, as a group or class, from receipt of security clearances is unjustified and contrary to fundamental American principles.

Homosexual American citizens have the same duty and the same right to serve in the Armed Forces as do all other citizens. Homosexuality should not be a bar to military service. Even under existing military standards, a person dismissed for homosexuality should be given a fully honorable discharge.

For too long homosexuals have been deprived of these rights on the basis of cultural prejudice, myth, folklore, and superstition. Professional opinion is in complete disagreement as to the cause and nature of homosexuality. Those objective research projects undertaken thus far have indicated that findings of homosexual undesirability are based upon, value judgements or emotional reactions rather than on scientific evidence or fact.

A substantial number of American people are subjected to a second-class citizenship, to the Gestapo-like “purges” of governmental agencies and to local police harassment. It is time that the American public re-examine its attitudes and laws concerning the homosexual.

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