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**THE PRODUCTION OF PRIDE: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND
LGBT PRIDE ORGANIZATIONS**

A Dissertation Presented

by

Lauren Joseph

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Abstract of the Dissertation

**THE PRODUCTION OF PRIDE: INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND
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This dissertation examines the process of institutionalization for cultural social movement organizations, drawing on twelve months of intensive ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in four LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) Pride organizations in three cities: New York, NY, Boise, ID, and St. George, UT. Pride events are marches, parades and festivals that celebrate LGBT identity. This study focuses on activities and decision-making involved in the *production* of pride events throughout the year. While some social movement theorists treat institutionalization as the final stage before organizational death, this dissertation shows that institutionalization can signal organizational growth and survival.

The dissertation defines and analyzes two distinct meanings for “institutionalization.” First, I develop the concept *external institutionalization* to describe the process by which LGBT Pride organizations become regular, established actors within a community. Pride organizations, through routine activities of fundraising and resource-gathering, create instrumental ties to local and national commercial, political, and civic entities. These ties represent *social capital* within a community, which generates *symbolic capital*, or legitimacy and recognition for the sexual minority group. The term *cultural resource mobilization* is used to describe the process by which organizations draw on symbolic capital to decrease social marginalization.

Internal institutionalization, the second meaning of institutionalization, describes the use of routine, bureaucratic procedures for decision-making and task completion for organizational goals. Contested but largely-accepted research on social movements suggests that internal institutionalization inevitably leads to oligarchy, deradicalization, and cooptation by mainstream interests. I argue that previous research has inappropriately merged the concepts of bureaucracy with democratic decision-making. My findings suggest that formal, bureaucratic structures can be *more* egalitarian in the diffusion of power among members—when and if democracy is deliberately built into the bureaucratic structure—than organizations based on informal structures and the bonds of friendship.

I argue that internal and external institutionalization are linked—in that external institutionalization requires some degree of internal institutionalization, and tends to push a

group toward developing a bureaucratic structure—but that neither of the two are necessarily the kiss of death for an organization seeking to achieve genuine cultural, social and political change through Pride organizing.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In West Greenwich Village in New York City during the last week of June, it is clear that the annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride March and Festival is about to take place. Street pole banners flying on lampposts all around Midtown and downtown Manhattan display large swooshing rainbows and the brightly-colored logo of the organization that puts on the annual Pride events—Heritage of Pride, with its classic 1980s graffiti/pop art style design of interlocking male and female symbols. At the bottom of the banners are the names and logos of different corporate sponsors of the NYC Pride events, such as The W Hotel or Delta Airlines. In Union Square, a few blocks to the east, the store windows of Virgin Records are filled with a huge printed sign advertising Heritage of Pride and Pride Week, and all across the West Village large rainbow flags are put out for display by the innumerable gay bars and gay clothing stores that are concentrated on these streets.

In the subways, during the few days before the event, the New York City Transit Authority posts printed signs in subway stations all around the city—in stations ranging from Queens to Brooklyn—informing interested travelers how best to reach the LGBT Pride events by underground transit. Travel aboveground on the last Sunday of June, with three quarters of a million people descending upon the March route and Festival area, is always difficult to maneuver during this day, when the event closes down the entirety of Fifth Avenue for up to 10 hours.

Throughout the month of June the LGBT Community Center’s main room is booked solid by different politicians—from the City Comptroller to the Manhattan Borough President—hosting Pride Month celebrations that involve long speeches and lavish receptions. Politicians proclaim their commitment to the gay community and honor local organizations and individual

leaders that have served the local urban community. Even the grand room in City Hall, formal and plush with just a bit of peeling paint along the corners of the ceiling, is booked for a major event during Pride Week. This event, run by the New York City Council, is standing-room only, as the openly-lesbian Head of City Council honors different people who have contributed to the gay community and LGBT cultural life in New York City.

During the month of June, hundreds of different cities across the United States host events that celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Pride. Some events involve hundreds of thousands of people, such as the march that shuts down traffic for most of a day on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan in New York City, while others are small picnics or festivals with only a few hundred or even a few dozen participants. In their most elementary form, Pride events are about promoting the healthy acceptance of one's sexual or gender identity, affirming the individual and collective identities of LGBT people or heterosexual allies, and celebrating with one's peers in a public space. They are also about creating a time and place for the collective visibility of LGBT people who have historically been hidden from the public sphere. The phrase "out and proud" has special meaning during these days, in LGBT people take over public space in a way that both symbolically and literally disrupts quotidian social life in the streets.

The organizations that put on these marches and festivals aim to create an event that is—in the words of many of the organizers—"bigger and better" than the year before. The growth of the event, for the organizers and for public observers, is a representation of the burgeoning numbers of self-accepting and self-affirming LGBT people and heterosexual allies¹ willing to be visible on behalf of LGBT people in a society that stigmatizes non-heterosexual

¹ See Myers (2008) for a discussion of the role and identity of heterosexual allies within the LGBT movement. He describes them as activists working for the benefit of groups for which they are outsiders, as opposed to "beneficiary activists" who work for the benefit of a group to which they claim membership. The number of heterosexual allies, or what Myers calls "the politically gay," have been increasing in recent years within the LGBT movement.

identities and sexual practices. These Pride events are effervescently spontaneous in their exuberant energy and visual creativity; many of the participants don wild costumes and show some nudity at times. Outrageously-dressed drag queens and kings, as well as people holding brightly-printed signs (both home-made signs and signs distributed by various organizations) with slogans publicizing their beliefs, are out in full force. There are also families present—both gay and straight—and the events typically include a festival that includes local LGBT and allied musicians. It is clearly the opportunity for a day of diversion and fun in the presence of like-minded people supportive of diverse sexual orientations and identities.

Pride events have become an annual public ritual of gay life, becoming what some in the LGBT community have lovingly referred to as “Gay Christmas.” In “coming out” stories, the experience of stepping off the sidewalk and out into the street to join the Pride parade has been attributed with great symbolism; as I heard from one long-time member of a Pride organization say, for some people who are just coming to terms with their sexual orientation, the distance achieved between standing on the sidewalk (watching the March) and stepping off to march in the street with the other marchers can represent “the biggest step of their lives.” LGBT people often describe Pride events as significant for their personal growth, ceremoniously asserting and affirming their sexual identity surrounded by thousands of cheering supporters.

The modern LGBT movement, as a whole, has incorporated a range of different strategic elements since the early years of organizing, from political lobbying to disruptive street activism and the publishing of LGBT newspapers, of which the LGBT Pride movement is only one segment. The LGBT movement has always been simultaneously cultural, political and organizational, with its approaches as diverse as the organizations that fall under that label (Armstrong 2002; Adam 1987; Rimmerman 2002, D’Emilio 1998). As Levitsky (2007) points out about the LGBT movement, “by focusing on organizational resources on specific forms of

movement activity or *niches*, organizations develop ‘expertise’ in specific tasks—litigation, lobbying, protest, consciousness-raising, direct services—that they then deploy as part of a multipronged social reform effort” (271-272). Thus, *niche activism* within the LGBT movement field that allows for organizational specification that is part of both a *collaborative* and *strategic* effort to achieve social reform in multiple arenas; this specialization is instrumental to overall movement success, adding to a unified LGBT movement identity rather than undermining it in a case of competition for resources. Pride organizations are part of the cultural organizational niche, along with other organizations such as those that sponsor film festivals or challenge homophobia in schools.

Moreover, as Armstrong and Bernstein (2008) argue in their multi-institutional politics approach to social movements, domination is not located only within the political field and exercised through state power. Instead, this alternative perspective views domination as situated in multiple sources of power, each of which is simultaneously material and symbolic. This approach views culture as a primary, rather than secondary, force in the exercise of domination and power, and argues that our tools of analysis for how social movements challenge those sources of power need to be multiple and integrated, rather than focusing exclusively on challenges to the state. Finally, they argue that the instrumental-expressive divide in how we categorize social movement strategies and effects is irrelevant and prohibits full comprehension of how social movements launch their attacks, using the diversity of LGBT movement organizations as a perfect example of this multi-institutional approach to creating social and cultural change. Their approach allows us to understand Pride organizations as both material/instrumental *and* expressive in their challenges to culture, power, and domination, both within the individual and within local communities.

This dissertation seeks to explain the process of institutionalization for cultural social movement organizations, focusing on the way that movement organizations develop ties to their local communities through the mobilization of resources, as they grow and generate social and symbolic capital. In this research, I emphasize the connections between the organization and their urban contexts, and seek to explore the meanings of gay pride as they exist across these varied settings. While the promotion of public visibility and positive self-identity for a stigmatized and excluded minority group has been the cornerstone of the Pride movement, this analysis explains the practices through which this is accomplished on an everyday and local level within a diverse set of communities.

Pride events are often viewed as community protest rituals, belonging to the category of tactics that Taylor and Van Dyke (2004: 263) describe as “cultural forms of political expression such as rituals, spectacles, music, art, poetry, film, literature, and cultural practices of everyday life.” Pride events have become part of the standard tactical “repertoire” (Tilly 1978, 2008) of the LGBT social movement in cities across the United States and across the globe, a regularly occurring public performance that pulls together all of the elements of the gay community. It is also useful to think of Pride events through a historical perspective on parades and ceremonies that, like other street theater, have long been interpreted as political actions and the rhetorical means by which a myriad of performers have attempted to accomplish both practical and symbolic goals (Davis 1986: 5).

In addition to being a collectively-effervescent experience for both participants marching down the street and the spectators on the sidelines, with wild cheering and loud music that creates a fun and entertaining atmosphere, Pride events are also the complex and detailed productions of organizations that operate year-round. These events are very expensive to host, requiring massive amounts of labor and attention to minute detail throughout the year

in order to make them a success. Event organizers must obtain permits, contact volunteers and train them to staff the event, mobilize police departments for security, order portable toilets and tents, and attend numerous local urban community board meetings for months before the events to solicit approval and maintain good relationships with neighborhood residents. Most importantly, event organizers must engage in massive fundraising efforts to cover both the expenses incurred during the day of the event—such as food for the volunteers, stages and sound equipment for the festival performances, and advertising in various venues—as well as for the enormous amounts of supplies, ranging from copy machines and printer paper, to office rent, to accountants and travel expenses—all of which are necessary for the sustenance of an organization with sufficient internal capacity to put on such an event. While clearly not all Pride events are as large as the one that proceeds down Fifth Avenue and attracts three quarters of a million people, the financial and labor resources of an organization with the capacity to put on the event is essential to the staging of any Pride event, relative to its size.

In some major cities in the United States, Pride organizations have been very successful in making themselves part of the urban fabric. The borough of Manhattan in New York City is the site of the first gay Pride march in 1970 that commemorated the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion in which gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender bar patrons resisted arrested brought on by the illegal raid of a gay bar (the Stonewall Inn), and set off a riot that lasted several days, a day that has been marked as the birth of the gay rights movement. The quantity and intensity of organizing for gay rights that occurred almost immediately after that event was unprecedented at the time—the gay and lesbian movement grew from a small collection largely clandestine and accomodationist associations (such as the preceding homophile movement) to a defiant social movement with massive public visibility and a sizeable organizational field in the succeeding years within major urban centers.

The fruit of this long-term labor is undeniable; in terms of public visibility of LGBT identity in public space it is not difficult to find evidence of how some social movement goals have been incorporated in recent years, particularly in large major cities. In 1990, Heritage of Pride—the organization that was an outgrowth of the original Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee formed in 1970 to commemorate the 1969 Stonewall Riots—worked in conjunction with The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD—the preeminent organization monitoring LGBT representations in the media) to turn the Empire State Building lavender (a color symbolizing LGBT identity) for the two days during the weekend of Pride. This is an arrangement that has continued annually to the present day, with the Building regularly turning lavender for two days each year since 1990. Heritage of Pride also worked with the Koch administration and the City Council in 1989 to permanently rename the streets around the site of the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969 “Stonewall Place,” commemorating the historic event. These few streets, including the small public park located in front of the bar, draws in hundreds of thousands of gay tourists every year interested in seeing the site of the Rebellion. The LGBT Pride March and Festival, in this large urban setting, have become incorporated into the urban fabric of the mainstream Manhattan community and the annual calendar of New York City.

The process through which an organization that represents a stigmatized sexual minority identity attains the opportunity to turn the Empire State Building lavender for the weekend deserves our consideration as social movement scholars who are attentive to cultural and symbolic meanings. Moreover, it would serve us well to understand how members of that organization, or organizations that work toward that end product, understand their work. This dissertation is a study of the *production* of Pride events from the perspective of the organizations that work all year round to make the Pride events happen. Using an ethnographic approach to analyze the meanings, symbols, and decision-making processes of Pride event

production, I illuminate the labor and innumerable choices that make up the daily reproduction of these organizations. By analyzing the production of Pride we can learn a lot about the contemporary state of LGBT organizing and the relationship between LGBT organizations and the urban contexts in which they operate. We can also understand the process of maturation for a social movement whose constituents have historically been excluded from mainstream society.

All social movement organizations, including those such as LGBT Pride organizations, are embedded entities; they clearly do not operate in a social vacuum. Pride organizations must draw upon their local communities in order to produce these events; in doing so, they encounter institutional resistance as well as support, and they both change their communities and are structured by them at the same time as they engage in these processes. The everyday, quotidian operation of these Pride organizations reveals volumes of information about the local communities from which they emerge, the relationships between organizations and their communities, the state of LGBT organizing on a local level, and the meanings and symbols associated with the making of contemporary gay identity.

Over a period of two years, I conducted 12 months of intensive ethnographic fieldwork—totaling several thousand hours in the field—as well as close to one hundred interview and archival research on four LGBT pride organizations in three cities across the United States—New York City, Boise, Idaho, and St. George, Utah. I watched as these organizations, in very different settings, interacted with their local communities to generate the necessary resources and public legitimacy to put on their events. These communities are very different contexts; consequently, each of the organizations had a different environment within which they had to operate in order to accomplish the same goal of staging a successful Pride event. Mostly, I simply “hung out” with the Pride members; I sat through their meetings, stayed

in their homes, and was voted in as a formal member of one of the organizations. I was privy to the arguments and the moments of elation as the events were successful or when they encountered setbacks, and participated in innumerable fundraisers. I staffed a carwash and rummage sale in a parking lot, attended a fancy dinner-dance filled with local-, state-, and national-level politicians, as well as stuffed countless envelopes, decorated posters with colored markers, and attended informal parties and gatherings. Through these varied and spontaneous moments of immersed participant observation, I learned what Pride is, what it means, and how it is accomplished by the people who are responsible for making it happen, each under different urban social conditions.

Previous research on the LGBT parade as a cultural form has focused *almost exclusively on the day of the event* and the experience of spectators or participants (Browne 2007; Brickell 2000; Kates and Belk 2001; Johnston 2007). In a rare ethnographic study that focused on the *production* of the Pride events as a social process, Ward (2003, 2008) examined one case of Pride organizing in Los Angeles. She illuminates the conflict that emerged around the issues of cultural capital and skill between the working class organizers of the celebration and the local lesbian and gay professional community. While this research is useful for understanding the issues of contention for Pride in a highly developed gay community such as West Hollywood in Los Angeles, there is no research to date that uses a comparative perspective to examine Pride organizing across urban contexts.

To explore the production of Pride events, I engaged in in-depth ethnography and archival research on four organizations in three different cities, including two organizations in New York City.² The first was *Heritage of Pride*, located in Manhattan and responsible for

² While the bulk of my ethnographic data comes from the two settings in which I spent the majority of my research time—Manhattan and St. George—I draw on the other two cases of Queens, NY and Boise, ID in

putting on one of the largest Prides in the nation. The second was *Queens Pride*, a smaller organization in the nearby borough of Queens which is highly racially and ethnically diverse, and whose Pride event gathers a few hundred thousand people for the parade and festival. I also conducted research on *Southern Utah Pride* in St. George, Utah, a small city whose politics and culture are heavily influenced by the Mormon Church; their Pride events occur over a weekend and draw a few thousand people to the picturesque base of Zion National Park for two days and nights of festivities. Lastly, I spent time with *Boise Pride*, located in Boise, Idaho, a mid-sized city with an existing alternative subculture but whose political sphere is dominated by socially-conservative Republican control with a strong Mormon influence.³ The organizations varied by size and by complexity, ranging from a few core members who organized events for just a few thousand people, to an organization that had six operational committees, paid staff, and put on events for 750,000 people in the center of a metropolis. Moreover, the dramatic differences between the urban settings—from Manhattan with extensive gay infrastructure from gay bars to social clubs to gay street life, to St. George, Utah with almost no public gay life but an intensive network of underground friendships and connections within the gay community—provided for a unique set of urban laboratories to understand the relationship between organizations and their local urban community settings, and the ties that they develop under that set of conditions.

Understanding Institutionalization

order to triangulate my findings and prevent the drawing of simplistic comparisons between the two most dramatically different settings. This reasoning will be explained more fully in Chapter 2.

³ As I will discuss further in the background chapter on these two cities (in chapter 4), the influence of the socially-conservative Mormon Church is detectable in the legal rights and privileges granted to (or prohibited from being granted to) LGBT people. An example of this would be the lack of antidiscrimination protection against being fired from one's job for being gay, or the existence of a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman, thus prohibiting the advancement of gay marriage as a possibility in the legislature.

My intellectual journey in studying Pride organizations was, to a certain extent, a process of working backwards from the New York City setting, to understand the process of institutionalization as organizations seek to and are successful (or fail) in becoming regular, established actors within their communities. My goal was to understand how LGBT organizations reach the point at which their public identities are emblazoned on major public buildings such as the Empire State Building, and why that was important to these actors. I also was interested in knowing about how they conceive of their relationships with their host communities during the process of institutionalization. These answers were not readily available within the social movement literature that I encountered; the definitions of “strategies” and “tactics” did not match the cultural processes that I was observing, ones that were everywhere in front of me as I observed the actions of Pride organizing. Social movement literature on resource mobilization theory was useful for understanding social movements as organizations that need to financially and structurally reproduce themselves within their environment, but could be rejuvenated and built upon by paying closer attention to the *cultural meanings* of the process of social reproduction. At the same time, the literature on culture and social movement activity has focused more heavily on the broad meanings of frames, symbols, and discourse, while the activities of organizational reproduction within a local urban community on a daily level, and the ways that organizational growth might have its own symbolic significance, have been underemphasized.

Thus, inductively constructing questions about institutionalization directly from what I observed in the field in New York City, I asked: *How* and *why* do social movement organizations institutionalize? My goal was to understand what exactly institutionalization entails, and what strategies small, new organizations use to both reproduce themselves and integrate themselves

into their communities, as well as how these strategies change as organizations grow larger.

Moreover, I wanted to explain how members of those organizations understand their identities as social movement actors as they work in organizations that are becoming more institutionalized.

Social movement theorists have, traditionally, treated institutionalization as the final stage before organizational death. Institutionalization has been identified as signaling the end of radical ideology and risk-taking in terms of goals and strategies, and is taken to mean that the organization has become co-opted and no longer focuses on creating significant social or cultural change. In fact, I began this study by imagining that the setting of New York was somehow the “end of that road”; that it had outlived its meaningfulness as a legitimate social movement organization. The events produced by Heritage of Pride are regularly critiqued by detractors as having lost their relevance as civil rights events; now funded by massive corporate sponsorship, they were no longer “outsiders” or “challengers” to heteronormative, dominant culture that they had once been. Moreover, there were intimations within the gay media and more radical elements of the LGBT community that Heritage of Pride had become disconnected from its grassroots origins, co-opted by copious amount of corporate funding, and become a showcase for politicians (for example, the Gay Shame movement—which expressed this highly critical sentiment—emerged (and soon dissipated) briefly in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Halperin and Traub 2010)). Thus, I initially sought out to explain how the most developed Pride organization—one with a budget of close to one million dollars, a hulking bureaucratic structure, and extensive corporate advertising—was somehow a “perversion” of the original intention of radical Pride organizers as it was conceived in 1970. But as my research developed I realized that in fact the process of institutionalization itself instead signals organizational growth and survival. In fact, the *point* of Pride, I realized, was to become a regular, established actor within

the local urban community, and, especially, that the *practices of growth*, or the strategy of growth—as my Pride members would say, “bigger and better!” was *not* a distortion of the Pride approach, but was instead the central core of its cultural and political impact on society. It was the *practices of growth*—the process through which the organization developed within its local urban community—that has been its most effective and most important strategy of the Pride movement. Moreover, as I continued to examine the practices of growth within the community as containing both instrumental and symbolic meanings, I saw the underlying connections between this concept of growth and the discourse of “gay pride,” as well as its historical relationship to gay shame.⁴

Through an analysis of Pride events over four different organizational contexts and in three cities, it became especially clear that the significance of the events is not the singular day of the event. Of course, organizers do view that day as very important, and it is certainly the ultimate focal point of their efforts—but, analytically speaking, the significance and social impact of Pride organizing is, to a large extent, the *everyday process of growth out into the local host community*. The relationship between the organization and the local urban community, and how that relationship is extended by movement organizers through the development of connections geared toward making the day of the event happen, is another level through which Pride affects its local urban community. The day of the event—marked by a march, a parade, and/or a festival—is important for many LGBT people and their allies as a pleasurable moment, a moment of celebration of the diversity of sexualities and identity, and a crucial point of

⁴ This is not to say that the critiques of Pride organizing, as presented by more grassroots and radical elements within the community, are not legitimate and do not express important concerns about the contemporary relevance of the events, the impact of corporate funding on the events, and even the logic of organizational growth as a means of achieving social change. In the Conclusion, I fully examine these contradictions and tensions and present an evaluation of this logic that takes seriously these critiques. However, my goal throughout this research has been to understand the process of institutionalization as a result of the efforts of those actively working within the Pride movement, how *they* view the effects of their actions, and how they go about trying to achieve them, as seen through their eyes.

visibility for a marginalized and stigmatized group that has been made to feel shame over their identity. However, as I will demonstrate, the invisible practices of Pride organizations that significantly contribute to social change are in fact embedded in the growth that organizations accomplish as part of reproducing themselves, financially and through the accomplishment of daily logistical goals necessary for producing the events.

Moreover, particularly for some of the smaller Pride organizations within urban settings that do not have well-developed public LGBT communities, I will show that it was the process of raising funds by holding public gay fundraising events, the gathering of various local and corporate sponsors, and the *public doing* of the daily activities of the organization that were *crucially important* for visibility and for generating stock of public support. Rather than seeing growth as a perversion or a detraction, drawing members' attention away from the grassroots organizing classified in social movement literature as "real activism" (which, for traditional analyses might include, for example, the staging of protests, electoral voting campaigns, or other contentious political activities), I argue that the process of growth of the Pride organization itself creates social change through its enactment—and that this intricately involves the production of a relationship between the Pride organization and its local urban community. As I will demonstrate below, this concept of growth includes a building of various forms of social and symbolic capital by the organizations over time, as these groups engage in activities of organizational self-reproduction.

There has been some research in the area of the institutionalization of social movement organizations (Staggenborg 1996, 1988; Landriscina 2007) suggesting that institutionalization is a process of growth and that the development of mainstream community ties may not be as perilous for the continuity of social movement organizations as previously assumed. Yet this association between institutionalization, growth, and the development of community ties can

be more fully theorized, building on previous social movement literature. In particular, I argue that more research on the institutionalization of *cultural* movements, movements that are specifically oriented toward improving the symbolic status of stigmatized social groups such as the LGBT community, is especially important. Cultural movements may follow different patterns than other movements specifically oriented toward concrete political or economic goals. Institutionalization may not be as harmful to the continuity of successful cultural movement organizing as some imagine it to be. More significantly, institutionalization should be understood *as a strategy* for cultural movement organizations which work in the arena of symbols and culture, within one niche among several that make up the LGBT movement (Levitsky 2007) and that work through a multi-institutional approach to creating social change (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008). This dissertation research seeks to build upon the existing research of key social movement scholars such as Staggenborg (1996, 1988) on social movement institutionalization by integrating cultural approaches such as that of Taylor and Rupp (1993), Taylor and Whittier (1992), and Johnston and Klandermans (1995) which are specifically oriented toward understanding the cultural and symbolic dimensions of social movement organizing, as well as resource mobilization theories that illuminate the importance of developing ties to local, mainstream community institutions.

Forms of Institutionalization: Distinguishing External from Internal Dimensions

“Institutionalization” is a very broad concept. Common usage of the word refers to making something part of a structured and established system, or to establishing something as a norm in an organization or culture. Within social research, the concept has been used in every way, form, and permutation possible, the definitions for which conflict with each other, often do not

dialogue with each other, and in fact refer to many different processes on a wide variety of micro-, meso- and macro-levels of analysis. Classic theories of organizations refer to internal processes of organizational development, drawing on analyses that looks at internal characteristics (Weber 1947; Michels 1949) while other theories consider external dimensions as well, focusing on the relationships between the organization and its environment (for example, Piven and Cloward 1977). “Traditional” institutionalism in organization theory (Selznick 1949, 1957) focuses the sphere of informal interaction within organizations, to show how informal structures deviate from and constrained aspects of formal structure and to demonstrate the subversion of the organization’s intended, rational mission (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:13). “Traditional” institutionalism was only labeled as “old” by the emergence of what has been called “new institutionalism in organization theory” in the last several decades. Neo-institutionalism focuses on the organizational sectors or fields in which organizations are situated, emphasizing the way that organizational forms and structural components of organizations are institutionalized across these fields, regardless of whether they are most efficient at accomplishing intended goals (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977).

I also carefully articulate my own meanings of institutionalization through a distinct paradigm particular to cultural movement organizations. I argue that institutionalization can be conceived of in two discrete but related ways, which I believe can both be captured and operationalized together under the larger approach of resource mobilization theory and the multi-institutional politics approach (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008) in social movement research.

First, I perceive Pride organizations as engaging in a process of *external institutionalization*, in which the organizations become regular, established actors within a local urban community by creating both instrumental and meaningful ties to various local and

national cultural, commercial, political, civic, and market entities. This includes the development of : (1) ties between the social movement organization and *local social, commercial, and cultural establishments*, such as gay or straight bars, clubs, cafes, and churches, or other non-profit organizations; (2) links between the social movement organization and the *political and civic sectors*, which includes the presence of politicians at their events and the opportunity to use public space as well as having Pride Week events commemorated by various city government and political officials; and (3) connections between the social movement organization and the *market economy*, which points to the increasing role of corporate sponsorship in the Pride movement.⁵ As I will explain in more detail below, the development of these regular ties to various local urban community and commercial institutions generate important stocks of social and symbolic capital that are important for creating widespread cultural attitudinal change around the issue of LGBT social acceptance, and they entail a crucial undercover pattern for how Pride organizations work toward their goals.

Second, institutionalization is also an *internal* process. Movement organizations create regular patterns of decision-making and task accomplishment within their daily operation that function to produce successful Pride events. Internal institutionalization can develop over time, or it can be established quickly under strong leadership seeking to put into place highly regular paths for accomplishing daily tasks. In order to effectively produce Pride events—events that in some cases involve the coordination of hundreds of thousands of people—members must create strong, sustainable organizations that can perform the management of the day-to-day

⁵ In this case, I do not mean to suggest that the LGBT Pride movement is the only segment of the LGBT movement that has relationships with corporate sponsors, with political forces, or social and cultural organizations. These relationships are seen not only across many different niches within the LGBT movement as well as across *all* sets of social movement organizations. My goal here is simply to parse out how I see these relationships developing within the Pride organizations that I studied—and hope that they can, in fact, provide a set of conceptual tools for discussing all types of other movements that follow similar or slightly different patterns of relationships with various entities within local communities.

work involved. Internal institutionalization involves the creation of regular procedures for making decisions and following through on the required tasks of running an organization. Classic theorists of organizations (such as Michels 1949; Weber 1947; Hiller 1975; Castells 1983; Piven and Cloward 1977) suggest that formally-structured and bureaucratized organizations will lead to the privileging of the powerful, central leaders, and that the organizations will inevitably abandon interest in creating radical social change—what I call the “deradicalization thesis.” The leaders of the organization, the deradicalization thesis suggests, will become more interested in self-reproduction of their positions of power than in the goals of the organization as originally intended.

However, after months of fieldwork with four Pride organizations, I find evidence to support other social movement scholarship (such as Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1959) and Rucht (1999)) which suggests, rather than movement organizations exhibiting an “iron law of oligarchy”—the famous phrase taken from Michels’ (1947) research on unions in Germany—the reality is that, in fact, “It Depends” (Caniglia and Carmin 2005; Schwartz et al. 1981; Schwartz 1976; Zald and Ash 1966; Pruijt 2003). In my study, I find that the development of formal structure can, in some cases, lead to the equalizing of power, requiring lots of hands to be involved in small decisions. In these cases of high bureaucratization, organizational rules can be used as weapons either for the powerful *or* to protect the less-powerful members from members who seek to wield inordinate amounts of control. However, on the other hand, I also found that, in other cases, a lack of formal structure allows for one individual to dominate the organization, and conflicts around personalities within the group can become overwhelming. In these situations, organizations that operate on friendship networks rather than formal structures run the risk of falling apart if those friendships become frayed and there is a lack of formal organizational structure to reel in discretionary decision-making (cf. Freeman 1972). In

this research, I provide ethnographic evidence that illustrates both of these cases, and will identify how organizational structure—i.e. the extent of internal institutionalization—impacts the experiences of members and their feelings about equity in the decision-making process and their sense of efficacy as one member of a larger whole.

Both external and internal dimensions of institutionalization, in my evaluation, can be contained under the umbrella of resource mobilization theory, since they are complementary dimensions of how an organization effectively produces and reproduces itself. This speaks to both the question of how organizations gather resources from the communities in which they are situated, and how they operate internally to ensure their survival as an organizational form with specific patterns of decision-making. In this study, I conceive of “institutionalization” (broadly written) as a process that outlines how organizations develop from small, isolated entities and grow into larger, more community-connected organizations, with functional means of accomplishing organizational tasks. Resource mobilization theory helps dissect the double-sided process of development and illuminate it in detail. By combining institutionalization theory, resource mobilization theory, and a cultural analysis of social movements, it is possible to clearly understand the operation and social impact of LGBT Pride organizations in contemporary American culture.

The Meaning of Mobilizing Resources: Resource Mobilization Theory and Culture

This research draws heavily on resource mobilization theory, which has been proven to be especially useful for narrowing in on the organizations that actually make up a social movement. Resource mobilization (RM) theory was developed as a reaction to earlier collective behavior traditions that viewed protest and other types of disruptive action as irrational and utilized only

by marginalized members of society (e.g., Smelser 1963). This theoretical perspective presents social movements and the organizations that promote collective action as normal, rational responses by aggrieved groups to legitimate grievances. While resource mobilization (RM) proponents certainly recognize grievances as a necessary factor in creating the impetus for social movement activity, grievances are insufficient by themselves in explaining the emergence and sustenance of movements. First outlined in detail by McCarthy and Zald (1977), the fundamental idea that drives resource mobilization theory is that the aggregation of resources—mainly money and labor—is a key determinant of the emergence and success of collective action. RM theory thereby redefined the study of collective action from the domain of deviance and social disorganization to a study in organizational sociology, focusing on the organizations responsible for reproducing themselves and process of resource accumulation that make mobilization possible (Buechler 1993: 217-218). Moreover, traditional analysts of social movements assumed that resources came from direct beneficiaries of the social changes they pursued. But, as RM theorists have shown, many organizations rely on financial and manpower support from sources such as conscience constituents rather than beneficiaries, and that social movement organizations may be run by professional staff rather than beneficiaries (Jenkins 1983).

More recent RM research has come to recognize that there are many different types and sets of resources that might be utilized by social movement organizations (see, for example, Cress and Snow 1996; Oliver and Marwell 1992; Edwards and McCarthy 2004). For example, studies have added the resource of access to media or publicity for their cause (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Yet the basic tenets of RM theory remain refreshingly straightforward, and are especially useful for an analysis of the institutionalization of the LGBT Pride movement. I focus here on two fundamental elements within the theory: (a) the emphasis on internal

organizational structure and (b) the relationship between the organization and entities outside the organization, which includes a multitude of local urban community and commercial institutions.

First, since resources must be controlled or mobilized before action is possible, RM theory directs the analysis toward an *organizational* perspective of social movements. Zald and Ash (1966) were the first to note that social movement organizations are unique entities and form an essential basis for mobilization. Specifically, resource aggregation requires some minimal form of organization of people with at least some nominal structure for accomplishing tasks, both in order to acquire external resources (such as money) and to manage those resources internally, however limited the organizational structure may be. Essentially, the RM perspective analyzes the strategic tasks that need to be accomplished in order to produce “success.” RM theory is flexible enough to discuss small, informal organizations with little structure, focusing on how members in these entities go about accomplishing their goals, yet also provides a set of tools of analysis for large, bureaucratic social movements, recognizing that some social movement organizations (SMOs) have developed into highly complex organizational forms.

Second, in accounting for a movement’s success or failure, RM theory explicitly recognizes the crucial importance of involvement on the part of entities (both individuals and organizations) from *outside* of the collectivity which a social movement represents (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1216). Since the flow of resources to the organization is viewed as very important, and often these forms of support do not come exclusively from members, RM theory connects the organization to the *setting* from which it draws its resources—whether those resources are financial, labor, facilities, or other. The RM perspective is sensitive to the important role that the environment (writ small, as in the organization’s local community, or

large, as in a set of national economic or political conditions) plays in the ability of the social movement to sustain itself. Many other perspectives in social movement theory ignore how movement organizations can utilize the environment for their own purposes. But RM theory highlights the fact that society—whether that entails the local context, the state, or the national or global setting—provides an essential infrastructure on which the organization can rely to draw in resources and conduct its movement activities. The work that organizations perform within their communities, and especially the relationships that organizations develop to their local communities, determine the flow of resources to the organization.

Building on Resource Mobilization Theory: Integrating Culture and Process

While RM theory recognizes that an interaction occurs between organizations and their communities as they gather resources, I find that this theory can be best used in conjunction with other theories that are better suited to analyze the *cultural* meanings of those different forms of resources. While it certainly distinguishes between large donors and small donors, or recognizes the difference between professionalized organizations and ones run primarily on paid labor (Oliver and Marwell 1992), the myriad ways that organizations draw resources from those communities has not been fully theorized. Moreover, when researchers using the RM perspective claim to examine the intersection between culture and resources, they tend to interpret culture as a set of conceptual tools and specialized knowledge that one uses to form functioning and effective organizations or conduct social movement activity within the field. For example, knowledge about specific tasks like how to stage a protest, how to hold a news conference, run a meeting, or form an organization. Or they may use culture to refer to conceptual resources such as tactical repertoires, organizational templates, or technical know-

how (Edwards and McCarthy 2004a). Focusing on culture and resources in this limited way obfuscates the social significance of different types of resources and the social and symbolic capital that social movement organizations gain by garnering resources from certain kinds of entities. Although some RM theorists laudably discuss “legitimacy” as a resource that contributes to the success of social movements—Cress and Snow (1996), for example, refer to legitimacy as a moral resources in which a movement receives an endorsement of their aims and actions by an external organization—there is more work to be done to explain *how legitimacy is produced* and the *symbolic meanings of different types of resources* that an organization can draw from a local urban community.

I draw on RM theory in my research to look at Pride organizations in two crucial ways—as both internally-structured organizations *and* as entities that must rely on relationships they develop with their communities. Some quantitative or post-facto (meaning, through historical reconstruction, rather than in-situ ethnographic) research that uses RM theory points to the success or failure of certain social movements by noting the presence or absence of certain resources at the time: the amount of money raised, membership rolls, or other similar indicators. But by aggregating those resources, we inevitably lose the ability to analyze, in a contextualized, relational sense, what those relationships of resource accumulation mean for the organizations that are concerned with reproducing themselves over time.

By engaging in an ethnographic study of Pride organizational development, however, I have been able to capture RM as a *process*—focusing on the meanings and symbolic forms of these different sets of resources—rather than simply producing a quantitative account of the amount of money or volunteer hours that were available to them, and obscuring the process of building resources through the development of on-going relationships. To know, for example, that the Southern Utah Pride organization received as a sponsorship \$3,000 worth of credit in

advertising in their city's local newspaper is one piece of dry, quantitative information. Given that this newspaper was known to be highly socially conservative, and had been very unsupportive in the past of the Pride organization (insofar as it was steadfastly unwilling to report on the organization's previous events or provide advertising credits in the past), this would have thought to be clearly a coup for the organizers, and marked down in the record books as a major development in breaking down barriers for the organization. However, by finding out the stories *behind* this arrangement—in this case, the struggles that the organization's leaders endured when the newspaper's editors later decided that they did not want to honor the agreement that they had established with one gay-friendly individual who no longer worked at the newspaper, and the debate that ensued over whether or not the organization was allowed to display the newspaper's logo as a sponsor on the organization's website—we see a far more complex narrative that is as much about symbolic meaning as it is about advertising dollars.

More specifically, what I show is that the process of resource mobilization is both material *and* symbolic. It is about collecting money or manpower, but is also a process of *creating relationships*—relationships between the Pride organizations and the different *sources* of resources. By going deep into the context in which the Pride organizations are operating, I seek to reveal the *meanings* and *cultural significance* of the particular relationships they are building. The process is the same in each local community, yet organizations are working in social contexts that are at very different ends of a spectrum. Specifically, when I point to the important differences in the urban contexts between St. George, Utah, and downtown Manhattan, I argue that each of the relationships that the organizations built need to be considered within context of that setting. For instance, in St. George, Utah, the organization encountered significant challenges in locating a commercial space willing to host a Saturday

night fundraising dance for the LGBT community. When they did find a café that opened its doors to them, that commercial entity was taking a significant risk, and was subsequently subjected to surveillance from city government. Yet in New York City, options for where to hold a fundraising event were endless; they had access to both an extensive gay urban infrastructure that included gay bars and clubs as well as an array of major non-gay-identified commercial entities. One such example is the Six Flags amusement park that cooperated with the organization to host their annual fundraiser at their establishment, which was very well attended, drew in approximately \$50,000 as revenue for the organization, and turned the amusement park—in the words of one member—“entirely gay for a day, which was incredible!” While both of these examples may seem very different in scope, they are expressions of the same process of reaching out into the local urban community, creating relationships to mainstream commercial entities, disrupting the heteronormativity of public space, and gathering the material and symbolic resources that make LGBT people a visible part of the wider mainstream urban community.

Standard RM theory helps point us toward recognizing the fact that connections to one’s local community is important, but our analysis can benefit by adding in sharp cultural tools to disentangle how and why connections are successful or unsuccessful in developing within particular communities. Gamson (1987, p. 6) notes this weakness by noting that while RM theory is useful for its emphasis on organizations and tangible resources, what has been obscured are the cultural factors involved in the emergence or evolving of social movements and their sustaining organizations. By staying strictly within RM theory, social movement scholars are in danger of failing to see how social movement organizations (SMOs) compete with ideologies or symbols (ibid). What RM theories give us, says Gamson, can be heavily institutional and organizational, with little about norms, values, and political discourse. They

sometimes provide little analysis of cultural trends, even when they are trying to predict the future of social movements.

By drawing on the evidence I find in this research study, I propose the use of a new term, the “*cultural resource mobilization perspective*,” that integrates both a cultural and a resource mobilization approach to analyzing social movements. Cultural approaches to social movements, epitomized in the “new social movement” theories that developed in order to account for more recent movements such as the women’s, environmental, and LGBT movement, focus their attention on the construction of collective identity necessary for movement emergence and the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, bystanders and observers (Polletta and Jasper 2001; Melucci 1989; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Cultural perspectives “treat interests and identities as politically constructed, define social movements broadly, see the state as one among many possible targets for social movement action, see the instrumentality of cultural strategies and the culturally constructed character of instrumental action, attend to the cultural creativity of movements, and understand that while movement action is ‘meaningful,’ it is not always ‘rational.’” (Armstrong 2002: 7-8). Since the LGBT movement has historically drawn heavily on cultural performances as part of its tactical repertoire to assert identity claims and to promote particular goals (Taylor et al. 2010), any analysis that ignores the cultural dimensions of this movement would be limited in its ability to explain the impact of this movement. Again, as Armstrong and Bernstein (2008) point out, power is not located only in the state, but rather distributed across multiple institutions including the cultural and commercial realm, and thus a multi-institutional approach to social movement organizing is vital for explaining tactics that simultaneously engage both material and symbolic targets.

However, rather than just seeing the one day of the Pride event as a cultural performance worthy of analysis, I argue that the everyday process of resource mobilization that the Pride organizations engage in are also important means through which LGBT people enact cultural change. Given that the subjugation of LGBT people is often enforced by their public invisibility,⁶ a fundraising event held by a Pride organization in their local coffee shop, or the flyers about a Pride event posted in their local supermarket, advertisements in mainstream (non-gay) media publications, sponsorship by a major corporation whose headquarters is in that city, or the presence of a major pizza chain at their Pride festival, disrupts the heteronormativity of public space and/or the homonormativity of gay space at gay events, and creates ties between mainstream and LGBT communities that operates on a cultural level in the same way that other cultural strategies of social movements have done in the past. Cultural resource mobilization chips away at institutionalized homophobia by incorporating gay culture into mainstream communities.⁷ In this way, we can see external institutionalization as a form of cultural movement strategy that the LGBT Pride community employs, through routine activities that are intended to financially reproduce the organization and simultaneously provide socializing activities for the LGBT Pride community throughout the year.

⁶ The issue of “visibility” for the LGBT community is very complex. It has been simplistically accepted as a goal and measure of success for the LGBT movement, but has also been the subject of extensive critique and analysis within the activist and social science literature on LGBT activism. In particular, the question of whether greater visibility in the mainstream media and public sphere is a signifier of *or* will naturally lead to greater political rights for LGBT people (see Vaid (1995) and Clarke (2000), for example, or Mary Gray (2009) for a discussion of the politics of visibility in rural communities) is a particularly sticky issue. I use the word casually—but cautiously—here, and delve into a more complex discussion of this concept and its implications in the Conclusion.

⁷ Clearly, the incorporation of LGBT culture into mainstream communities is not equivalent to earning legal rights and privileges. However, it is part of a multi-pronged set of strategies that the gay movement uses to change the current climate and attitudes towards homosexuality; cultural tactics are not meant to be used on their own but rather as one part of a larger movement that includes various niches of activism. Moreover, there have been extensive critiques by the queer activist community as to whether “mainstreaming” of LGBT people is even a desirable goal in and of itself. I will discuss these critiques further in the Conclusion.

Pride organizations are also important for the development of LGBT collective identity and social networks within communities in which there are few other options for gay socializing (although see Mary Gray (2009) for a discussion about how queer youth utilize public space and digital media in highly rural settings). In St. George, Utah, one member of the organization in her early twenties who grew up in the area and felt like she “was the only gay person in the universe,” noted: “Southern Utah Pride [the organization] is the center of the gay community here. I mean, they host the drag shows and stuff, and that’s how people find out that there’s actually gay people here! Hosting events—they are the *basis* for the gay community, essentially. That’s how I found most of my gay friends, through Pride.” Clearly, as this young person points out, the routine, instrumental fundraising activities of the organization provide symbolic and collective identity functions that cannot be explained by using only resource mobilization theories; an analysis must also take into account the non-rational, culturally-productive aspects of Pride organizing.

Social Capital and Symbolic Capital

The *cultural resource mobilization perspective* that I draw upon in this dissertation shows that resource accumulation is a process of building not only the necessary financial support to put on the events, but also the building of *social* and *symbolic capital*. Symbolic meanings are a crucial part of the resource mobilization process, and analysis of symbolic meanings through a resource mobilization perspective can provide a very useful tool for understanding how cultural movements produce cultural change. This collecting of various forms of social and symbolic capital is particularly important for a stigmatized sexual minority that has historically been victim to social denigration, and the building of various forms of capital can contribute to the

improvement of conditions for this minority group within their communities. While some theorists in the RM tradition point to “legitimacy” in their theories of resource mobilization, I provide here a more complex and articulated explanation of how legitimacy is produced through cultural resource mobilization. I also provide a language to talk about the linking of real connections between various local urban community institutions and the symbolic forms in which capital is gathered. I connect concrete ties between entities and a symbolic realm that accounts for the *meanings* of those forms of capital.

Specifically, I argue that social capital in the context of LGBT Pride organizations is a set of ties based on the instrumental relationships of financial or other concrete support—in the form of sponsorships, in which corporate or local companies, small independent businesses, politicians, or individuals give money as contributions to the Pride organization in exchange for their logo or name on the organization’s website, on banners displayed during the Pride events, or by verbal mentions during their events, including fundraisers, or in the form of allowing the organization to use their space for a fundraiser or other event for free or at a reduced cost. Social capital is a set of connections, or social ties that are built between the organization and various entities that are interested either in supporting the organization for altruistic purposes and/or for purely economic marketing purposes, in hopes that the gay community will patronize their establishment, or vote for them, or choose their product over another product.

Theorists use the term “social capital” for a variety of explanatory purposes. The key concept is that social capital is captured from embedded resources in social networks (Lin 2001). It has also been used to refer to the level of social integration of a community (Putnam 2001), to the degree of trust that exists between rational actors (Coleman 1988; see also Smith 2007 for a discussion about the distinction between trust in institutions versus trust in individual actors), and as a set of social networks that significantly impacts one’s life chances and success in the

education system or labor market (Portes 1998, 2001). Small (2009) points out that people's social capital depends fundamentally on the organizations in which they participate routinely, emphasizing the organizationally-embedded nature of social interaction, and the extent to which resources are available and must be mobilized through them. Within the social movement literature, Edwards and McCarthy point to the interaction between social capital and organizational strategy in the short-term persistence of small, local social movement organizations, in which social capital is a precondition that either facilitates or constrains the mobilization of organizations, as well as an outcome of mobilization (Edwards and McCarthy 2004b: 622). Diani (1997) notes that the influence of a social movement may depend on the reach of their social ties (i.e., their social capital) to both other social movement actors as well as other actors in their social milieu or cultural and political elites.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1992, 1998, 2001) theories of social capital provide the most comprehensive and useful material for understanding the operation of capital in LGBT Pride organizations. Bourdieu states: "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' that entitles them to credit" (2001: 102-3). He continues later to note that the network of relationships that comprise social capital is the product of "investment strategies," that are either individual or collective, and conscious or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term (2001: 103). This produces "durable obligations subjectively felt," such as feelings of gratitude, respect, or friendship, and reproduced through an "alchemy of consecration" created through the exchange of gifts, words, or other such social niceties, and which both presuppose and produce what

Bourdieu refers to as “mutual knowledge and recognition” (ibid.) It is this association between the investment of resources, in which creating working relationships are created between two entities (such as a corporation or a local business and the Pride organization) that results in *recognition* which illustrates the logic Pride organization utilize when they pursue external institutionalization as a cultural strategy.

“Recognition,” however, refers to an additional concept that Bourdieu provides for us as a theoretical link that can help explain how external institutionalization works. In fact, one of his most important insights was that forms of capital are *fungible*. Thus, we see that social capital—in this case, instrumental social ties between the Pride organization and various commercial, political, and/or civic institutions—produces *symbolic capital*, in the form of public, visible, recognizable displays of backing from sponsors or supporters that indicate social acceptance by that entity. The presence of corporate logos on the Pride organization’s website or on a banner during the Pride events, or the opportunity to host a gay event at a mainstream community establishment, or the co-hosting of a Pride event at City Hall, has not only a financial benefit (and in some cases, no direct financial benefit) but a symbolic import as well. Symbolic capital, in this context, is a representation of *legitimacy*, a demonstration of one’s connections to various mainstream community institutions that have different stocks of social credit, recognizable to those with the ability to perceive the symbolic significance of that entity. Corporate sponsorship by major companies, such as airlines like Delta or American Airlines, or by local entities—such as restaurants, travel agencies, newspapers, bookstores, or other sorts of local businesses, as well as local politicians—within smaller communities in which the people doing the perceiving would recognize that entity, are sought after by Pride organizations not only for the financial benefits they may receive, but also for the legitimacy that they provide on

a symbolic level. Legitimacy, in the form of symbolic capital, represents social acceptance for a stigmatized group that has long been on the outside of the mainstream heteronormative center.

Moreover, these symbolic benefits are generative and build upon each, with each sponsorship or display of support generating additional symbolic legitimacy that can potentially lead to larger and more extensive support. When I asked a member of the Southern Utah Pride organization why she focused on companies as sponsors, she answered “Because companies like to be advertised. If we can get Taco Bell to be on our banner, people will recognize that business.” When I asked why that matters, that people recognize that business, she answered:

It’s acceptance. Like, if we can get Taco *Bell* to say it’s okay [to be gay], then Taco *Time* might say it’s okay. It’s like—it becomes like a competitive thing, between them. Down here, so many of our businesses are local-owned; they’re not franchises. So, if Marv’s, who’s well-respected in the Mormon Church, if he has an open-enough mind to support this, and say, I [referring abstractly to any member of the St. George community] know he’s a great guy, and I know that all of his daughters went through the Temple but *he* still thinks it’s okay, then it might be okay for, say, The Bear Claw to support us. And *more than that*, when the straight people go by and think, “oh, those nasty gays over there!” and they see the sign and they say, “ohhh, Marv’s is on that sign...guess I shouldn’t trash-talk gays at Marv’s...” and maybe even they might talk to Marv and say, hey, what’s your point of view on this? Like, the more that we have the *community* accept us, the *community businesses* accept us, the more it’s identifiable to individuals. Not to mention that it kinda gives us, as a group of gay people, an idea of how many people out there actually do support us.

Thus, the goal of the organization is not only to gain financial capital through social ties, but also to earn symbolic capital as they collect and display public, visible support by important social and symbolic capital-holders within the local community, such as a restaurant-owner who is well respected by church-goers. Moreover, as she mentions, it also signals to LGBT people that they have support within their local community, acting again as a symbolic form of capital that can help to alleviate some of the shame that LGBT people feel about their sexual and gender identities. While it is important to recognize that the process of earning acceptance and legitimacy within highly conservative communities may not be quite as simple as displaying the recognizable

logos of various well-known community businesses (as discussed in the quote above), I show that this is the logic of social movement action that Pride organizations use when they seek to gather and display symbolic capital. As part of an arsenal of LGBT movement tactics, the display of symbolic capital can have very important and impactful effects on a local urban community.

Gay Pride as a Discourse, and Gay Shame

This research also illuminates the meaning of “gay pride” as a discourse and the relationship between gay pride and gay shame, as they have been historically constructed by and in relation to the LGBT Pride movement. “Gay pride” as a term emerged in the early years of the contemporary lesbian and gay movement, after the Stonewall Rebellion, and was championed by the Pride movement that began in New York City and other major cities (such as Los Angeles and San Francisco) soon afterward. The phrase itself is widespread in common parlance; often, the word “pride” is used as a stand-in for the word “gay” or the umbrella of “LGBT.” To cite just one example, the “Pride Foundation” is an organization that provides grants and scholarships exclusively to LGBT youth.

The concept of “gay pride” within the LGBT Pride movement, I argue, has been constructed in a deliberately broad manner, in order to be accessible to all people who identify in some way as LGBT as well as to straight allies. In some ways, it is an unspoken set of beliefs about the positive self-valuation of LGBT individuals, one that aims to be relevant to all sexual minorities who claim a healthy personal and collective identity. Yet, on the other hand, more politically-oriented critics might suggest that it is a trope that lacks “teeth” and has little political substance, leading the LGBT community to accept an accommodationist and gradual attitude

toward the earning of political rights and privileges, and away from the formulation of militant demands (see, for example, Vaid (1995) and Richardson (2005) for critiques of the “mainstreaming” of gay politics and its limitations for producing tangible rights for gay and lesbian citizens). However, as pointed out by Gould (2001), the meaning of gay pride can change over time and place, depending on the political climate towards LGBT people and the sentiment within the LGBT community or degree of external threat. She notes that during the mid to late 1980s, an era in which the HIV/AIDS organization ACT UP was most active and engaging in public acts of civil disobedience, “gay pride” came to take on more militant connotations that are significantly different from contemporary meanings.

In my ethnographic research, I paid close attention to the usage and construction of “gay pride,” in order to discern the set of meanings that informed the use of the term within the Pride movement. I found that members of the organizations often took for granted the meaning of “pride.” They rarely if ever discussed its meaning during their routine activities; one long-time and very prominent member of the Pride movement (on a national scale, even!) noted that the meaning of “pride” was so personal that he actually felt perturbed when asked to publicly define it at a conference group session. “Gay pride” floated around as an assumed set of meanings that stirred up little controversy, contradiction, or debate. Save for a few brief occasions during a regional conference attended by a select few of the members from Heritage of Pride, I did not encounter spontaneous moments when the members expressly articulated what gay pride meant to them either as individuals or as a collectivity. However, through my interviews with individual members, I was able to draw out some of the ways that they understood the meaning of gay pride as it related to their lives.

I also compare and contrast the understandings of “gay pride” as they exist in disparate socio-political urban contexts. In highly religious and small communities, with little public gay

life, one would imagine that the meaning of “being proud” might be different from gay pride as a discourse in a large urban area where anonymity and sexual diversity are widespread. Or in an organization whose members were very politically active, such as Queens Pride, this might also create a different orientation toward “pride.” However, I found a great deal of similarity as to how people across all settings thought and felt about “gay pride,” and what it meant to “have pride.”

The discourse of gay pride is intricately related to the opposite emotion of “gay shame,” pervasive within the LGBT community and evidenced by the high rates of suicide by LGBT teens across the United States. Drawing on the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu (1992, 1998, 2002), I point to the way that gay shame is a form of *symbolic violence* perpetrated against the LGBT community, one that sexual and gender minorities struggle to overcome on an individual and collective basis. Gay shame positions LGBT people outside of the mainstream, as deviant and non-normative. By understanding both gay shame and gay pride as two parts to a whole and by understanding Pride organizations as operating within those dimensions, my analysis seeks to illuminate the contours of gay shame—as well as why “gay pride” has been so enthusiastically embraced as a movement across the country and across the world that may (or may not) help to alleviate “gay shame.” I examine how gay pride, as a discourse, may be effective or ineffective at trying to combat the sense of gay shame that is produced in American culture. I do this by reconstructing of the meanings of gay pride as they relate to gay shame within the LGBT movement and militant gay activism around HIV/AIDS (Gould 2001, 2002, 2009), and then also the more broad contrast to the historical construction of shame—both gay shame and generalized shame about sexuality and its relationship to morality in American culture (Munt 2008; Stein 2006; Halperin and Traub 2009). I also present the four different ways that I encountered the use of “gay pride” within the field, as understood and expressed by my

subjects; I found that it was an open vessel into which anyone could pour their own meanings, and that they all co-existed within the field of the movement.

In order to explain the “why” of social action through ethnographic inquiry, one must focus on the “how” (Katz 2001, 2002)—the practices through which the object of interest is produced through daily practice. In my research, I see the patterns of external institutionalization as intimately connected to *how* the organizers seek to produce gay pride as an emotion within their local urban community. Organizers of the Pride movement engage in external institutionalization as a means of collecting social and symbolic capital that will earn them public legitimacy. Through developing connections with local commercial, cultural, political, and civic entities the Pride organizations seek to establish themselves as legitimate and non-deviant community members. The practice of external institutionalization by Pride organizations is the way that they go about producing gay pride as a form of symbolic capital, and as the organizations generate increasing amounts of symbolic capital they are able to progress in their modes of resource accumulation toward institutionalization within their communities.

I also found that there was an inherent tension within the discourse of gay pride as it related to the issue of political engagement. In the eyes of some Pride members, there was an important separation between the discourse of gay pride and explicit or specific political goals (such as achieving the right to gay marriage or concrete transgender rights), one that has ensured the longevity and vitality of the Pride movement. For those who believe in this perspective, the widespread appeal of the Pride events to the average lesbian and gay community member, and its attraction for the (presumably non-politically oriented) masses of LGBT people and allies, was predicated on the lack of attachment to a political agenda. Yet for other members working within Pride organizations, Pride was an essential part of what they

viewed as a progressive and political LGBT movement, one that operated in the realm of public visibility while other segments of the movement simultaneously worked on issues that required lobbying or organizing for electoral campaigns. At times members of the Pride movement were unable to avoid public political conflict, and in several cases the organizations found themselves embroiled in political battles that demanded a self-evaluation of their identities and their ability to mobilize against threats to their rights. Were they simply an event-planning organization, they were forced to ask themselves, or were they a civil rights organization? Moreover, were they prepared to take on these contentious issues that confronted them? I discuss two contentious cases in detail that illuminate how the organizations reacted when their rights and legitimacy were challenged. In Manhattan, Heritage of Pride was denied, at the last minute, a city permit to move their festival to a new location; this was a shock to an organization that had come to think of themselves as working cooperatively and amicably with city government. In St. George, Southern Utah Pride was refused participation in a “diversity fair” by the Downtown Business Association that was to feature the diversity of local organizations and ethnic groups within the St. George community and promote revitalization of the downtown business district. In these cases, the Pride organizations came up directly against what they suspected to be discriminatory behavior, and were forced to figure out how to respond. The reactions that I encountered from members were very revealing about their understandings of what a Pride organization is and their predilection toward mobilization or accommodation in the face of threats to their legitimacy, as well as the boundaries and limitations of “gay pride” as an ideology and set of practices for an organization.

Activist Talk, Activist Definitions, and the Doing of Pride

I began this research interested in the intersection between culture and activism, and I sought out a setting in which I could see how people thought about and talked about “politics,” broadly conceived, in an organization that focused on creating *cultural* change around the issue of LGBT social acceptance. Pride organizations came to the fore as a context that straddles the cultural and political arenas of creating social change. Cultural developments in the last forty years around the issue of social acceptance for gays and lesbians have undergone a sea change; in some cities and states around the country, gays and lesbians have gained significant legitimacy as a minority group, while in other communities their rights have been consistently abridged. Moreover, while the legal and political battles waged on behalf of LGBT people in the second half of the twentieth century have been extremely significant, and have focused on obtaining rights and privileges that can be granted (or restricted) by the state, there are very important dimensions of social change occurring outside of the state arena in the cultural realm. The state has not been the only target of the LGBT social movement in the last several decades, yet many of the scholarly books and articles that I encountered about the LGBT movement seemed to focus almost exclusively on political and legal battles in American society. They appeared to neglect the massive energies directed toward making cultural changes on the issue of social acceptance for LGBT people, within smaller communities around the United States—and in particular within communities that are so politically conservative and dominated by religious authorities that political change has not been a legitimate option.

Moreover, by listening to the voices of people within different LGBT communities, and by watching as media representations of LGBT people increased dramatically within the last decade (including more positive representations, in ways that showed LGBT people as simply part of our diverse national or international population), it became increasingly clear that the average LGBT person’s experiences oftentimes had little to do with state rights and privileges. I

found that many gays and lesbians within the Pride community—especially in the smaller, less gay-friendly communities—were often unaware of the specific conditions of their political rights and privileges, despite the undeniable fact the state does, ultimately, determine some key aspects of their lives (such as adoption or inheritance rights, or the right to a civil union or marriage). Thus, my focus became narrowed in on how people who are “out and proud,” and especially those who organize events that focus on increasing the visibility and presence of gays and lesbians who are “out and proud,” understood their own relationships to politics, to being an activist, and to how they understood their own personal identities as being ones of activists in their daily lives.

The LGBT movement is one of the most classic examples of “new social movements,” for which the state is not the object of mobilization efforts, but rather the focus is on cultural change in the arena of personal identity, self-acceptance and collective identity (Melucci 1989). Politics, viewed through the lens of new social movement theories (based on movements such as the women’s movement), is understood through the notion that the “personal is political,” and that the political realm is not confined to the legislature and the courts. Following this logic, I asked: what kind of language do Pride members use to talk about “politics” and how do they see their events as having an impact on political changes? How do they talk about politics? Where do they see the beginning and end of “politics”? What kind of political language do Pride organizers use to express their goals, or is “politics” something that an outsider would attribute to their work without any relevance to their perspectives? I also focused on understanding how these conceptualizations of activism and politics change over time, as an organization becomes a more regular, established actor within its host community. Along with questions about organizational institutionalization, these inquiries comprised a secondary and related set of questions that animated my research within the Pride community.

As I will explain further in a later chapter, I entered the field armed with theories that predicted the members of the most institutionalized (i.e., the most well-developed, connected, and established within their communities, as well as the older and longer-running) organizations to exhibit the least amount of “political talk” (Eliasoph 1998). Following this logic, institutionalized organizations were presumed to be the most routinized, bureaucratized, and non-radical, expected to be more concerned with the reproduction of their bureaucratic entity than engaging in risky activist talk and activities; an insider organization rather an outsider challenging the established cultural and political system. I began the study with Heritage of Pride in New York City. The setting, I imagined, had produced an organization that had lost its activist bent somewhere along the way, handing over the more activist-type activities to other more radical organizations within the New York City area. In comparing that scenario to an organization that was more recently-established and in a more high-risk urban context for members of a marginalized sexual minority, that of St. George, Utah, I speculated that I would find that smaller and newer organization to be a counterpoint of activist talk and orientation. The relationship between the two variables, however, proved to be far more complex, and did not fit my neat expectations of a causal relationship between institutionalization and political talk. Political talk in Utah was not what I expected it to be—in fact, many (although not all) of the leaders eschewed what they called “boring political talk.” They engaged in what I refer to as “doing apolitics.” They were more focused on the tasks in front of them, animated by the excitement and responsibility of producing a drag show or Valentine’s Day dance for the gay community in their small city, and saw little point in trying to change a political context that was severely stacked against them and offered little chance for acquiring specific political rights and privileges. This, suffice to say, violated the principles of organizational theory that I had consulted, and demanded a re-evaluation of the relationship between activism, political

language, and institutionalization. Political talk was not the opposite of institutionalization; they were separate and complex systems that operated in relationship to each other, with distinct but related logics. It was not institutionalization that was the cause of the decline of political talk, but rather that the logic of “gay pride” had its own approach to the use of political language.

Yet, in another of my fieldwork cases, that of Queens Pride in a borough of New York City, I found that the members of the organization were *highly* politicized. They were very well-informed about local political elections, candidates, were members of LGBT political clubs, and a number of them even worked in politics. Since this organization was highly institutionalized within their local urban community, their events recognized as a part of the urban fabric and publicized on the local civic calendar for years, receiving extensive city funding as well as corporate sponsorship, I found that this challenged the strict relationship that one might have established between institutionalization and political talk. This relationship, I argue, is highly complex and cannot be reduced to simple dichotomies; the environment does not determine the outcome. Instead, one must examine the inclinations of the leadership and the development of the organization itself over time, as they each have different paths that they may take, through strategic choices and the choices *not* taken. Thus, while certain settings may influence the potential for political orientation, they do not determine how the members of an organization see their abilities to connect to the political field and to use political action for making social change. Institutionalization is not necessarily the opposite of political involvement—in some cases they can clearly work together in tandem— and the organizers of Pride events may in fact be highly politicized individuals who see Pride as one facet of their efforts to create social and political change around the issue of LGBT rights and social acceptance.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 presents an in-depth discussion of the methodology that I used to conduct this research. I employed relational ethnography and paid close attention to the relationship between individuals and their environment, focusing on the infrastructure of the communities in which organization members existed. A dialogue between the individual, the organization, and the local community was present at all times. In the first half of this chapter, I explain in detail my case selection and why I used a set of four cases in order to prevent a simplistic and dichotomized comparison between “institutionalized” and “non-institutionalized” cases, and instead reflected a more rounded perspective on process and the different possibilities of patterns of organizational development. In this chapter I reflect on my role as a fieldworker, especially what it meant to be a heterosexual researcher within a fieldsite made up predominantly of LGBT people, and the process of managing my identity in different contexts and times.

In chapters 3 and 4, I provide detailed backgrounds on each of the urban contexts and organizational settings in my study as they relate to the development of the organizations, as well as a brief history of each of the organizations. I discuss the four different urban settings in terms of the extent to which they have an urban gay infrastructure, and how different urban elements such as population density and the availability of public space in which to gather impacted the experience of life in that city. My goal is to provide a contextualized sense of the context in which Pride organizing occurs, which is very different from Boise, Idaho to Queens, NY. This will provide a relevant conceptual background to understand the social, political, and

historical conditions that lead up to the LGBT Pride organizations that I encountered when I entered the field.

In Chapter 5, I delve into one of the key theoretical contributions that I make to the field of social movement studies: the concept of external institutionalization and cultural resource mobilization. I draw on archival data that uses the coding of annual organizational publications, called Pride Guides, to paint a historical, empirical picture of how Pride organizations developed within their communities, and then I move to examples from my ethnographic data to show what external institutionalization is and how it works. I illustrate what the three different dimensions of external mobilization are—local cultural and commercial, political and civic, and corporate institutionalization—and how they build upon each other over time as modes in which an organization develops stronger and deeper ties within its local urban community. Here, I provide detailed examples from my fieldwork that illustrate the ways that the various organizations in my study employed these different modes of institutionalization, how they used them to build social and symbolic capital, and how certain avenues were open or closed to the organizations at different points in time.

In this chapter, I expand on my claim that external institutionalization is a key dimension of resource mobilization for cultural movements made up of individuals with a stigmatized identity. I show that by incorporating a more cultural dimension to RM theory, we can see resources not solely as financial support earned through the development of social capital (ties to local community institutions) but also as the collection of various forms of capital that can be turned into symbolic capital—a currency that is especially important for stigmatized minority groups in seeking to establish legitimacy and increase social acceptance. Resources are not only material, but symbolic as well.

Internal processes are also important for accomplishing the goals of an organization; a group cannot function indefinitely without some sort of collective patterns for getting things done. In Chapter 6, I examine the process of internal institutionalization within two organizations, focusing on the contrasts between the formal and informal structures of Heritage of Pride and Southern Utah Pride. HOP was a highly structured, bureaucratized organization with a long history and a complex, oft-consulted and oft-revised constitution, while SUP was an organization built primarily on friendship networks and collectivist practices. The board members' attempts to produce a highly structured, ordered, and efficient organization dissolved under the stress of personalities and individual conflict. I discuss in detail the benefits and pitfalls in using these two forms of structure, and explore how each fared in terms of ensuring equity of power among members. I carefully distinguish between bureaucracy and democracy, and show that these are individual factors that must be considered independently. Bureaucracy is not the opposite of democracy, and I show that oligarchy and deradicalization are not necessarily an automatic result when an organization creates bureaucratic forms of internal organization. My evidence supports a lot of the social science literature on internal processes that have emerged from the women's movement and other movements to disprove the supposed iron law, but looks at them in two very different urban social contexts. In a local urban community in which the Pride organization is one of few outlets for connecting with other LGBT people, it may be necessary to have a tighter-knit group with intensive friendship bonds, but this may also threaten the sustainability of the organization over time if sufficient structure is not in place.

In the first half of the seventh chapter, I discuss the various and co-existing meanings of "gay pride" as it exists in these different places, both for individuals and for the organizations. Gay pride is like an open vessel into which one can pour a multiplicity of meanings, which I see

as the reason for its massive proliferation as a social movement across the globe. First, it is a process of production through which one creates cultural resources (i.e., external institutionalization, as discussed above); these resources can be used to earn political resources or they can be left in the cultural arena, which means that gay pride can either be political or non-political (in the “traditional” electoral political sense), as one wishes to view it. Second, gay pride is also a positive feeling, emotion, or sentiment as an LGBT person; it’s the counterpoint to the shame and stigma of homophobia, both external homophobia and internalized homophobia. In this way, it is about self-affirmation and positive individual identity and association with the term “gay” or any one of the LGBT letters. It is also about a collective identity construction, contradicting the isolation that an LGBT person feels when they think they are “the only one.” Third, gay pride is about visibility and the disruption of the heteronormativity of public space; it is about “taking over the streets” for a huge march or just about taking over one’s local café for a drag show fundraiser, but it involves being out in public as an identifiable LGBT person or ally, even if you’re not welcome. And lastly, I found that gay pride was about the establishment of an alternative culture, a cultural form that can be celebrated and embraced. This is where the celebratory, party, and “play” aspects of pride (i.e., the “drama” of Pride events, with flashy colors and costumes) come together with a respect for the history and traditions of gay culture. It is a culture that must be learned when one comes out; unlike an ethnic group into which a person is born, this is a learned culture that you come to share with your fellow LGBT-identified people. It has symbols—the rainbow flag—and common practices, such as the performance of drag, and has its own language at times as well. It is about celebration of unity in diversity, as Armstrong (2002) notes, in which all types of subcultures within the LGBT community come out to represent their sub-identity within the LGBT community. These are the four main meanings of gay pride that I encountered through

my fieldwork, but the openness of the form does not preclude new and emergent meanings from coming up over time and across varied settings.

In the second half of the seventh chapter, I also address the meaning of activism and the use of political language within Pride organizations. I point to a surprising incongruity between an environment of “threat,” in which LGBT people feel that their identity as gay is highly contested, and the predilection or tendency toward using political, activist-style talk. My findings support the notion that activist talk does not naturally develop out of a situation of threat; it develops from conscious attention by movement members to issues of politics and the development of political consciousness. Because of the connection between culture and movements for the LGBT community, Pride organizations are able to do movement work without using political language. I examine how Heritage of Pride, a highly institutionalized organization in a largely gay-friendly urban environment—yet has a historical connection to the most celebrated revolutionary moments in gay activist history—constructs its identity as a social movement organization. I look at the tensions that emerge in creating an organizational identity when there is a decrease in social opposition as was found within Heritage of Pride; the tendency toward thinking of the organization as simply an event-planning group comes to the forefront. The ability to continue to think of oneself as a civil rights organization changes over time, and I look at the internal struggles to define and redefine the organization that occur under those conditions of decrease opposition, and to increase or temper their own sense of importance or relevance within the LGBT movement.

In the Conclusion, I close with a discussion about the symbolic meaning of Pride organizations and the utility of symbolic capital for making real social change. What does it mean to have the Empire State Building lit lavender for the weekend? How do we account for this, in understanding the effect of cultural movements? I discuss critiques of the Pride

movement for being accommodationist and contributing to a process of mainstreaming, de-radicalization, and overly capitalist and unconscientiously trying to earn legitimacy and privileges through the corporate market rather than through political organizing. I also point to critiques that have been waged on the “politics of visibility” that the LGBT movement as a whole—and certainly the Pride movement—have largely embraced. What are the benefits and pitfalls of using a politics of visibility? I suggest different ways of thinking about cultural change that take into account the goals of the movement versus the expectations of activists who have different kinds of goals. However, I do argue that this is only one of many tactics that the LGBT movement as a whole has embraced within a larger set of multi-sited and multi-challenging approaches to creating social change. Ultimately, Pride organizing challenges our theoretical definitions of what we think of as political, what we think of as cultural, our understandings of the local urban “community” and how that community can be mobilized to create cultural change, as well as our visions of what “resources” mean for a cultural social movement. Adding to theories on resource mobilization and cultural movements, expanding those definitions so that they can account for what is currently a massively popular movement—found within thousands of cities across the country and around the world—is necessary if we are to also understand the contemporary twists and turns of the wider LGBT movement that operates outside of the courts and the legislature.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON FIELDWORK

This chapter describes the research methodology used to conduct this study of LGBT Pride organizations. The chapter is broken up into two parts. The first part outlines my research design, my approach to ethnographic research, the types of data that I collected, and details on how I collected the data. The second half of this chapter is a methodological discussion about the ethnographic research process. It includes a reflection on the management of identity in the field, the process of gaining entry to a fieldsite, and roles taken on during fieldwork.

Data collected for this dissertation are comprised of three elements: a) intensive participant observation; b) interviews, and c) archival research. Over a two-year period, from September 2007 to August of 2009, I spent approximately twelve months in the field with four organizations in three cities. During that time, I spent several thousand hours of participant observation with subjects and conducted close to one hundred interviews. Approximately fifteen hundred pages of archival material produced by the organizations were compiled, photocopied and later analyzed using a coding frame that I developed. This research design of *data triangulation* with three separate sets of empirical evidence allowed me to produce, refine, and confirm robust theoretical analyses.

There were two main foci of the overall ethnographic data collection process. The first goal was to collect information on the perspectives, attitudes, language use, and sentiments of individuals within the Pride organizations, and evidence on how the Pride organizations functioned as entities from the inside-out. The second focus of the research was to gather information about the field in which the Pride organizations operated—both the non-profit organizational fields as well as the local urban context (writ more broadly) in which the Pride organizations developed, over time and contemporaneously. With respect to the organizational

field, this included elements such as the density and types of organizations in the field, and for the urban context I focused on aspects such as the availability of public space for gathering and the presence or absence of gay urban public space. I also paid close attention to the density of population, the level influence of religion on the culture and city and state government, and the political climate of the city. This allowed me to combine a social movements perspective with an urban sociological and cultural analysis that integrated various components. Information on the urban context was gathered through interviews and participant observation within each city, and by critically examining the places and spaces that I encountered through spending time with Pride organizers and other LGBT people in each city.

Lastly, archival material provided a longitudinal and historical perspective that focused on changes over time in two of the cases. This set of data confirmed initial hunches that I developed during my research, which emerged from retrospective reports by “old timers” (people who had been around the organization for many years) that I heard in interviews and in day-to-day discussions in the field.

It is important to note that, while I collected evidence on four organizations within three cities, two of the organizations received far more in-depth attention than the others. Heritage of Pride in Manhattan and Southern Utah Pride in St. George were the central focus of my study from the outset. The other two, Queens Pride and Boise Pride, at times took a back seat to the two key organizations with which I spent the most time. This was intentional, rather than accidental. While I describe all four settings relatively equally in the background section (chapters 3 and 4), and draw on interview and observation data from members of all four organizations in various sections of this dissertation, I did not collect in-depth or detailed information on the *internal* workings of these two organizations. As I explain below in the case selection process, this research design was intended to produce a deep and multifaceted

understanding of institutionalization as a social process across time and space. I was able to successfully accomplish this by studying two organizations and urban settings in-depth, and using two organizations and urban contexts as comparative and secondary cases. Moreover, the two secondary organizations had small and informal executive boards, with very limited membership numbers. A more in-depth study of the internal workings would not have revealed a great deal about how a more complex organization might work.

In this dissertation, I use the real names of organizations and cities, but the names of individuals and local commercial establishments—essentially, people and places that are recognizable only to locals within each urban setting—are pseudonyms. However, I *do* use the real names of political figures (including local city officials), the real names of non-profit organizations, and the real names of companies—such as a beverage company or an airline—since these names would be a) easily discoverable by the mainstream public; or b) the statements about these entities would have little analytical impact if actual names were not used.

SECTION 1: THE GATHERING OF INFORMATION

Constructing the Cases

Case selection, in which I decided which cities and organizations to research, was the most delicate element that I had to contend with in the construction of this ethnographic study. It was absolutely vital that I put together a sample of urban contexts/Pride organizations that would allow for appropriate theoretical comparison. Thus, great care and thought went into

ensuring that the organizations and urban contexts reflected both the variety of Pride organizations and cities in the United States as well as the similarities among them.

During the period of two years in which I was actively conducting fieldwork, I spent nine consecutive months of intensive participant observation with two Pride organizations in New York City, from September 2007 until June of 2008. This included Heritage of Pride (HOP) in Manhattan, and The Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee (QP) in Queens, a borough of New York City. The fieldwork for those two organizations was conducted simultaneously, as I was living New York City at the time and was able to travel back and forth between the boroughs. However, the research with HOP was far more intensive, as they had meetings between two and four times a week, and sometimes with other events on the weekends. In contrast, meetings of Queens Pride were far less frequent; they were held once or twice a month, with meetings in the springtime (as we got closer to the day of their Pride events) occurring at most once or twice a week. After leaving the field in New York City after this initial intensive period concentrated during nine months (September 2007 to June of 2008), I then returned to these two field settings for a ten-day period during the following June of 2009, in order to conduct follow-up interviews with board members and additional participant observation at their Pride events.

During that two-year period, I also conducted ethnographic research with Southern Utah Pride (SUP) in St. George, Utah, and Boise Pride (BP) in Boise, Idaho. I visited St. George on three different occasions during those two years—in March of 2008 for 2 weeks, in September of 2008 for 2 weeks, and then in March of 2009 for 4 weeks. These visits totaled eight weeks of very intensive fieldwork, during which time I lived with a key member of the organization and spent all of my days and evenings with various members of the LGBT community. Fieldwork in Boise totaled approximately five weeks of time spent in the city with various LGBT community

members. I visited Boise for 2 weeks during June of 2008, and then again for 3 weeks in June of 2009. I lived for part of the time with a key member of the organization, which allowed for intense interviewing and intimate familiarity with the organization in a short period of time. Re-visits over the course of a year to both Boise and St. George allowed me to see a longitudinal perspective despite the shorter amount of time physically spent in the field.

My initial interest, at the outset of my research, lay in creating a comparison between Heritage of Pride and Southern Utah Pride. However, I became quickly aware that only studying these two radically different organizations could lead to very simplistic comparative analyses (e.g., big versus small city; large organization versus small organization; long-standing organization versus new organization; gay-friendly urban context versus repressive environment). Heritage of Pride, moreover, is an idiosyncratic example of a Pride organization--one that was established as a direct and localized response to the Stonewall Rebellion, and which occupies a special place in the history of the LGBT movement. If I had only studied Heritage of Pride within New York City, I would have been left with a picture of Pride that was not directly comparable to Pride organizations in other urban settings, given the different conditions of development.

Over the duration of my fieldwork in New York City I observed that the other Pride organizations (in other boroughs) had important differences from Heritage of Pride, it became clear that these differences between organizations within the same city were not to be *ignored* but rather to be *incorporated* into my theoretical analysis. Thus, I began to pay close attention to the activities of Queens Pride, which served as another example of an organization within New York City, under similar but *not identical* urban conditions (and, as I will demonstrate, with leadership that had different values and political orientations). Queens Pride provided an

excellent “foil” for simplistic comparisons between “gay Pride in New York City” and “gay Pride in a small city in Utah” that would have been very limited in analytical utility.

Lastly, I was also concerned with the theoretical limitations of a direct comparison between a Pride organization within an extremely urbanized, gay-friendly local environment (Greenwich Village in Manhattan, NYC) to a small city with virtually no public urban life, in a religious and non-gay-friendly local culture (St. George, Utah). Thus, I later incorporated Boise into my study as a *mid-point* between the two extreme urban cases: Boise is a medium-sized city with public urban life, a downtown area, and a moderately-sized gay community with its own bars, clubs, and non-profit organizations. As I mentioned above, fieldwork and interviews in Boise, with Boise Pride, were more limited in scope than with Heritage of Pride and Southern Utah Pride. Boise and Boise Pride were used primarily as a means of ensuring that my theoretical analysis also applied to medium-sized cities that would likely be, in many ways, more representative of the average American city’s Pride organization.

Extended Case Method: Reflexive Dialogue between Theory and Data

My urban case selection was driven by a concern with connecting theoretical and analytical ideas to empirical evidence from the field. Constructing the cases involved a constant and ongoing process of reflexive thinking and negotiation, both in theoretical and empirical terms, about the data that I was collecting and the contexts from where this data emerged. My main concern was to ensure that the more general application of my analysis would not be limited by idiosyncrasies of the cases.

In constructing my cases and producing my analysis, I drew on what Michael Burawoy calls the *extended case method* approach. In ethnography, which he aptly labels a “reflexive

science,” one enters the field with a set of assumptions about what one would be likely to find in that setting, drawing on accepted social science knowledge about the theoretical and empirical case at hand. Invariably (and most importantly), one turns out to be *wrong* in one’s expectations; existing, already-known theory must be refined and developed by examining this new setting. The point of ethnographic research, according to this approach, is not to create or discover entirely new theories about social life, but rather to draw on microsocial analyses of actual cases to refine, extend, and revise existing theories. Theory guides one’s initial interest in the case, and it is that same theory that is constantly modified and revamped during fieldwork as a result of the empirical evidence collected in their particular case. This is done by extending microprocesses to macroforces, creating links between what one sees on the ground and what was presumed about how those macroforces worked before entering the field (Burawoy 2009, 1991).

In my study, an amalgamation of theories about institutionalization, social movement culture, and the physical urban environment guided my initial interest in the Pride organizations. If institutionalization is the end of the road for social movements, I constantly asked myself during fieldwork, how could one account for the importance of urban gay public life for an LGBT person in a major city, and how could one account for the success and popularity of Pride events? Were millions of LGBT people across the country, each June, unwittingly celebrating the *demise of their own movement*? Why did Pride organizations all across the country see their extension into the mainstream of their local communities as success, and connections to city government as a step forward for the LGBT community, while social movement theory argued that it was a harbinger of their death as a movement? And ultimately—this was the challenge I had the most difficulty with—if that were true, then Heritage of Pride and the 750,000 people that attend their events was, in fact, the greatest example of a *social movement failure* that had

ever been seen. This was puzzling to me—and it was this dissonance that pointed me to look toward revising existing theory. My goal was to understand this contradiction and to modify theories of social movement development to accurately account for the extension of *cultural* movement organizations into their local communities. The existing theory simply did not fit what I was observing in the field, and it was only by creating an ongoing and reflexive dialogue between data and theory that I was able to produce an extension of institutionalization theory—a modified theory that accurately accounts for cultural movements and sees external institutionalization as an *important cultural strategy* of cultural movements, rather than a reflection of their failure.

Out in the Field: Data Triangulation using Various Approaches

Participant Observation

Given the intensity of the ethnography that I conducted with these four organizations, the time I spent “in the field” easily totaled over several thousand hours. Moreover, the boundaries between being “in the field” and “out of the field,” especially in the two cases where I lived with members of the gay community for a duration of time (in St. George and in Boise), were highly permeable, and often bled into each other.

In all four cases, I attended all formal and informal meetings held by the organizations, from executive board meetings to committee meetings, to envelope-stuffing meetings, to get-togethers at people’s homes that were loosely organized around discussing organizational plans. Formal meetings for the organizations took place in a variety of settings, depending on the fieldsite: either in an office (Heritage of Pride) or within an LGBT community meeting space such

as an LGBT community center (Queens Pride and Heritage of Pride), within members' homes (Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride, and occasionally Queens Pride), or within a café or bar (Boise Pride and Southern Utah Pride). HOP's office space was often a place that I could arrive early and simply "hang out" and chat or eat before meetings; it was open all day and was staffed by an employee, and there were usually a few members hanging around and/or working on Pride planning. The other three organizations had no formal space belonging only to them, and would often switch their meeting places and times. Heritage of Pride's meeting schedule was posted on their website, and regularly updated. The others organizations, however, demanded an immense amount of energy and effort on my part to keep "in the know" about when and where the meetings were to be held. Often they were arranged informally and spontaneously among key members, which was a challenge to keep up with.

During formal meetings held in all of the organizations I took extensive notes in black-and-white marbled notebooks (of which I had dozens by the end of two years). This did not appear to be especially "out of place," as most members of the organization were jotting down notes in a notebook or on a legal pad for later reference. In my notes, I attempted to capture both the formal proceedings of the meeting—such as what measures passed, who endorsed them, and what the vote count was—but also, and for an ethnographer more importantly, these notes also covered the informal interaction among attendees that occurred during meetings. Amusingly, on more than one occasion a member of the organization assumed that I would have the best "minutes" of the meetings (since I was constantly scribbling in my notebooks), and asked me to consult my notes for particular details on organizational proceedings, for use in constructing a set of minutes for the meeting that had taken place. Sheepishly, I had to reveal that I did not catch the final "decision" made (typically about some relatively unimportant detail—at least to *me*— such as what color t-shirt they finally decided to order for volunteers, or

which sticker design received the most votes during a committee meeting). For members, my notes were quite useless as a form of organizational bookkeeping. Instead, my notes during meetings focused more on interactional details, such as how decisions were made through discussion, how body language was used by members to express dismay with the final outcome of the group decision (reflected in, for example, a loud sigh or a rolling of the eyes toward one's neighbor), the types of language to describe the organization's goals, or the use of (or failure to use) parliamentary procedure to control or encourage discussion.

While I was out in the field, rather than sitting in formal meetings, I would often carry a small notebook in my back pocket or purse in which I would surreptitiously write down quotes or just pieces of information that I wished to record for future reference. I tried to do this outside of the view of the participants as much as possible—except when I needed to keep track of specific information, such as names and dates of importance. Crude notes of all fieldnotes, both organizational meetings and notes taken when out in informal field settings, typically written up the next morning. In my fieldnotes, I was careful to use a special system to distinguish direct, verifiable quotes from paraphrasing: single quotation marks denoted paraphrased comments, while double quotation marks illustrated a true and accurate quote from a particular individual that I captured verbatim.

The process of writing up fieldnotes the next morning allowed me to turn my informal scribbles into more detailed descriptions of what had occurred, and to include both my own comments and elaborate on my observations. These sessions were important not only for recording information as to what happened, but also allowed me to write short memos, in which I could process what I had seen and heard, and compare it against the social science literature that I was reading at the time. These memos, which sometimes emerged impromptu in the middle of my fieldnote documents and other times written in separate documents, were

intended to be seen only by myself and included stream-of-consciousness evaluations of different theories and ideas that would potentially be useful for constructing an analysis. This is part of the reflexive ethnographic experience of refining and extending the various social scientific theories one is reading, on the side, at the same time that one is in the field. I tested out different theoretical ideas on my data, pushed these theories as far as they would go, questioned these theories, and posed different questions that I had yet to answer with the data that I had so far collected.

The ability to capture the use of language and different comments “in situ” is exceedingly important in qualitative research (Byron 1993). I kept my audio recorder on hand as often as possible. When I felt it was appropriate (and had already obtained permission to record informally), I would introduce seamlessly into a conversation that was occurring either just between myself and someone in the field or when everyone was talking. At the end of my fieldwork, I found that about 15% of the recordings I had were of informal group or impromptu (rather than formal, scheduled) one-on-one conversations that I was able to record, in addition to formal interviews. I found that most subjects responded well to the introduction of the recorder; some were flattered that I wanted to record their perspective. Most subjects, once they became accustomed to it, perhaps forgot it was on, and continued to speak about whatever issue was at hand. On the few occasions that I realized it was stifling discussion, where the subject or group of subjects was clearly not comfortable being recorded, I quickly shut it off and put it away, rather than intrude on conversations that were best left unrecorded. However, overall, when introduced with a sense of discretion and with “enthusiasm” on my part about wanting to ensure that I captured the speaker’s true words, the audio recorder was typically well-tolerated by my subjects. In this way, I was able to capture verbatim quotes that illustrated themes I had been hearing about throughout the fieldwork. I was also able to

capture different field subjects in dialogue with *each other*, contradicting what the other said, giving multiple and different perspectives on the same question, or agreeing with each other.

Fieldwork with these four organizations extended far beyond the formal or even informal meeting. The organizations held their own public events as well as attended (as a group) many other public events. In each setting, I essentially immersed myself into the daily activities of the members of these organizations, and simply “went where they went.”

Throughout fieldwork, I took up any and all invitations to events or activities that were offered to me, regardless of where or when they took place. In New York City, this led me from the Bronx to Washington Heights and out to Staten Island, attending barbeques and picnics of various LGBT organizations with Pride organization members, to a party boat on the Hudson River honoring the contributions of volunteers, and to the local NYC convention center to staff a table for the organization at the bi-annual Gay Business Expo. It brought me to various apartments in Queens to stuff envelopes for a major mailing held by a sister organization to Queens Pride, and to Queens Borough Hall, where Queens Pride members were honored for their contributions to the local Queens community. In St. George, fieldwork led me to the parking lot of a WalMart where I helped wash cars for a fundraiser, to another parking lot where I helped staff a rummage sale, and out to the town in which the Pride event would be held, to check on the size of the festival space. In Boise, I tagged along to meetings with the Parks Department to finalize arrangements for the festival, and helped to purchase last-minute supplies.

I also attended innumerable meetings that members of each organization were required to attend in their roles as organizers of the events. In New York City, this included various meetings such as local urban community board meetings or monthly police precinct community meetings. A week before the Pride events were to take place, I attended a meeting with

representatives of Heritage of Pride, held within a large police precinct conference room. Since HOP's events are such a major endeavor that takes over the city for a day and requires intensive coordination among city officials—not to mention that the density of spectators presents a target for a potential terrorist attack—this meeting included representatives from every key city office: the Mayor's Office, the Police Department, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Sanitation, the Department of Transportation, and The Parks Department.

I also attended the actual Pride events put on by each organization—in three of the four cases I attended them twice (Southern Utah Pride did not hold one in 2009). I was present for the March and the Festival of each organization, and took copious fieldnotes at each of them. At the Heritage of Pride March I was assigned to the role of running the press conference for the Grand Marshals of the parade, formally introducing them to a throng of media reporters with cameras and microphones.

The process of gaining entry into each of the organizations, in order to conduct fieldwork, took a different form for each setting. For Heritage of Pride, I located their website, which had an online calendar, and attended one of their committee meetings. I introduced myself and asked permission to study the organization, which was granted without much discussion (they have a policy of "open meetings" for the public, and were used to being the focus of media attention). For Queens Pride, the process of gaining entry was slightly more challenging. I was unable to find any listings for the organization, although I had heard about it. I finally located a flyer for an event, posted in the Heritage of Pride office, with the home phone numbers of the QP board members; they called me back and agreed to let me join them for their next meeting. For both Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride, I found their websites online while searching for a Pride organization that would fit my research design. I sent a message to the general information e-mail address, explaining my research and that I was interested in

coming to visit, and received a phone call back almost immediately from a board member, who enthusiastically invited me to come out and study their organization.

Constructing the Organizational Field

The goal of this study was not only to understand Pride organizations, but to contextualize and understand the connections between Pride and the organizational field in which it lives. When I was not at a meeting for the Pride organizations, I spent my time attending any and all meetings for other non-profit organizations and various social or cultural groups (from LGBT groups to non-LGBT groups) within the particular urban setting. I went to anything that I thought might shed light on the broader context to which Pride was developing its ties.

This field observation and immersion filled two related analytical purposes for my research. First, I quickly realized that it is impossible to truly analyze the perspective of one organization without a sense of comparison to how other groups in the setting understood that setting. It was important for me to find other, comparative organizations, so that I would not lose my perspective and “go native” within Pride, seeing things only the way they saw them. I needed to keep in mind that their way of seeing things was a *strategic choice*, a reflection of who they were and how they sought to run their events. For example, it would be easy to say that all of New York City as an *entire field* had become de-radicalized, and that Pride’s perspective on politics was simply a reflection of the de-radicalization of contemporary LGBT cultural movements. In order to avoid this myopic view, I deliberately sought out a number of different organizations that were very dissimilar to Pride, and attended some of their meetings (with full disclosure of who I was and why I was attending). I especially looked for more radical organizations that were involved in protests, or simply organizations or community leaders that

would be likely to have a very different perspective on the community and how to approach cultural change on LGBT issues. For example, I attended a few planning meetings for the Dyke March, an unpermitted protest march for lesbian and women's rights that takes place the day before Pride in Manhattan. I attended one meeting of the Irish Lesbian and Gay Rights Organization, a highly politicized organization that actively fights against the St. Patrick's Day Parade's discriminatory practices of preventing anyone from displaying their non-heterosexual identity during the Parade.⁸ I interviewed a woman at the Herstory Archives in Brooklyn; she had been involved in the radical lesbian feminist movement for several decades.

I also spent a weekend in Long Island attending a grassroots activist training session run by The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, a major LGBT organization in NYC. This training provided both a crash course in local electoral politics and the "how to's" of grassroots organizing. I met individuals who self-identified as strident activists, as well as people who were employed by the organization to generate grassroots activism within local communities. This significantly helped to contextualize and put into perspective the extent to which Pride members were, or were not, activist in their orientation, their speech, their language, and their approach to creating social and cultural change. I interviewed some of the leaders of this organization, and participated in phone bank organizing sessions, making calls around the country to get people to volunteer their time toward LGBT issues, in order to pay attention to the different conceptual approaches to creating social change. While I may not specifically quote these interviews or refer directly to my fieldwork experiences within these "other" organizations in the following chapters of this dissertation, they were nonetheless very

⁸ This was the only organization that was highly wary of me as a participant-observer of their meetings—understandably so, as they were involved in an active and ongoing lawsuit against the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the sponsor of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. I was allowed to sit through part of their meeting, but at a certain point I was asked to leave, so that they could discuss more private matters that could not be shared with outsiders.

important for helping me to intellectually contextualize what I heard and saw in the Pride organizations.

My second goal, in attending all of these meetings across the broad organizational setting, was to gain a broad perspective and an account of *all* of the organizations that were in operation within that urban context. I wanted to understand what the struggles were for *any* organization in each urban context, and to have a sense of the density and intensity of the organizing that was occurring in each setting. For example, in St. George, I attended the Tri-State HIV/AIDS Task Force board meeting, to see what they were discussing. I attended a PFLAG meeting, and I attended a meeting of the Utah ACLU with local St. George community leaders and interested parties (at that point, I knew many of the people in the room at these others meetings, simply as a result of spending time with the Pride group and local friendship networks). In Boise, I attended a board meeting of The Community Center, a center for LGBT people within the city, and I attended an awards ceremony for LGBT leaders within the gay community. I interviewed long-time LGBT members of the Boise gay community who could provide a historical background, and I interviewed people who were leaders of other organizations such as Idaho Equality and The Community Center. I went out at night to the bars and clubs in Boise, and chatted with as many people as possible within those settings.

Overall, the point is that I looked a great deal *around* the organizations, not simply within them. This was far easier in Boise and St. George, where there was a limited quantity of organizations to examine. However, in NYC, I tried to reach as many different types of organizations and LGBT-community-associated members with as different perspectives as possible, within the time I was allotted. This was especially true in the early months of my fieldwork in NYC, when I was very broad in my approach to “the field”; I later became more focused as to what and how I wanted to triangulate my study of the field. Early on, this “broad

field exploration” led me into places that were, in retrospect, too far afield from my interests. My enthusiasm for accepting “any and all” invitations at one point opened the door quite far. In November of 2007, I answered a request from a friendly local gay activist, who told me to meet him at a certain corner as soon as I could get to Manhattan. Within the hour, I found myself marching *in the middle* of the Veterans Day Parade, up Fifth Avenue in front of hundreds of thousands of spectators, holding up one end of a banner announcing the “Gay Veterans Association” in one hand and waving to the cheering crowds with the other. There were six of us in total; I was accompanied by three other (much older) gay veterans and two other young female graduate students who, apparently, had each received a similar phone call. While this was an exciting opportunity, I later began to turn down such invitations as I became more strategic about my use of time in the field.

Interviews

I collected a total of 99 interview recordings: 87 individual interviews, plus 12 interviews that involved more than one person. These “group” interviews included recordings of a couple that wanted to be interviewed together to impromptu discussions that emerged between two, three, or more people while hanging out. The individual interviews lasted, on average, approximately an hour and a half. However, they ranged in length. A couple of the interviews were quick follow-up sessions that lasted only twenty minutes, in which I asked a set of specific questions for clarification. However, many of them were longer interviews that lasted for three or more hours, meandering from a discussion of personal life histories to in-depth discussions about recent events in the organization. Interviews were conducted in a number of different locations, but typically took place in participants’ homes, in cafes and restaurants, or in their

work office (one restaurant near the Heritage of Pride office became so familiar with my visits that the waitstaff automatically led me to the quietest area of their establishment when I arrived with an interviewee).

The individual interviews were semi-structured; I had a set of substantive areas that I wished to cover with the participant, but the conversation often took on a life of its own. I was able to ask questions and clarify statements, behavior, or interaction that I had seen or heard during my participant observation. I interviewed a number of the key leaders of the organizations more than once, and these were typically very long interviews about a wide range of topics. I interviewed people with the goal of generating as much variation as possible in sampling in terms of length of time as a member of the organization, gender, age, and race. I spent a good deal of time interviewing “old-timers,” people who could tell me a lot about the history of the organization and had the greatest depth of information. However, whenever I heard someone described as an “outsider,” someone who “didn’t quite fit in,” or someone who had just left the organization, I made an effort to interview that person as well. In some cases, the most insightful and critical perspective comes from those who do not fit in within the mainstream of that setting. The non-conformer, the detractor, or the person who simply withdraws from the organization, I found, can often provide information that conflicts with the organization’s stated intentions and/or the status quo of how the organization wishes to represent itself.

Over a long period of fieldwork, there are always new areas of interest that emerge as one comes to be more involved in the study. In that situation, it can be necessary to have to return to the fieldsite and conduct additional interviews. In this case, I realized after the completion of my fieldwork in New York City that I had a great interest in internal institutionalization, but that I had not delved into this during my fieldwork and did not have

sufficient interview data as I did from the other sites (although I did have extensive participant observational data). In Boise and St. George, since these fieldwork visits were conducted in several distinct periods over time, I re-interviewed people on later visits, while completing the overall research project. However, in New York City, I returned to the area and spent 10 days in June of 2009 exclusively re-interviewing key members of the organization on issues of internal institutionalization. The multiple visits to each site over a two-year period is illustrated in the fact that I interviewed some people more than once. A detailed break-down of interview subjects can be found in Appendix 1, and the interview schedule can be found in Appendix 2.

Interviews were self-transcribed, over time, throughout the period of research. Printed interview transcripts totaled approximately seven hundred and fifty pages, and they were read and coded according to larger themes and smaller sub-themes, or master codes and sub-codes. Within the interviews, as with the participant observation fieldnotes, I also kept a running set of mini-memos that included stream-of-consciousness analysis. Thus, analysis and pure transcription occurred simultaneously, and I used the data from each interview as an opportunity to record an internal dialogue that pointed out different themes and their potential relevance to an emerging theoretical analysis. This allowed for the development of an evolving analytical frame that was checked and re-checked as I progressed with my transcription.

In both the ethnographic and interview material, I followed a relatively standard code of “best practices” for qualitative research analysis: ideas, sentiments, and facts that I heard or observed more than once, or that I heard from more than one person, were given stronger weight in my analysis than those were seen only once, or expressed by only one person. Explanations and opinions that were expressed by one individual were always taken seriously, but nonetheless always seen as one perspective among many (possibly competing)

explanations, and were always reflexively compared to information that I knew about that person through observation and their other attitudes and sentiments.

Archival Data

I used archival data as a means to *triangulate* my strong hunches about the process of external institutionalization over time that I came to see through fieldwork and interviews. The two Pride organizations in New York City—Heritage of Pride in Manhattan and Queens Pride—each put out what they call a “Pride Guide” once a year. The other two organizations did not produce a journal, and thus my longitudinal data is limited to the two New York City organizations. A Pride Guide is a printed journal, produced by the organization and distributed for free throughout the city during Pride Month. It includes articles (written by individuals within and outside of the organization) and many advertisements from a variety of entities (described below). The journals served as a fundraiser for the organization since a fee was charged for each advertisement, and they also allowed the organization to “speak” directly to its audience through the printed articles. They are widely distributed during the week leading up to Pride, and thousands of copies are printed.

Heritage of Pride has put out a Pride Guide each year since 1984 and up to the present day.⁹ These journals vary significantly in size; issues in recent years have been small in size, but up until a few years ago they spanned from fifty to a hundred pages. Queens Pride produced a Pride Guide from its first year (1994) until 1993, when they decided that the Guide was too cumbersome of an undertaking. These journals were smaller in size than the HOP issues, usually

⁹ Heritage of Pride’s predecessor organization, The Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee, put out a Pride Guide during its tenure, and HOP continued the pattern when the organization re-formed. The first year that it had a new name and identity as HOP, within the Pride Guide, was 1984.

numbering about forty pages, consisted of both articles and advertisements, and were widely distributed around Queens and handed out during their Pride events. Queens Pride also put out a Winter Pride Journal each year since the beginning of the event in the winter of 1995, which continues to be distributed at their annual Winter Pride event to this day. The Winter Pride journal is a smaller publication, typically numbering about twenty-five half-size pages. It consists primarily of short articles that introduce the annual Winter Pride Dinner-Dance honorees for that year, and many advertisements taken out (many of them by individuals). The Winter Pride journal is distributed only to guests at the Winter Pride dinner-dance.

I took a representative sample of each of the three journals; I coded every fourth year of HOP's journal, which led me to code a total of 8 HOP Pride Guide journals. For Queens Pride, I coded every 3rd year of the annual Queens Pride Guide and every 3rd year of the Winter Pride journal, leaving me with 4 Pride Guides and 6 Winter Pride journals for the Queens case (10 journals total). The number of pages in each HOP journal far outnumbered those in each of the Queens Pride annual and Winter journals, so it was appropriate to use both of the Queens Pride journals to even out the quantity of data across the two organizations.

In coding, I focused exclusively on the *advertisements* taken out in each journal. The goal was to produce a longitudinal and quantitative analysis of the process of external institutionalization over time, for the two organizations in New York City. I viewed "advertisements" as signifying a "tie" to that entity.¹⁰ My hypothesis was that each Pride organization in their *early years* would have advertisements primarily from *gay and local*

¹⁰ This approach of constructing a field of entities associated with the gay community is inspired by Elizabeth Armstrong's work on creating institutional-cultural fields at different points within the history of the San Francisco gay community (2002, 2005). She consulted such archival material as the Gay Yellow Pages and gay bar guides in order to construct a view of a complex cultural and institutional field that involves not only gay and lesbian non-profit or political organizations, but the entire range of gay cultural and social entities that make up that field at a given point in history. Moreover, she tracks the changes over time, and uses those time-structured comparisons to illustrate how the fields (and thus social movement organizing in San Francisco) changed from one era to the next.

entities, and in the *later years* have a greater representation of entities that were *non-gay and national*. By viewing an advertisement as a form of “tie” between the organization and the entity taking out an advertisement, I was able to analyze the extent to which the density of ties to non-gay and national entities grew over the years. While this may not be an exact representation of all of the ties that an organization had to local and national commercial, cultural, social, civic and political entities at that moment in time—since not all entities that have ties to the organization take out advertisements, and not all advertisers have close ties to the organization—I choose to use this as an approximation or a proxy for the density and type of external institutionalization that existed for the Pride organization at that time. Since the coding frame remains the same over the years, but the data results change, we see how the types and number of external ties between the organization and various local community and national entities changes over time. This, I argue, serves as a proxy measurement for “external institutionalization” put into quantitative terms that can be compared over years of development.

In my analysis, I expected to find that in the earlier journal issues there would be few advertisers outside of the members of the gay community willing to be associated with a gay organization. However, I anticipated that as we moved along in years there would be a greater presence of advertisements taken out by non-gay and national entities, such as major corporations, non-gay politicians, and other more “mainstream” entities seeking to advertise to the gay community. This archival research analysis tracks the development of this process over time. Moreover, since I distinguish between the different types of advertisers in my coding (i.e., corporations versus politicians, for example), the analysis also allows for a comparison between various “forms” of external institutionalization. Given what I knew about the different

trajectories of Heritage of Pride and Queens Pride, I expected the results to vary across the two organizations by *type* of external institutionalization.

By “advertising entities” I refer specifically to the entity that took out the advertisement. This included businesses, corporate companies (such as a beverage company or an airline), restaurants or bars, non-profit organizations, tourism agencies, social movement organizations, service providers (such as individual therapeutic counselors or couriers), elected and running political officials, individual members of the Pride organization, theater/performance/party events or establishments, media programs (such as a television program or station), or religious organizations that advertised in these journals. A portion of these entities were “official sponsors” of the Pride organization, which means that they may have engaged with the organization in other ways such as providing money or services to Pride. However, overall, the majority of the advertisements were from entities that simply took out an ad in order to market themselves to the (presumably mostly LGBT) readers of the journal. Advertisements ranged dramatically in size; some were full-page or double-page ads, while other advertisers took out small business-card-sized ads with only their name and the type of service that they offered.

Each advertisement was coded into one of the following categories: a) *gay and local*; b) *non-gay and local*; c) *“unclear” and local*; d) *gay and national*; e) *non-gay and national*, and f) *“unclear” and national*. The categories “gay” and “non-gay” refers to whether or not the advertiser—i.e. the company, the organization, or the individual—was gay-owned, gay-operated, or catered specifically to LGBT people. In some cases, it was not clear which category (gay vs. non-gay) an entity fell into; thus, the category “unclear” was created so that we did not have to force an entity into one category or another. Use of the Internet was very helpful in seeking out information about the various advertisers, in order to determine if the entity should be coded as gay. For local and national, this was usually easy to determine based on the postal

or physical address (local meant that they were located within the Tri-State area of New York City). Each individual advertisement was coded cooperatively and simultaneously by a research assistant and myself; we discussed each one until we agreed upon an appropriate category. The coding frame and meanings of each category were continuously refined and re-checked throughout the process. Overall, the results strongly confirm my hypothesis about the increase in external institutionalization over time, reflected in the expansion of ties between the Pride organization from exclusively local and gay entities to a greater representation of national and non-gay entities as advertisers.

A Note on Terminology

I use the terms “LGBT” or “gay” interchangeably in this study to describe the people in the community that I encountered, rather than the word “queer.” This is because the overwhelming majority of my subjects described themselves as part of the “LGBT community,” “gay,” or “lesbian,” and I wish to reflect the definitions and language used by subjects themselves. The term “queer” has been claimed by LGBT activists, individuals, and scholars alike to describe a constellation of radical and contested meanings of sexual identity, often employed for the deconstruction of sexual categories, the blurring of lines between gay and straight, and multi-issue organizing around social problems that intersect with sexuality such as racial and economic inequality (see Gamson 1995 for a discussion of the meanings and strategic use of the term “queer” over “gay” or “lesbian”).

Some scholars, such as Mary Gray (2009) use the term “queer” in their ethnographic studies of LGBT people, despite the fact that her subjects by and large did not use this term in their everyday language to describe themselves. Gray specifically points to the effect that LGBT

people have on their communities as “queering” public space by disrupting their surroundings through their mere public presence (p. 26). While I did encounter people within my field sites that used the term queer, almost all of them were people *outside* of the Pride organizations that I studied (such as members of gay rights organizations within the local community). The term “queer” did not have broad use within the Pride organizations as a label of self-identification. I see the use of the term queer as a deliberate claiming of difference, a label that has significant socio-political meaning to those who choose to use it. Thus, since my subjects did not typically use this word to describe themselves, I also refrain from using it to describe their identities. I limit my use of the word queer to a *verb*—in which one can queer a space by disrupting its heteronormativity, for example—which denotes an action and result rather than a catch-all identity phrase to describe individuals who do not, in fact, claim a queer identity.

There is also a small, but significant, difference in the use of the acronym GLBT versus LGBT—essentially, whether one puts “gay” before “lesbian.” Common parlance in the gay community across the nation is to put the L first, out of respect for lesbians who feel that their concerns and identities have historically been marginalized in relation to gay men’s concerns. A large majority of the people in the four Pride organizations used the term LGBT. However, this was not entirely uniform. It was more common for men in all of the four organizations to use GLBT; I found this especially in Boise Pride (which was made up almost exclusively of men) and in some sub-groups (for example, the Dance committee, made up primarily of men) in Heritage of Pride. I noticed that in St. George, I heard a mix between the use of GLBT and LGBT, by both men and women. More conservative non-profit organizations such as the Human Rights Campaign (HRC)—a major gay rights lobbying group in Washington, D.C.—use the term GLBT, while other more grassroots, liberal, and radical organizations such as the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force or other local organizations typically used the term LGBT. I found a general

pattern in that the more contact a subject had had with the HRC, or the more conservative the political beliefs of each individual (such as with the several gay Republicans that I encountered), the more likely they were to use the term GLBT over LGBT. It is difficult to know if this was a deliberate or unintentional use of terminology that differed from the commonly-accepted LGBT acronym; I imagine that for some it was deliberate while for others it was unconscious. In any case, I did not encounter any discussions about it while I was in the field, although it would be an interesting point of inquiry.

I also wish to point out that some of the people in my study used language as a way to “queer” (to use the word as a *verb*) their collective space. One of the men and a transgender woman in Heritage of Pride *always* used the feminine pronoun to describe other men on a regular basis, intentionally. The man would say such things as “Well, she told me to be here at 4 o’clock” when referring to a fellow male member who was normatively masculine in his self-presentation. Several of the male members used the word “girl” when speaking to each other (which actually sounded more like “gurrrrrrl,”) such as in the phrase, “Girl, you know I’ve been here for three hours!” After spending nine months of intensive fieldwork hanging out with members of this organization, I found myself adopting this “queered” language at times, and had to catch and correct myself when I almost called heterosexual male friends or family members “girl” in passing while outside of the field.

SECTION 2: BEING “ME” IN THE FIELD

Being Straight in a Gay World

As an ethnographer, the process of managing one's identity in the field has been shown to be complicated and tricky. Since fieldwork "relies upon the social researcher as a research instrument," (Coffey 1999, p. 2) it can be hard to know how much of oneself to put forth, how much to hold back, and how much to emphasize one's similarity to or difference from the group. While a great deal of research has been written about the relationships of *power* between a fieldworker and her subjects by virtue of the fact that one is studying the other (e.g., Tang 2002), this has also been shown to be context-dependent and can vary according to the specifics of the relationships that develop during the research process (Weiner and Popper-Giveon 2010).¹¹

One key part of managing relationship to subjects in the field involves managing dimensions of "social difference." Fieldworkers routinely study those who are "different" from them (such as white, middle-class academics who study the urban, minority poor—i.e., "studying-down"), and are expected to reflect on how the difference may have impacted their data collection. In this study, the key difference between myself and my research subjects was that I am heterosexual (and white) while my subjects were—for the most part—either lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered. (I should note here that in 2009 there was one heterosexual member of Southern Utah Pride and two in Boise Pride, and many straight people attend the events—but the overwhelming majority of the members and participants were LGBT). While there is certainly a place for "straight allies" in the LGBT movement as a whole and the Pride community specifically—as there were many non-gay people who were involved in different

¹¹The power relationship also changes depending on whether the researcher is "studying-up" (conducting research on elites); "studying-across" (within her same status category); or "studying-down" with subjects who are less privileged than the fieldworker (Gazit and Maoz-Shai 2010; Hertz and Imber 1995). Moreover, a fieldworker constantly remains very much at the mercy of her subjects; she relies on subjects not only to *grant access* at one point in time but also to provide *continued access* to the field—a situation that becomes even more critical over time as the researcher invests significant amounts of energy and attention to studying that particular setting. This fact can also affect the relationship of power between subjects and researcher.

ways with the organizations—this issue of *identity difference* remained a point of interest for me throughout the study. Thus, I paid close attention to the ways that it may have affected my research. Significantly, sexual orientation is not a *visible* dimension of social difference; it is not easily perceived the way that racial, gender, or national origin differences can be more easily—but not always—detected (such as through accent, skin tone, or other surface cues of identity). A straight researcher must “come out” as heterosexual during the research at some point if her sexual orientation is to be known. As Myers (2008) notes, the decision to reveal oneself as a “heterosexual ally” of the LGBT movement rather a “beneficiary” (someone who is a member of the group in a social movement setting and who would directly benefit from the movement’s activities) can be fraught with tension: “Should, for example, the heterosexual ally make a point of her or his heterosexuality when others might assume he is gay or she is lesbian? If the ally does not come out as straight, he or she may feel dishonest—as though he or she is stealthily invading private space and interaction...not intended to be open to heterosexuals” (pp. 170-171).

It is impossible to definitively know *exactly* how much one’s identity, biography, and personality impacts the ability to *gain access* to a fieldsite. However, it has been shown to have an effect on this process in past ethnographic studies, both as a source of helping to gain access or to inhibit access (Feldman, Bell and Berger 2003). One’s identity can act as a source of “capital,” helping to create rapport and build trust with one’s subjects, or one can lack the appropriate capital or habitus to be able to “play the game” (or even to understand what “game” is being played) (Bourdieu 1984). Elements of *identity* can refer to a wide number of factors in how they impact one’s experience in the field; general categories include one’s racial identity (Wacquant 2003), class status (Venkatesh 2006, 2008), gender or gender display (Ortiz 2005), sexual orientation (Taylor and Rupp 2005), or one’s national origin or ethnicity (Colic-

Peisker 2004) that can all be a source of co-identity or identity difference in qualitative research. There are also very specific elements of identity that are relevant only within the particular fieldsite. Desmond (2007) writes that he drew on his own “country-masculine habitus” for gaining intimate access in his study of forest firefighters—a feat that would have been difficult or impossible for someone who lacked that particular form of capital. Telfer (2004) notes how his status as an adoptive parent made access to some settings within his fieldsite very easy—when it was a source of co-identity with other adoptive parents—while it also inhibited his access to other arenas.

In addition to social identity, a fieldworker’s *personality*—not entirely distinct from identity but with a more interactional, individual, and situational quality—and his or her *past experiences* and *cultural familiarity* with the subcultural community under study can also impact the fieldwork research process. Factors are far-ranging: they can include such disparate elements such as whether the ethnographer is outgoing as opposed to shy; her comfort level in interacting with the study population; familiarity with the host community’s subculture outside of a co-identity with subjects (which helps the fieldworker to understand or even make relevant insider jokes); the ability of the individual fieldworker to “make friends” easily; whether she can find other common interests with the study population; or the chance occurrence that he or she is able to create a genuine source of connection (i.e. “friendship”) with a key informant in the field who can “vouch” for her and keep her informed and included in the field. While none of these elements are “make it or break it” for an ethnographer, these are all factors that come into play during the process of entering and—even more importantly—*staying* in the field.

In the case of this particular study, the axis of social difference between me and my subjects was sexual orientation. I should also note here that, while I did not share a common sexual orientation with my subjects, I am of middle-class background, and Caucasian—which

matched the background of the overwhelming majority of subjects in three of the four organizations I studied (only Heritage of Pride was not almost-entirely white). Yet, how did my sexual orientation, as a point of social *difference* from subjects, impact the research process? I was open about my heterosexual identity with all four of the organizations that I studied; in all four of the organizations that I discuss in this dissertation, the issue came up quickly in conversation soon after meeting them, and I revealed my sexual orientation. With two of them, it was asked in a direct question—Are you gay?—while with the other two, I made a specific point of adding it into the conversation early on. Within these four organizations, I do not believe that it prevented me from accessing any part of the field, or that the subjects did not feel comfortable with my presence. In fact, I believe that some of them actively *welcomed* me as a straight ally, since they may have viewed straight allies as playing an important role in producing significant social and political change around the issue of public acceptance of homosexuality. Perhaps they were even flattered that a straight person was interested in studying their organizing activities.

Moreover, being gay in a straight world allowed me to “play dumb”—ask obvious questions in order to get subjects to explain things in their own words, and to make inquiries about things which seemed to be “natural” to them but were of interest to a sociologist. It also allowed me to resist taking elements of culture for granted that might have been more difficult for a person who was a member of that sub-culture. As much as I tried to subject myself, my body, and my life circumstances (Goffman 1989) to the exigencies of being a member of a Pride organizations, the ability to ask “how did that feel?” or “what was that like?” in prompting subjects to verbally express what may have been an “obvious” emotion was perhaps made easier on account of my heterosexual identity.

However, I will mention that I believe the extensive contact that I had with the gay community throughout my life—before beginning this project—made it easier to blend into the field and to follow conversation. The neighborhoods of Chelsea and Greenwich Village in which I grew up and went to school were, as I discuss later, “gayborhoods,” and I was highly familiar with gay sub-culture and comfortable being immersed in a universe organized around a gay and lesbian identity, and with discussions about sexuality. I was able to catch the inside jokes and small references that come from spending a lot of time with gay people—from brief references to the gay male community’s stereotypical love of Judy Garland or *The Golden Girls*, to references to straight people as “breeders,” or knowledge of the differences between a “top” and a “bottom”—which may have eased my entry into the field without too sharp of a learning curve.

One of the most striking experiences of being straight in a gay world was the repetition of the “coming out” experience—in this case, *coming out as straight*. Almost all of the people in the social scenes that I met during fieldwork were LGBT, and they most likely assumed that I was gay when I met them. When I met a new group of people, a smaller sub-section of the Pride organization, or was introduced at a bar to some friends of the organization members as a researcher of Gay Pride organizations, I was frequently asked in conversation, point blank, “Are you gay?” I would reply no, but that I was a “strong ally of the gay community.” I would sometimes mention that I grew up in a predominantly gay community. This was typically treated with little to no reaction, and the conversation would continue—either to ask why I was interested in this topic, or on to another subject that had little to do with my sexuality. What was most poignant about this repetitive experience of coming out as straight was that I realized, from a very first-hand perspective, that the process of coming out for an LGBT person is not a one-time affair, but rather involves a constant and interactional experience with each person

that one meets in a social setting. As often as I had to come out as straight during my fieldwork, LGBT people have to come out as gay on a daily basis; in the world outside of the Pride community or a gay bar, the assumption is that one is straight until proven otherwise. Coming out—whether as gay or straight—is an interactional and repetitive process that involves opportunity (in which someone asks about your sexual orientation, or the decision to use a pronoun to describe for one’s sexual partner, sexual interest, or significant other), and a level of comfort and self-acceptance of one’s similarity or difference that is ever-present and emergent in each situation.

I was also very pleasantly surprised about the level to which the members of the four organizations were accepting of my heterosexuality. In fact, there were several things that certain members did in order to *make sure* that I felt welcome as a heterosexual which were especially poignant. In these cases, I felt almost ashamed that “my” heterosexual culture was so unaccepting of them, in many ways. The first example is that I brought my boyfriend to a Christmas party, held by Heritage of Pride. As soon as he walked in, several of the members made sure that he was publicly introduced to everyone, and that he had a drink in his hand and a seat at the table. They were exceedingly friendly to him, and took time to ask him questions and include him in conversation. The second example took place at a fancy dinner-dance held by Queens Pride, which was attended by many members of Heritage of Pride, with whom I shared a table. My boyfriend had decided not to join us for the dinner, and many people in HOP inquired about why he had not attended. At the end of the evening, one of the women from HOP grabbed a bouquet of flowers that was the centerpiece of the table, wrapped them in napkins, and pressed them into my hands, saying “You have to bring these home so he knows you were thinking of him!” These examples are especially touching in that I know that there must have been many occasions on which their same-sex significant other was not recognized

by their family members, not given the same courtesy as a heterosexual partner—and yet they made it a point to ensure that I felt comfortable with my own sexual orientation while in the presence of people who identified differently than myself.

Surprises during Ethnography

I was also surprised by two things that I experienced during fieldwork. Typically, I would ask someone to do an interview when I encountered them during an organization meeting, and they would either set a time and place or they would give me a phone number or e-mail address so we could set it up at a later time. Although most people I encountered were very amenable to helping me with an interview, I had to seek them out and politely request that they find time in their busy schedules for an interview. However, I found that there were a few people (to whom I had briefly mentioned that I wanted to interview them) actually called or e-mailed *me* to set up a time and place for an interview. These couple of people, I found, were especially eager to *tell their story*. Each of them was experiencing some amount of personal turmoil *or* they did not have other opportunities to talk about their homosexuality at length with anyone in their social world (one subject was closeted to everyone in his life except for those he knew through Pride). These particular interviews felt more like therapeutic counseling or confessional sessions than interviews, and after a number of failed attempts to keep them on track with my own interview questions, I soon (metaphorically speaking) took off my sociologist hat and simply just allowed them to share their emotional experiences and, in some cases, very personal secrets with me.

I was also surprised about how many participants wished to have their real names used in the study. I originally applied (and was ultimately denied by IRB) to use the real names of individuals in the study, since the organization was geared toward promoting the public visibility

of LGBT people, and because it seemed difficult to conceal the names of people who were holding office in established organizations that I was describing by name. I expected that my subjects would be cautious about using their real names, inhibited by the idea of having their words and feelings recorded. However, I was very wrong; for example, when I asked the members of HOP, very cautiously, if they felt comfortable using their real names, the reaction I received was one of puzzlement. In their eyes, why would they spend so much time speaking to me, giving interviews, if their real names were not going to be included in the final product? All of the organizations wanted as much publicity as possible for their group and even for themselves, and regularly did interviews with media outlets when they had the opportunity. The leaders of these organizations often sought out public interviews with the newspaper and magazine media, and were confused as to why I would *want* to prevent their names from being in the final study that I would produce (and later turn into a published book). Moreover, they wanted to create a “gay history” of their organization, which would record their personal efforts in producing Gay Pride in that city. (Not all subjects felt this way; some of the less-involved members did not have a strong sentiment about the use of their name, and a few asked to remain anonymous). In effect, many of my subjects perceived an anonymous interview as a waste of time—since their goal was the promotion of their organization and acknowledgment of their own efforts, they would want their real names and titles to be used in any publications. While I originally hoped that this project would be more of a useful historical document for each organization, as a contribution to the local gay history of these various cities, the IRB prevented me from doing so. In the end, however, I ultimately felt relieved that I will not be faced with the prospect of speaking about individuals using their real names in the public arena. I believe that anonymity at an individual level may permit me greater honesty with less hesitancy about my observations and critiques of individuals in the final research product.

CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND ON MANHATTAN, NY AND QUEENS, NY

Introduction

In the next two chapters, I provide a socio-historical background for and introduction to each of the four LGBT Pride organizations in which I conducted my fieldwork. Volumes could be (and in certain cases, have been) written about each of these urban contexts and their local social and political conditions as related to LGBT Pride movement organizing, both historically and in the present. However, the backgrounds that I provide for each urban context and Pride organization are not generalized or arbitrary accounts. Rather, each case description is guided by my overarching analytical perspective, paying close attention to the relationship between organizations, organizational fields, the existence of urban public space, the extent of gay urban infrastructure, the city and state political context, the influence of religion on the mainstream community, and the historical cultural context. The development of each LGBT Pride organization is a highly embedded process, one in which organizations are built out of the raw materials available to them in their local communities. Thus, these cultural-historical backgrounds are intended to provide focused contextualization for later theoretical explanations of how external and internal institutionalization, the elements of urban gay infrastructure, and cultural resources are engaged within each particular urban setting.

The four urban cases presented in the following two chapters differ dramatically in terms of the occupation of urban public space. In Greenwich Village, there is a clearly-defined “gayborhood” that is demarcated and well-known as public gay space. Next, I find what I call a “gay urban infrastructure” that exists to support the gay community in two other urban cases, yet in different ways. In Jackson Heights, Queens, the gay infrastructure is visible, well-

developed, and integrated into both the urban cultural *and* the political sphere alongside other ethnic and racial groups. In Boise, however, while the urban gay infrastructure is also visible and above-ground (albeit not highly integrated into the mainstream community), which provides crucial support for Boise's LGBT organizations, this gay infrastructure does not extend to the urban political sphere. In southern Utah, I find a case of virtual public invisibility, in which underground social networks of LGBT people provide a submerged form of contact for gay-identified people, and where urban cultural and political space is virtually devoid of LGBT representation.

Next, I present the *organizational field* in which the Pride organizations operate, in terms of the number and types of LGBT and non-LGBT (and/or allied) nonprofit organizations and state-supported facilities for LGBT issues or concerns. I discuss both the density and the diversity of this field. In some urban contexts there are only a few organizations that provide opportunities for LGBT political activism, LGBT social activities, or LGBT cultural expression, while in other cities there are too many different organizations to count. Moreover, I note whether this (large or small) field of organizations is populated by a core group of leaders or whether the field has many different types and sets of organizational interests with their own leaders.

Next, I provide a short history of the *Pride organization* itself: how it came into being and developed over time, what the early Pride events were like, the organization's early funding strategies, and fears that members held about the event during its early years. I also present a brief *contemporary account* of each organization as I encountered it when I conducted fieldwork in 2008 and 2009: the size of its membership base, the leadership and formal structure of the organization, its main sources of funding, where meetings are held, and other general characteristics. For two of the organizations—Heritage of Pride and Southern Utah Pride—I will

spend an entire chapter later on discussing the internal dimensions of the groups, and thus I provide here only a cursory look at the organizations in order to sufficiently familiarize the reader with the inner workings of the organizations.

Finally, I conclude with a short synopsis of what the actual *Pride events* looked like and felt like, as a participant during the actual day of the Parade and Festival. While there were certainly similarities among the events, which one can glean from the general descriptions, each city's Pride event is very different on account of the distinct cultural, political, and social urban environment from which it emerges. Elements such as the sheer size of the march or parade, the diversity of groups represented, the number of spectators, the ethnic and racial backgrounds of the attendees, the presence or absence of protesters, and the visibility of corporate sponsors are noted. My emphasis in these sections is on the points of dissimilarity between the four events, so that the uniqueness of the urban setting can be understood in relation to the distinctive qualities of each Pride event.

These two background chapters, with case descriptions for each urban context, are intended to be an orienting map for later theoretical and analytical chapters. This chapter (chapter 3) covers the two organizations in New York City, while the next chapter (chapter 4) covers Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride. The case description of Heritage of Pride is slightly longer than the others. This is a function of the fact that the organization's host community of Greenwich Village, the Heritage of Pride group, and its predecessor organization (the Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee), have very long and very public histories, and have all played a notable role in the development of the national LGBT movement in the United States. While I do try to summarize and provide only relevant information, I would be remiss in my contextualization if I were to fail to provide at least some sense of the very dense and publicly-documented historical context for HOP's development.

CASE 1: HERITAGE OF PRIDE

The office of Heritage of Pride (HOP) can be found on Christopher Street, which is located in the heart of Greenwich Village, a neighborhood on the lower west side of Manhattan in New York City. HOP represents itself as “New York City Pride” and its march and festival certainly draws in people and organizations from all five boroughs of New York City as the surrounding Tri-State area.¹² As an organization, HOP is both a product of its distinctive local community of Greenwich Village and a product of the larger New York City political, social, and economic environment. The Stonewall Inn, the site of the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969, is located within this neighborhood, and HOP retains strong ties to the history and culture of this area.

Greenwich Village became known in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as the bohemian capital and the East Coast birthplace of the Beat Movement in the 1950s. Since that time, it has been known for the liberal alternative culture pervading the area. The neighborhood is filled with cafes, tavern-style restaurants, small theaters, and music venues that stay open late and are frequented by people from all walks of life. Washington Square Park, a large park within the neighborhood, has a long history as a meeting place and a center for counter-cultural activities; during the warmer months it is filled with people of all ages, from the elderly to parents with small children, hippies and punk rocker-types, students, homeless people and tourists, spending the afternoon outside.¹³

¹² Each of the five boroughs in New York City currently has its own Pride event. In two cases (The Bronx and Staten Island) the events are put on by the LGBT community center of the borough, and there is no separate “Pride organization.” Each of the five boroughs chooses a different weekend on which to hold their events. However, despite the presence of Pride events in each borough of the city, people and organizations from all five boroughs come in to Manhattan to attend HOP’s events.

¹³ On a main avenue within the neighborhood, booksellers of all racial and economic backgrounds have made a seemingly-permanent home selling printed materials to the locals, and have become known as a

The term Greenwich Village, or—as locals call it, just “The Village,” refers to the West Village; a corresponding neighborhood called the East Village borders the area to the east side of 6th Avenue. The buildings in this area are predominantly small in height, with few reaching over four stories. The physical dimensions of low buildings and narrow, windings streets create a feeling of literally being within a small village, with a seemingly-innumerable quantity of streets in which to discover intimate and unusual bars, cafes, and shops. The neighborhood is in a constant process of gentrification that appears almost impossible to stop, but strong neighborhood associations and historical preservation associations work to retain a sense of local urban community as much as possible.

Most residents of the neighborhood are upper-middle class and tend to be white—especially homeowners in the area—due to extremely high real estate and rental costs. However, the area is traversed by an incredibly diverse cross-section of the urban population, both by class, race, and national origin during all hours of the day and night. As is typical of central parts of Manhattan, diversity in all forms describes the experience of being there; it is a gathering place for people from the outer boroughs of New York City (such as Brooklyn and the Bronx) and neighboring suburban areas who come to the area for restaurants, nightlife, and to walk around the streets and sit in the parks. The Village entails a very intensely dense commercial area mixed in with residential properties. The density of foot traffic and population provides the experience of anonymity; even more so for those who travel from outside of the area to visit the neighborhood.

The political voting record of the area is largely Democratic. The state representative of Manhattan’s West Side in the State Senate is Tom Duane, who is one of five openly LGBT members of the New York State Legislature. Prior to serving in the Senate, he was elected to the

source of local knowledge within the community (see Mitchell Duneier’s 2000 book *Sidewalk* for a history of booksellers and their relationship to the local community in this neighborhood).

New York City Council in 1991, where he was the first openly gay person to ever serve in the Council. In 2002, New York State passed the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA), and the Hate Crimes Protection Act covers hate crimes against lesbians and gays. However, Tom Duane came under fire in the past few years for allowing the act to be passed without ensuring protection for transgender identity. He marches in all five of the boroughs' Pride marches on a regular basis.

In 2008, New York City had an openly lesbian Speaker of the City Council, Christine Quinn, as well as Rosie Mendez, another woman on the council who is openly lesbian (although by 2010, there were four openly gay city councilmembers). They are both regular participants in LGBT Pride marches across the city, as well as other events that celebrate inclusivity and diversity. Christine Quinn, who identifies as Irish-American, was an activist for gay rights for several years. However, she has also recently been critiqued by more radical LGBT activists for not being progressive enough in supporting LGBT and general progressive interests over and above other city-wide interests.

On the issue of gay marriage, NY State has come close to passing a bill that would allow for the state to grant marriages to gay couples, but the bill ultimately failed. The governor during the period of my fieldwork, David Patterson, has been an ardent and public supporter of gay rights, and has been at the forefront of attempts to provide state rights to LGBT people. In 2008 Governor Patterson issued a directive requiring that all state agencies recognize gay marriages conducted in other states, which still stands as of today. Most recently, a strong push for gay marriage in NY State occurred in 2009, when a bill for gay marriage passed the NY State Assembly for the second time. However, the bill did not have enough votes in the more conservative-leaning State Senate in December of 2009. It is unclear when the bill will be

proposed again, given the current turmoil within the New York State Legislature and the governor's perceived lack of political support.

The Gay Community in Downtown Manhattan

There have been spaces for gay life within in Greenwich Village for as long as the neighborhood has been in existence (see Chauncey (1995) for a history of gay life in New York City until the mid-twentieth century).¹⁴ In the early years, especially prior to the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969, gay public life occurred in small illegal bars, underground nightclubs, and in public space such as parks and streets. While patrons or frequenters of these places were subject to police harassment and potential arrest for "lewd public behavior" or "illegal liquor licenses," public gay life has never been hard to find in Greenwich Village for those who knew where to look for it. Streets and parks have always been places for LGBT people to congregate, socialize, and find potential sex partners. For many years, one could also find gay bathhouses that were a public secret in this neighborhood, among other neighborhoods—although these were largely shut down by the Mayor's Office during the 1980s when the AIDS crisis hit.

After the Stonewall Rebellion and the legal battles that were fought to repeal discriminatory laws against gay people congregating or consuming alcohol in public spaces—such as laws that prevented liquor licenses being held by bars that served gay customers—gay life in the Village became above-ground and less seedy. Since the 1970s, there have emerged

¹⁴ It is important to note here that this is only a (very brief) review of the gay community in Greenwich Village (and a little bit of Chelsea), which is a delimited and small area within the whole of New York City. Volumes could be written about gay life in each neighborhood within NYC, each with their own distinctive historical development and culture, such as gay life in Harlem (for a history of gay life in Harlem, see *Gay Rebel of the Harlem Resistance: Selections from the Work of Richard Bruce Nugent* by Richard Nugent (2002), and *Gay Voices of the Harlem Renaissance*, by A.B. Christa Swartz (2003)), or in various parts of Brooklyn, such as Park Slope (see, for example, Tamar Rothenberg's "'And She Told Two Friends: Lesbians Creating Urban Social Space,'" in *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, by David Bell and Gil Valentine (1995)).

dozens of gay bars, gay clubs for all types and orientations, as well as cafes, restaurants, and shops that cater to the gay community all across Greenwich Village. Gay life in The Village has very much a *public* and *visible* presence, and has turned the area into what can undeniably be called a “gayborhood.”

The term “gayborhood” has been coined, in tongue-and cheek-fashion, to describe the sort of gay-oriented community that can be found in most large cities, of varying size and density. Within a gayborhood, the neighborhood itself is infused with gay culture, not necessarily to the *exclusion* of other cultures and socializing opportunities for other subcultures, but with a level of visibility that marks it as “gay space.” The West Village (and the nearby neighborhood of Chelsea) is a quintessential example of a gayborhood.

The West Village has, for years, been an area that LGBT historically flocked to in order to find their fellow lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Before the Stonewall Rebellion, during the 1960s with the counterculture era, the neighborhood was known as a gay-friendly community, but after that event the area became the site of an explosion in community organizations fighting for gay rights. While gays had always flocked to this neighborhood, they continued to take over public space on the streets. Just as George Chauncey in his widely-read book *Gay New York* describes The Bowery as the center of public gay street life in lower Manhattan in the early twentieth century, with gender-nonconforming men congregating in the area, Christopher Street is the contemporary street of LGBT social activity within Greenwich Village.¹⁵

¹⁵ In the early years after Stonewall, as West Greenwich Village became known as the center of gay life and had extensive bars and clubs, including leather, S & M clubs, and “bear” clubs. However, as the neighborhood became increasingly gentrified over time, these types of less-mainstream gay bars tended to found more in nearby neighborhoods such as the East Village and Alphabet City, which were not yet gentrified and were less subject to intense policing by the cops. It is likely that they have since been pushed out, by rent increases and other reasons having to do with the gentrification of *those* neighborhoods, to other neighborhoods that are farther away from the Village.

Christopher Street, to even the most inexperienced observer, is the most visible display of gay life in the West Village, with bars and gay-owned or gay-oriented restaurants throughout the neighborhood, as well as on Hudson Avenue. Gay-themed advertisements can be spotted all throughout this neighborhood. On the corner of Christopher Street and 7th Avenue—a major thoroughfare for the area—sits an enormous billboard, which often displays advertisements for gay-oriented companies, such as a gay cruise line or a gay travel company.

Across the street from the billboard is Stonewall Place, a historically-landmarked intersection which includes a small park oddly set in an unusual intersection of several tiny streets and 7th Avenue. On Stonewall Place is the Stonewall Inn, the site of the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969; the bar is visited by thousands of tourists a year. If one were to enter the subway station nearby, the wall of the Christopher Street subway station has a mural set into the tiles that depicts the rebellious and countercultural history of the area—featuring “anarchists, pacifists, communists, insurgents, and visionaries, backlit by the glaring red hues of the Stonewall Rebellion and culminating in a glimpse of the Village’s famed Gay Pride parade,”¹⁶ complete with a visual depiction of the Stonewall Rebellion.

Walking down Christopher Street from the subway station, headed west toward the Heritage of Pride office, one would continue to see visible examples of gay culture. Within a space of 7 or 8 blocks, one would detect a number of gay bars, most of them with rainbow flags hanging as banners or with rainbows included in the sign that displays the bar’s name. Some of these bars—many of which have been around for years—cater to the leather crowd, while others cater to a younger, trendier crowd, and still others are just a hole in the wall with a low-key atmosphere. The other key thing one would notice is the number of novelty (mostly of the

¹⁶ This text was taken verbatim from a tile describing one of the murals in the Christopher Street subway station. The murals were commissioned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and painted by Lee Brozgold and the students of a local public school, P.S. 41.

sexual type) and costume shops, which also display large rainbow flags outside of their shops to let passersby know that they have goods that would interest the gay community. These shops are not necessarily run not by gay men or women, but rather by entrepreneurial immigrants of color who discovered a profitable niche in selling sex toys and risqué costumes to the thousands of gay and straight tourists that regularly pass by. Restaurants and cafes in this area also fly rainbow flags outside; for some of these shops, this is an indicator that it is a gay-oriented establishment. However, other restaurants and commercial establishments, which are not gay-oriented but instead are simply gay-friendly, will have rainbow flag displayed inside to let the gay community know that they are welcome, actively courting their (highly lucrative) patronage.¹⁷

Since the mid-1990s, the neighborhood of Chelsea, which borders The West Village to the north, has also become a gayborhood, with the gay life concentrated in particular on one avenue (8th Avenue) but expanding outward toward 9th and 7th Avenues. It is a neighborhood that has rapidly gentrified in the last 20 years, and real estate has become exceedingly expensive. However, given that it is centrally located in Manhattan, the neighborhood is traversed by all types of people, from all parts of New York City. It also has a higher-than-average representation of wealthy gay men who both rent and have been purchasing real estate in the area, with an especially high concentration of gyms located within a small radius of city space. It is a far more masculinized area than the West Village, which has more of an integration of LGBT women and men, as well as more youth (especially youth of color). Shops

¹⁷ For example, the Chelsea Diner, located two blocks north of the LGBT community center, displays a rainbow flag in the back of the restaurant. This diner is the host of many meetings of groups that choose to hold their monthly meetings at an eating establishment (HOP did this several times, as did other groups), as well as groups of LGBT people who wander there after meetings. Despite the fact that it was clearly a Greek-family-owned business with ostensibly little political interest in the gay community per se, they wanted to ensure that their most active customers knew that they were interested in retaining their patronage.

that line 8th Avenue tend to be for high-end luxury items, such as expensive shoes or clothing stores that are geared exclusively for gay men, in newly-built high-rise luxury buildings. The bars and clubs in this area tend to be more trendy and exclusive, with expensive drinks, and tend to be patronized by what has been nicknamed “Chelsea Boys”—very physically fit (typically white, but not necessarily) men with tight shirts and tan bodies. However, just like other gayborhoods in New York City, due to such high pedestrian traffic in the area, gay residents and visitors are well-integrated and co-exist with other types of residents and visitors.

A large number of youth of color, particularly transgendered youth of color, coming from all boroughs of New York City, regularly traverse the streets of the West Village. On many afternoons and evenings, both when it is warm out and even during the winter months, you can see many youth hanging out on the streets, in the parks, and in other public spaces. There have been extensive public battles between the residents of the neighborhood, the youth of color and an organization that represents queer youth political and community interests—FIERCE, or Fabulous Independent Radicals for Community Empowerment—and private development interests within the neighborhood over the redevelopment of a pier on the far west side of The Village on which the youth like to congregate at all hours of the night.

The most defining feature of gay life in these neighborhoods is its *public visibility*, and the extent to which Greenwich Village has been a special haven for openness to gay men and women for many years. Walking around Greenwich Village and Chelsea today, there are innumerable more subtle cues that you are in gay public space. In both West Greenwich Village and in Chelsea, some of the advertisements on bus stop shelters are geared specifically toward a gay audience, alerting the gay community about its needs, from such organizations as The Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC) or by the LGBT community center. These bus shelter advertisements promote whatever is relevant at that moment for the gay community, whether

that might be to advertise a new HIV medication, or an ad geared toward the promotion of condom use, or a new off-Broadway play with a gay theme. The advertisement space on the side of a public phone booth on the corner of 17th Street and 7th Avenue could be viewed as a window into whatever social problem is affecting the gay community at that moment. I found that in the year I conducted my fieldwork it was used not only to promote a new initiative at the local LGBT center, but also to warn gay men about the dangers of methamphetamine use, which was receiving attention as a problem within the male gay community in Chelsea and The Village.¹⁸

LGBT and Allied Organizations in NYC

While HOP is located within Greenwich Village as its host neighborhood, it still operates within a larger field of LGBT and allied organizations and services across New York City. The breadth and width of this field of LGBT and allied organizations is extraordinarily expansive, as one would expect to find in such a major city, particularly one as diverse and densely-populated as New York. There are a number of large, key organizations that are nationally-recognized, but the field is also very well-populated by smaller (and sometimes very radical) organizations that are rapidly emerging, coalescing, and dissolving at rapid speeds. There is also an enormous amount of social services connected to the gay community, both through the New York City and State Health Department and other related agencies (and especially if one considers the HIV/AIDS organizations as LGBT-related). It is almost impossible to do justice to the field of LGBT

¹⁸ However, at the same time, while The Village and Chelsea come to be known as gay-dominated spaces, they have not been exempt from their share of anti-gay violence. In the spring of 2010 the LGBT Center, located in The Village, was the object of homophobic activity; a burned rainbow flag was draped across the entrance of the Center, in what was presumed to be an intimidation attempt directed at the LGBT community.

organizing across New York City in summary and in a small space, but I will try to simply provide an overview and point out key trends relevant to New York City at the time of my fieldwork.

After the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969, hundreds of gay rights organizations were formed within that following year; many of them met in public spaces within Greenwich Village or in apartments throughout New York City. Many key gay liberation groups, such as the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activist Alliance, were formed shortly after the rebellion. Radical lesbian groups based in New York City, such as RadicalLesbians, and the Lesbian Avengers, were major forces in organizing lesbians outside of the male-dominated gay organizations.¹⁹ These organizations were influenced by members' associations with the New Left organizations and various identity movements that were already in place. Very quickly after the Stonewall Rebellion, hundreds of gay organizations were formed, along with gay newspapers and other radical means of communicating with each other. An organization called the Stonewall Veteran's Association still exists today to promote the momentous event and to continue to keep public attention on its centrality as a key moment for the gay movement.²⁰

Another key moment of radical organizing in New York City was during the AIDS crisis in the mid-to-late 1980s, as ACT UP and other key organizations engaged in massive mobilization to get attention on a local city-wide and national level for the HIV crisis. As thousands of gay men in New York City alone were dying of HIV, this took on an urgency and radical element that was very intense. Many of the more radical organizations of the 1970s had, by the 1980s, disbanded, but they were replaced in general by a wide institutional structure within New York City that includes LGBT-oriented services. This was the work of both the radical organizations

¹⁹ An extensive archive of lesbian activism, particularly in New York City, can be found at the Herstory Archives, located in a brownstone in Brooklyn.

²⁰This organization had a somewhat acrimonious relationship with each of the Pride organizations in NYC, and especially with Heritage of Pride. While the veterans were always provided the honor of having a position at the front of each march or parade, the leadership of the organization was perceived to be confrontational and difficult to work with.

and then the expansion of HIV services that took place as the interests of HIV-affected people were increasingly addressed.

Since the early 1970s, the proliferation of organizations and social service providers for gays and lesbians has grown exponentially. It is difficult to count or even describe the number of different groups and organizations. Many of them may exist in name only, coming together only to march within the annual Pride March, or they may meet on a weekly basis or have a large facility in which they operate. As one indicator of the numerical density of LGBT and allied organizations in NYC, the New York City Comptroller has for a number of years collected contact information for all of the LGBT organizations in New York City and published a document called the *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Directory of Resources and Services*. This publication is over fifty pages long.

Many of these groups meet, on a regular basis, in one of the rooms of The Center (the name for the LGBT community center), which is quite appropriately located on the northern border of The Village, and on the bottom border of Chelsea (the two local Manhattan gayborhoods). Since 1983, the Center has owned and operated a large, attractive, multi-floor building; today, it is very well-patronized and staffed, with extensive funding and professional leadership. It provides affordable meeting space for various groups of all different types, from activist to academic to social and cultural groups; today, over 300 groups meet there on a monthly basis.²¹

A brief look at the Center's monthly calendar for meetings can provide a sense of the variety, diversity, and specificity of the groups available to LGBT people in New York City. To provide only a sampling: there are the political organizations, such as The Stonewall Democratic

²¹ A number of groups that expanded to become national movements were born at the Center, such as ACT UP, The Lesbian Avengers, and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation (GLAAD). This information was found on their website, gaycenter.org.

Club and the American Veterans for Equal Rights; support groups, such as Gay/Bi Dad's Group of New York, Bisexual Women's support group, and FIRE-FLAG (for gay firefighters); leather groups or alternative sexuality groups, such as Leather Invasion, the New York Panthers Club (specifically for men of color), and the Butch/Femme Society; spiritual groups such as the Northeast Two-Spirit Society or the Christian GLBT and Others group; and dating or couples groups, such as Lesbian Deeper Dating or Qwik Date for gay men; and professional associations such as Out Professionals and the Lesbian and Gay Teachers Association.

What is most striking, however, is the vast number of *cultural* and *social* groups that can be found in these listings of groups that meet at The Center. To provide only a small sampling: the Indoor Gardening Club, the Metro Gay Wrestling Alliance, the Salsa Social Club, Scrabblers, Room to Write (a writing group), Playtime Workshop (a "day camp for grownups"), a Language Class for Learning Italian, New York Prime Timers (a social group for older gay men), a folk dance group, the Big Apple Softball League, and Natural History Group (for LGBT naturalists of NY).

The above includes only groups that meet at the Center. A vast number of groups do not hold their meetings at The Center, particularly those groups that serve sub-communities that might not find downtown Manhattan a convenient location. To provide only two examples out of many, Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD) operates a community-center type organization out of a floor in a building in Harlem, and the Audre Lorde Project operates a center in Brooklyn for community organizing around issues of social and economic justice for LGBT people of color.

There are also several major and national LGBT organizations based in New York City, including The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (an organization that has both a lobbying arm and sends grass-roots community organizers for anti-gay initiatives across the country), GLAAD,

and the Gay Men's Health Crisis. Marriage Equality New York was also a major actor in the political field at the time of my fieldwork.²²

The ethnic and racial diversity of New York City is also another vital component to the proliferation of different organizations. Just as one organization meets at the Center called The Asian Pacific Alliance of New York, there are an enormous number of small organizations that have come together around a common ethnic and racial identity. Some of these may exist only to come together for the HOP March and Festival, while others exist on a more consistent basis for social or political activities. Even more, there are several racial and ethnic groups who have put on their own small Pride events themselves. For example, P.R.I.D.E, or Puerto Rican Initiative to Develop Empowerment, puts on a festival each year for LGBT Puerto Ricans and allies in upper Manhattan, and a Black Pride Festival has been taking place in Queens, NY for a number of years. These are not perceived as competitors to the HOP March but rather as alternative events that celebrate the intersection of sexual orientation/gender identity and racial or ethnic identities.

A group of women have been staging The New York City Dyke March on the day before the Pride march in Manhattan as an alternative to the HOP march since 1993. This is a march for women only, organized by women only. Moreover, it is explicitly an *unpermitted* march; this was crucial to their mission of expressing free speech and grass-roots challenges to political authority as an outsider group. Some of the women who are active this organization will also be present at the HOP march in other capacities (such as the leader of another non-profit

²² Overall, in New York City, there has been a general decline in support for radical organizations that are engaged in direct action tactics, and the proliferation of more social and cultural groups. However, this does not mean that radical groups operating outside of the political system no longer exist within New York City—FIERCE is a perfect example of one such organization that is still very active—but that they are greatly outnumbered by the social, cultural, religious, social service, and activity-based groups, as well as political groups that seek to work through the mainstream political system to achieve their goals.

organization), while other women feel that HOP does not accurately represent their interests as radical feminist women and do not attend.

There are many social and health services available to the LGBT community in New York City. Many are provided by non-profit organizations, while other sources come from city funding or a combination of the two. There are several free HIV and STD testing centers, as well as HIV social services (such as residential living for HIV patients) all across New York City, available for the LGBT population.²³ There is a small public charter high school specifically geared toward LGBT youth called the Harvey Milk High School.

The relationship between the LGBT community and the local city and state government is, not surprisingly, very difficult to summarize in a short space. Different LGBT organizations with various racial, ethnic, and immigration statuses have variable relationships to the state, as a reflection of their intersecting identities outside of simply their LGBT identity. Heritage of Pride, overall, had a relatively amicable relationship with city government, although it was certainly spotted with moments of controversy. At one time, under Mayor Koch, the city had a special division within the Mayor's Office for the LGBT community, but this was disbanded under Mayor Guliani, who was opposed to the notion of "special interests." Today, there is no special division for LGBT people within the Mayor's Office, but some initiatives are being set forth to deal with issues of relevance to the LGBT community under other names (such as domestic violence, within the LGBT community). In 2009 they established a commission for the study of the LGBT youth, to examine the root causes of the situation and address their needs and provide shelter.

²³ Within Manhattan, these tend to be located either in Greenwich Village or Chelsea, or within other neighborhoods such as Harlem that are designed to serve other sets of racial or ethnic populations that are concentrated in upper Manhattan.

It is also important to note that public funds are regularly spent on retaining local LGBT history with no contestation; the main public library in Manhattan has maintained a vast and extensive archival library of LGBT historical documents for a number of years. Heritage of Pride had also recently developed a working relationship with the semi-private advertising agency hired to promote tourism by The City of New York. The New York City Police Department also has a special liaison to the LGBT community, who was present at each of the Pride events and many other events. His goal was to be a source of communication and contact between the LGBT community and the NYPD. He made sure that he was accessible to the gay community, friendly, and after a year of fieldwork I came to know his face well from within the crowd.²⁴

Overall, the field in which Heritage of Pride operates is enormous, populated by a wide and diverse set of organizations and interests. Moreover, there is a great deal of interaction between organizations based in the outer boroughs and Manhattan, and thus it is almost impossible to separate them. One of the few times that many of the groups come together is in the Heritage of Pride march, in which over 300 groups register every year. Another moment that you might see key representatives of these organizations would be during the various Pride Month celebrations put on by New York City political officials. However, even after a year of very active fieldwork all across New York City within the LGBT community, I could only identify by face or name approximately ten to fifteen percent of the people I encountered at these gatherings (compared to, say, 80% of individuals at a gathering in Boise or St. George, after a shorter period of fieldwork).

The Beginnings of HOP

²⁴ The NYPD has liaisons for a number of other specialized ethnic and religious communities, such as the Russian community and the Chinese community.

Before Heritage of Pride was the Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee (CSLDC), an organization that formed in 1969 soon after the Stonewall Rebellion to plan a march to commemorate the events. In June of 1970, the Committee—with the support of the newly-formed key gay rights organizations of the time, the Gay Activists Alliance and the Gay Liberation Front—staged a march that went up 6th Avenue from Washington Square Park in The Village to a “gay-in” held in Central Park.²⁵ A festival was put on separately by the gay bars in the West Village, which was organized under the name “Christopher Street Festival Committee.”

This organization, CSLDC—affectionately pronounced as “Sizzledick” by long-time HOP members—put on the March and the Rally for many years, from 1970 to 1983. There were a number of key activists involved in CSLDC who have turned out to be major leaders for the gay community well into the present.²⁶ In addition to putting on the events, CSLDC organized a Speaker’s Bureau that conducted outreach at high schools and colleges, speaking on behalf of the gay community for education and information. They were also a key representative of the gay community in the media, fielding phone calls about whatever gay issue was at hand at the time.

In the fall of 1983, however, a major financial scandal hit CSLDC, in which one individual who was a member of several gay organizations was discovered to be stealing money from all of the organizations. Only three months before Pride was to take place that year, CSLDC found their bank account to “have a balance of about ten dollars.” At that point, they realize that they had to do major fundraising in a short time. A long-time member recounts,

²⁵ From LGBT@NYPL, a website connecting the LGBT community to the archival resources at the New York Public Library; <http://lgbt.nypl.org/?p=60>

²⁶ Members of this early organization include Matt Foreman, who later became the executive director of a major LGBT civil rights organization, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, as well as other people who went on to be employed at high levels within the same organization, in the role of—not surprisingly, given the skills required for putting on Prides—event coordinator. Another early member, who “started a little pamphlet with bar listings” while volunteering with HOP is now the owner of a major gay entertainment magazine that has national distribution.

I had ties to the leather community, and so I remember going to my friends that were in organizations and in clubs that were part of that, and begging them to do a benefit....And then, the two of us went to the Christopher Street Festival Committee [the association of bars] and said, “look, we need your help, because there’s not going to be a rally or march to end up at your event!” And even though their event would have gone on and people would have attended it, they realized that it makes sense to have a march to end up there. So, they threw some more benefits for us.

At that point, since the Christopher Street Liberation Day was no longer a reputable name within the community, the few members who still remained with the group reformed the organization under the moniker Heritage of Pride. One old-timer jokes, “The most popular alternative name for the organization that was also proposed was ‘Celebration of Pride’—until we realized that the acronym would have been COP! And that was *definitely* not okay!”

A few years later, HOP filed to become a 501(c)3, an official non-profit organization. As CSLDC, they had been an unpermitted march, but in order to incorporate floats and to create the Lavender Line (a painted line down the street which imitates the line painted for St. Patrick’s Day), HOP decided to apply for a permit, beginning in the mid-1980s.²⁷ The people who came to Heritage of Pride were also very interested in creating a more colorful and visually-stimulating Pride event; floats also served to be an important fundraiser that could cover the costs associated with the growing event. During the transition from CSLDC, they also moved from being an organization made up of representatives of other organizations to having individual memberships for people who were putting in the time and energy to sustain the event. For a long time, the organization was active mostly from January to June, although as the events grew in size and complexity the organizing increasingly began to come together earlier in the year.

In the late 1980s, after years of petitioning by HOP, Mayor Koch proclaimed June to be Lesbian and Gay Pride Month, and the last week of June to be Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. Up

²⁷ This decision to obtain a permit for the event is clearly a point of interest for understanding how the March changed over time from a protest event to an institutionalized event.

until the late 1980s, the organization did not have an office, and files were stored and meetings held in various board members' apartments. According to rough estimates of their budget from documents summarizing the organization's history, HOP grew from an annual budget of under \$50,000 in 1985, to over \$500,000 in 1998, and since the year 2000 has had a budget of over a million dollars a year.

Becoming HOP, Inc

In 1993, HOP signed a lease on a large but windowless basement office on Christopher Street, near the Hudson River. The organization currently operates year-round. There is one full-time staff person on the payroll in the position of "Development" who focuses predominantly on sponsorship, and there are often several other part-time paid workers employed by the organization. Funds for the organization come primarily from corporate sponsorship and (to a lesser extent) from two major fundraisers that they put on during the year: the Pier Dance and one highly-promoted social event per year such as a day at an amusement park. While in the early days HOP earned its money from selling t-shirts and rainbow flags on the streets prior to the Pride events and relied on regular fundraising parties throughout the year, today these have been almost entirely phased out. Corporate sponsorship has grown slowly and steadily over the years, and currently the organization holds "exclusive sponsorships" with major companies that contribute tens of thousands of dollars in exchange for advertising.

The organization is made up of a general membership, an executive board, and a set of committees that draws its participants from the pool of general members. Committee meetings were the most frequent, taking place monthly within the office around a table, and typically had between four and ten attendees. These committee meetings were very relaxed and people

often brought food and drinks for sharing. The chairs of these committees made up the positions on the Executive Board Committee, which also met once a month in the office. There are two co-chairs of the organization; one female and one male. All meetings, even Executive Board meetings, were open to the public, and could be attended by anyone, even if one was not a member of the organization.

Once a month throughout the year—and more frequently during crunch time in June—the organization held General Membership meetings. These meetings were held at the LGBT Community Center, which had a larger meeting space. General Membership meetings typically drew in anywhere between 15 and 40 people. There was certainly a greater number older people than younger people who attended the meetings (the range was from early thirties to mid-sixties). At least a third of the organization was made up of people of color, and there was a range of socio-economic classes, with a strong professional class representation but also a significant and active group of members who were either working-class, employed in various blue-collar service industries, or on public financial assistance. The organization also included several transgender individuals. While some committees were far more diverse than others—the Outreach Committee tended to have a far greater representation of racial minorities from a less-privileged class background than, for example, the Dance Committee, which had a large proportion of middle- and upper-middle class white men—overall there was diversity in the membership as a whole, in line a racially diverse place such as New York City.

The large General Membership meetings followed a strict parliamentary procedure, led by the two co-chairs of the organization. Executive Board meetings were run by a relaxed form of parliamentary procedure, and the committee meetings—particularly when there were only a few people present—were largely run by informal consensus. The organization as a whole had a

very complex and detailed sets of bylaws and constitution; sets of rules and regulations were often consulted, often modified, and often the subject of heated discussion.

Overall, this non-profit organization is a large, hulking bureaucracy that has many branches, many people working on different things, and it is under consistent pressure to keep it all moving forward in order to produce what is an enormous public event. HOP's complex set of organizational rules and regulations reflect a long history of trying to achieve the most successful way of running an organization with a large budget and a diverse group of people that need to work together to put on a set of events for three quarters of a million people.

Description of the Events

The organization puts on five events total as part of "Pride": the March, the Rally, the Festival (called PrideFest), and two dances (one dance geared toward men called the Pier Dance, and one for women, called Rapture). The March, the Festival, and the Pier Dance are held during the day of Pride, which is always the last Sunday in June (to match the day of the Stonewall Rebellion), while the Rally has been held the weekend before Pride for a number of years. The dances serve as major fundraisers for the organization as well as supplementary entertainment that make Pride weekend complete.

The March is the "main act" of the Pride organization, and it is what most people think of when they refer to "gay pride in New York City." I will focus on describing this event to the exclusion of others, for reasons of space. The organization primarily exists in order to ensure that the March occurs each year; the March is the subject of the most intense debate and discussion when changes or new ideas are suggested. The March has taken a number of different routes in its time. During my fieldwork and for a number of years prior, it began at

52nd Street and 5th Avenue, went south past St. Patrick’s Cathedral and down 5th Avenue, turned right when it hit Washington Square Park, went across Christopher Street with a moment of pause in front of the Stonewall Inn, and ended at Christopher Street and Washington Place. The “formation area” is on 52nd Street, just off 5th Avenue. In the late 2000s, the March typically took between six and seven hours from start to finish. With over 300 groups registered, some groups do not even enter the March from their starting place until four hours after the official beginning of the event.²⁸

The beginning of the March starts with a press conference where the media interview the Grand Marshals of that year’s March; there are typically two or three Grand Marshals, and they make statements to the press directly. Soon after, the media rush over to cover the major political figures gathered at the front of the march; this typically includes the Head of City Council. In 2009, Governor Patterson made an appearance and led the march for a few dozens blocks; this was seen as a big coup for HOP, a genuine and visible show of support for the LGBT community while gay marriage legislation was in limbo in the state legislation at the time. Mayors of New York City have walked at the front of the March for several decades, but there are some mayors—such as the current mayor, Michael Bloomberg, and the previous mayor Giuliani—who have refused to march in front of St. Patrick’s Cathedral since this was directed (not accidentally, but intentionally) as a symbolic challenge to the Catholic Church’s homophobic practices and the St. Patrick’s Day Parade’s refusal to allow LGBT marchers. Thus, the Mayor

²⁸ I was unable to find definitive information about the numbers of gay tourists—or the amount of revenue brought into NYC by “gay tourists”—during Pride weekend. The most reliable statistic that I found was an estimate by NYC tourism authorities that 10% of the city’s 47 billion visitors to NYC each year, which brings in overall \$30 billion, are gay—pointing to an average of 4.7 billion LGBT visitors bringing \$3 billion in gay dollars to the city (<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/07/from-stonewall-riots-to-rainbow-pilgrimage/>). The “Rainbow Pilgrimage” campaign of 2009, in which NYC spent close to \$2 million to court the overseas and domestic gay tourist, including massive advertising specifically for the HOP March, illustrates the financial potential of gay tourism—and specifically the potential for the March to bring in massive numbers of LGBT people to NYC during that weekend.

joins the March after it has moved south of 50th Street, in order to avoid controversy with the Catholic Church.²⁹

The March begins with the “dykes on bikes,” a raucous and wild group of women dressed mostly in leather who roar down 5th Avenue on motorcycles decorated with rainbow flags. After that follows certain specific groups: there are several groups consistently placed at the front of the March, for political reasons, following after the Grand Marshals: the Women Only Section, the People of Color Section, the HIV/AIDS Section, and the Stonewall Veterans. The other sections of the march are rotated annually.

Each section consists of organizations that are placed together by “type.” Examples of the different groups are: the religious section (consisting of churches, synagogues, or other religious organizations), the leather and S & M section, the ethnic group section (with such organizations as the Colombian Gay and Lesbian Association), the political section (which includes politicians) and the cultural or social groups section, which includes organizations such as the gay soccer league, or the bars and clubs section. Most striking about the March, in my view, is simply the vast diversity of groups that come together and represent their special, individualized identities during this time. If one had any doubts about the diversity of the LGBT community, or LGBT allies, this is an occasion where it would be immediately challenged. As noted by Elizabeth Armstrong (2002), the annual gay pride march is an event that quintessentially illustrates the “unity in diversity” that the LGBT community has successfully

²⁹ This is representative of a much larger battle between the Irish community, the Catholic community, and the LGBT community in NYC. LGBT people are not permitted to march openly in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade in NYC—an issue that has been taken to court several times but has not been overthrown. Heritage of Pride, up until 2009, insisted on walking past St. Patrick’s Cathedral in order to make a political statement in resistance to the discriminatory practices of both the Catholic Church and the St. Patrick’s Day Parade. However, since the Church is located very far from the end of the March on Christopher Street in the West Village, this makes for an extremely long March route (somewhere around three miles—quite a long way for the drag queens to walk in heels!), and in 2010 there are indications that they may be shortening the route by starting at a more downtown location.

navigated in the creation of a social movement for LGBT rights out of many competing but intersecting interests.

Some groups choose to decorate floats and blast music from sound systems as they make their way down 5th Avenue. Often, there are people dancing upon the floats; these can include scantily-clad go-go boys hired for the occasion. The HOP March tends to have a significant amount of nudity and provocatively-dressed marchers; the leather groups, the drag queens, and individual women exercising their legal right to go topless are found all throughout the procession.

Each major corporate sponsor is permitted a float in the March as well. Corporate sponsors advertising particular products, such as Pepsi Maxx, will hand out their product to spectators. One especially interesting fact that I learned was that many of the corporate groups that march in the HOP March are actually made up of the LGBT or *diversity employee groups* that are part of that company. One excellent example is that Google is a sponsor of HOP, and their float is staffed by a group of LGBT staffpeople from within the company that calls themselves the “Gayglers.”³⁰

Thousands upon thousands of people line the streets, behind barricades, to watch the March go by, filling the area behind the barricades for several miles. The crowd up near Midtown tends to be made up of tourists, but as one reaches the Village the crowd gets more intense and more clearly LGBT-identified, sometimes in a crowd that is four deep behind the barricades, waving rainbow flags and dressed in wild (or little) clothing. People hang out on the

³⁰ In an increasing number of cases, it has been the employee groups that asked to march as members of their companies, and they enlisted their corporation to become a sponsor on their behalf. This is an important issue that I will cover in more detail later in this dissertation, but it is important to note it here as well. This flies in the face of a lot of criticism of the “commercialism” for which gay pride parades have been subject to in recent years—rather than a top-down approach in which the (ostensibly heterosexual) corporation seeks to advertise to the gay community, it is actually gay individuals *within* the company that have been successful in getting the company to show their support for their openly gay employees by financially supporting the Pride organization, on their behalf.

fire escapes of apartment buildings all down Christopher Street, with a great view of the festivities. The interaction between the crowd and the marchers is intense, and the wild cheering of the crowd as each group passes seems to energize each group over and over again and it passes each block, for hours upon hours. The marchers vary from older couples with signs declaring that they have been in relationships for over thirty years—that will draw ecstatic cheers from the audience—to outrageously-dressed drag queens and people of different ethnic groups dressed up in dramatic and brightly-colored traditional garb with enormous headdresses and skimpy outfits, to the New York City Gay Apple Marching Corps, to the Gay Officers' Action League, to the radical HIV/AIDS organization ACT UP. All of these groups draw cheers and screams from the crowd as they pass by, for hours and hours, with seemingly-unending amounts of energy. The March as a whole is a massive, overwhelming, dramatic and intense experience; it is almost impossible to see all of the groups go by, or to take it all in at once.

The March ends as it hits Christopher Street and Greenwich Avenue, at which time it disperses and people are encouraged to head to PrideFest, a street festival that is put on by HOP featuring booths by non-profit organizations, local artists selling their work, corporate companies seeking to advertise to the gay community, and food and drink vendors. There is also a stage with local LGBT and allied musical performers, and people relax for the afternoon in the sun, watching the talent. In fact, outside of the festival area, throughout the entirety of West Greenwich Village, the entire neighborhood is literally taken over by gay-identified people and allies, wandering the streets with rainbow flags and costumes, and spilling out of the gay bars in the area. NYC Gay Pride Day encompasses all of the Village and Chelsea areas, until the late hours of the evening. At dusk, after the March, those who can afford the expensive tickets (or who volunteer their time in exchange for a ticket), head to the HOP Pier Dance, or off to the

myriad of gay bars and clubs that are packed in celebration of the New York City's annual Gay Pride Day.

CASE 2: QUEENS LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE COMMITTEE

Queens is one of five New York City boroughs, located to the east of Manhattan and leading out to Long Island on its eastern border. Within the borough of Queens, the areas that are built up around the central subway lines that run east-west through central Queens are highly urbanized and very densely populated, while other parts of Queens have a more suburban feel, especially as one moves farther away from Manhattan. As of the 2005 American Community Survey, immigrants comprise 47.6% of Queens residents.³¹ The borough as a whole is made up of dozens of distinct neighborhoods that have deep ethnic associations, and residents tend to identify strongly with their neighborhood. For example, Astoria is populated by predominantly Greek immigrants and Greek Americans, while Rockaway Beach and Woodside have predominantly Irish-American residents.

The Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee—or just Queens Pride for short—is very much a product of a neighborhood of Queens called Jackson Heights, located within the eastern section of the borough. The annual Pride events are staged on Jackson Heights' main arterial streets and many of the local sponsors come from that area. While not all of the members of Queens Pride live in Jackson Heights, the organization often holds its planning meetings within the neighborhood as well. Thus, while Queens Pride (QP) does represent the entire borough of Queens, they hold an especially close relationship to the Jackson Heights neighborhood. On several separate occasions, as I walked around the neighborhood with the founder and then

³¹ 2005 American Community Survey Fact Sheet for Queens County, New York. U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed April 12, 2010. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

with the current co-chair of the organization, we bumped into local residents who recognized them and stopped to say hello or to tell them about a particular upcoming event that they might be interested in attending.

Jackson Heights is no different from other Queens neighborhoods in its strong ethnic feel, and it is home to a large number of both South American and South Asian immigrants. The neighborhood is very densely populated, and people can be found traversing the main arterial street at all hours of the night, while the side streets tend to be more quiet and residential. The neighborhood is dominated by people of South American nationalities, such as Colombians, Argentines, and Peruvians, with restaurants, cafes, shops, and small grocery stores that carry South American foods.

While most of the neighborhood is Latin American, a small but dense section of the neighborhood close to the subway station is known as “Little India.” Indian restaurants, shops, jewelry stores, and small grocery stores are filled with imported Indian specialties, and street vendors line the sidewalk. Colorful lights streaming from inside the restaurants make the side streets come alive at night, while women in saris and men in traditional Indian garb make up the majority of pedestrians and shoppers. In addition to the strong Latino and Indian presence in the area, people of all nationalities and racial backgrounds live in Jackson Heights. Overall, the neighborhood is working-class and has a predominantly immigrant and economically-struggling community base, with some middle-class couples and families as homeowners in the area. Approximately 56% of the community identifies as Hispanic or Latino, with White and Asian making up the other 45%. Income levels in the area span from very low-income to middle-

income; the median income was approximately \$50,000 with 19% of the individuals in the neighborhood living below poverty level.³²

The neighborhood itself is well-served by the multiple subway lines that cross through it, and rent in the area is relatively inexpensive and in ample quantity when compared with other boroughs. There is a vibrant blend between residential and commercial use throughout the neighborhood. The housing stock is made up of a mix between smaller two- and three-story private homes and large apartment buildings, with both transient renters and long-time homeowners. There are lots of cafes and restaurants of various types all down the main avenues, from Irish pubs to Argentine steakhouses to Greek diners, and a number of Latin American bakeries selling freshly baked bread, sweets and coffee, proudly displaying flags and the names of South American soccer teams.

Along the main commercial avenues of 37th Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue, the ground floors of small buildings tend to be occupied by shops and restaurants, with residents living directly above the commercial entities. Roosevelt Avenue, which runs below the elevated subway lines, is the most intensely commercial, noisy, and busy artery within the neighborhood; bars and nightclubs that stay open until very late are interspersed among shops and eateries that are bustling during the day. The predominance of Latino residents in Jackson Heights is easily detected by the extent to which the Spanish language is used in the storefronts; many of the signs for stores and restaurants outside of the small Indian district are printed only in Spanish or in both Spanish and English.

Historically, the borough has changed dramatically over time. Up until the 1960s and '70s, Queens was primarily occupied by white working-class and relatively politically-conservative residents. I was reminded of this fact in passing on several occasions when my

³² Data gathered from <http://envisioningdevelopment.net/map> and from <http://www.brainyzip.com/zipcodes/11/11372.html>. Accessed May 22, 2010.

fieldwork informants would joke, in response to what they saw as a non-progressive attitude from some Queens residents: “Well, this is the Archie Bunker borough, after all!”³³ However, as a combined result of white suburban migration out toward the Long Island area and waves of immigration from a wide variety of other nations in the last few decades, Queens became one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the United States. While there are a few churches and one Jewish community center in the area, it is not a religiously-dominated neighborhood in terms of public space or culture.

Queens has almost all Democratic representatives in its local city and state offices. This does vary by area of the borough, with some neighborhoods tending to vote more conservatively than others—this pattern reflects such variables as ethnic identifications and immigration trends—but overall the borough is considered a Democratic stronghold. With respect to gay and lesbian political issues, however, the 2009 New York State Senate vote on gay marriage included several surprises that reflected more conservative veins within the borough. Four of the eight Democratic senators who voted against the bill turned out to be from Queens; two of them were representatives who had actually previously agreed to sign on to the bill (Joseph Addabbo from Howard Beach, and Hiram Montserrate, from East Elmhurst). Moreover, both of these senators had shown their support for the Queens Pride organization in the past by attending events and taking out ads in their annual journal. Thus, while Queens has a record of voting predominantly Democratic and being liberal on social issues, there are more conservative constituents within certain communities that can sway even previous supporters of the LGBT community to vote against bills that promote gay rights. In 2009 two gay City Councilmen from Queens were elected to office. One of the two is the founder of Queens Pride, who served as

³³ Archie Bunker is a fictional character from the popular American sitcom television show *All in the Family*. The character was a highly conservative and racially bigoted blue-collar worker and family man who consistently clashed with more liberal-minded family members. The show ran throughout the 1970s, and was distinctively set within the background of Queens, NY.

the Democratic District Party Leader (a Democratic Party position, rather than a government-elected position) until that time.

The Gay Community in Jackson Heights and Queens

Jackson Heights has what one could call a gay *subculture* existing within its boundaries, rather than existing as a gay neighborhood per se. This neighborhood “enjoys a more obscure distinction as a haven for gay men and lesbians”; it is not well-known outside of Queens for its gay nightlife, but has extensive opportunities for gay socializing and is widely recognized to those who are familiar with its culture to be a gay-friendly neighborhood (Santos 2010)³⁴

Jackson Heights has many public spaces that LGBT people can congregate, but gay culture does not dominate the neighborhood, nor are the streets necessarily perceptible as gay space to a passerby who is not familiar with the area—particularly during the day. Since Jackson Heights is like a “mash-up of multiculturalism,” with its diverse ethnic populations throughout the area, the gay population is largely integrated within the public sphere. While the gay bars and clubs come alive at night and are very visible, the bustling pace of the area during the day reveals little of the subculture that is well-known to locals.

There is a concentration of gay bars and clubs on Roosevelt Avenue, under the elevated subway line. These bars and clubs have predominantly Latino patrons and are far more affordable than the ones that one would find in Manhattan. One gay couple owns three of the key bars and clubs within a small section of the neighborhood, and there are many other nightlife establishments near the corner of 76th Street and Roosevelt Avenue. The bars and clubs, in catering to their mostly-Latino crowd, typically play music like salsa, merengue, and

³⁴ NY Times article, Jan. 15, 2010. “A Place Where Diversity Extends to Sexuality.”
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/16/nyregion/16metjournal.html>

Latin pop. Spanish and English are spoken in equal parts in these clubs, with ample drag queens and frequent drag shows for entertainment.

There is a mix of bars and clubs in the area, each catering to a different type of crowd. While the Atlantis nightclub tends to have muscled male bartenders in tight shirts, others, such as Friends Tavern, provide a more relaxed bar atmosphere. There is one Colombian-owned lesbian bar in the neighborhood called Chueca, and another club that is gender-mixed with predominantly lesbian patrons.

LGBT and Allied Organizations in Queens

When the Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee formed in 1992, there was only one gay and lesbian organization in existence within Queens: Queens Gays and Lesbians United, or QGLU. However, within four years of the first parade, there were a dozen, and now there may be too many to produce an official count. However, I mention here a few of the key organizations in the area that are associated with the development of Queens Pride within that neighborhood, with an eye to demonstrating the networks of connections between members of QP and those other organizations.

The founder of Queens Pride states that his goal was to start a new gay organization in Queens every single year after he began the Pride organization. With the help of many other important activists in the local gay community (such as the leaders of QGLU, but also many others), he recounts that within the first five years, he helped to start PFLAG-Queens, the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club of Queens, Queens Pride House (an LGBT community center), an LGBT youth program called Generation Q, and SAGE Queens (a center for the LGBT elderly). An all-inclusive St. Patrick's Day parade was started by an Irish Queens resident in 2000 as an

alternative to the discriminatory traditional Manhattan Parade. Marriage Equality of Western Queens was another organization that the members of the QP committee were seriously involved in during the period of my fieldwork. Starting in 1990s, several HIV/AIDS organizations began to operate within Queens, and many social and cultural groups of all types and categories that grew and (and sometimes dissolved) over the course of the past fifteen years, such as Lavender Latkes (for Jewish gays and lesbians) and the Colombian Lesbian and Gay Association.

While people in Queens always had the option of going into Manhattan to attend meetings, the idea of creating local organizations was very important for the founders of these local organizations. What is important to note is that a lot of the same people were involved in putting these together; that the activists in Queens were of a known quantity, and they helped to build—by working with each other, particularly in the early years—a critical mass of organizations that was specifically geared toward giving them a voice in their own borough. Moreover, I found in my fieldwork that those who were involved in the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club from within the QP group were also involved in the mainstream Democratic Club of Queens, in order to ensure that their interests were represented and because they were simply politically-inclined. All in all, this meant that QP had a highly politically-informed set of individuals within its membership, many of whom viewed their participation in Queens Pride as only one piece of their wider efforts to create significant political and socio-political change around the issue of LGBT rights in the borough (a factor that I will later show impacts how they conceive of the meaning of “gay pride” and the relationship between Pride and political change).

The Beginnings of Queens Pride

The beginnings of the Queens Pride organization can be linked directly to the events of the fall of 1992 and the debate over the Children of the Rainbow Curriculum. However, the gay community in Jackson Heights first came into the public spotlight as a result of an incident that occurred in the area in 1990; members of Queens Pride often refer to it as mobilizing factor in the development of a local gay movement in Queens. In 1990, a gay Latino man named Julio Rivera was murdered in Jackson Heights by a group of skinheads while coming home from a bar. Many LGBT and people of color community members were especially upset about the lack of response from the police; the case was assigned to a detective who was on vacation for two weeks. The issue brought the gay community and the Latino community together as they reacted to the perceived devaluation of a person marginalized by both his ethnic background and sexual orientation.

However, it was two years later that the Children of the Rainbow Curriculum situation emerged. The curriculum was a 400-page document that instructed teachers how to celebrate racial and ethnic diversity in their elementary classrooms, within which about 3 pages was devoted to acknowledging gay and lesbian families as legitimate. Daniel Dromm,³⁵ an elementary school teacher in the district—out to his friends and family but not professionally; decided to speak out as a gay teacher in support of the curriculum at a public meeting. He was immediately thrust into the spotlight by the media; his face was pictured on the cover of a major newspaper. While Daniel Dromm had been peripherally involved in the gay rights movement since the 1970s, and was civically active other ways, he suddenly found himself as a public spokesperson for gay teachers in Queens. In Danny's words in an interview with me in 2008, he

³⁵ This is one case in which I use the real name of an individual, since he later comes to hold political office in Queens. All elected officials mentioned in this dissertation are referred to by their real names, while all other people are given pseudonyms.

saw this as an opportunity to organize and put a face to the (relatively invisible at that time) gay and lesbian community in Queens.

A flyer from the organization in the late 1990s (printed in Spanish on one side and English on the other) summarizes the emergence of the organization and its reasons for deciding to hold a parade:

The Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee was created in November of 1992, partly in response to the hate and bigotry expressed by segments of our Queens community over the proposed Children of the Rainbow curriculum. We felt sure that we would be able to counter the homophobic misinformation being disseminated by our opponents on the Religious Right if our neighbors knew that we were their children, their friends, their teachers, their doctors, their parents; indeed, that WE ARE EVERYWHERE!"

The idea for the parade in Jackson Heights began as a discussion at a Queens Gays and Lesbians United (QGLU) meeting. They felt that they needed to "put a face on the tens of thousands of LGBT people that live in the borough" and that the parade would be an important show of visibility. By holding a more celebratory parade instead of a march, the founder of Queens Pride, Danny Dromm, notes that he felt people would be more willing to attend. The initial gathering at his apartment drew a total of four people, but the organization soon grew to have a staff of over fifty volunteers on the day of the first Parade. Early meetings of the Pride organization were held in Danny's apartment. However, over time, they were able to secure a meeting time and space at Queens Borough Hall once a month.

The first year, their main goal as organizers was to ensure that the Parade and Multi-Cultural Festival were *safe*. The organizers had a great deal of fear about the reaction from the local neighborhood residents; they were offered by the local police (and gladly accepted) helicopters flying above the Parade as it went down the route that first year, as well as several snipers with rifles on rooftops above the route, ready to respond if any problems developed.

Luckily, there were no disruptions that year; the parade and festival went off without any problems.

Early members of Queens Pride note that while local gay people they knew had been attending the Pride march in Manhattan for years, some were very intimidated about attending such an event in their own neighborhood. In Jackson Heights, they were far more likely to encounter someone they knew (such as a co-worker or an extended family member) and to whom they were not fully “out.” And while most of the gay community were excited to hear that Queens would now have its own Pride event, there was a small minority of bar and club owners who felt that it would bring unnecessary attention to the area and the gay community.

They were hoping to get a few hundred people for the first Parade and Festival. However, estimates of the number of people that came out to see the parade that year are around 10,000 people. The Parade went smoothly, as did the Multi-Cultural Festival that was located at the end of the Parade. The events, then as now, were attended by local Queens people from a wide variety of ethnic and racial groups, with a strong Latino presence, and not only the gays and lesbians within the neighborhood. One Latino member of the organization noted the affinity of Latin Americans for wild, flashy parades that are common in many South American cultures, minimizing what might be perceived as differences between a “gay parade” and any other parade. Members of Queens Pride were especially proud of the high number of Latinos (non-gay families and individuals, as well as gay Latinos) that regularly came out to watch the parade from the sidelines.

Fundraising for the parade in the early years was primarily accomplished by passing around a coffee cup at bars and clubs in the neighborhood; one long-time member chuckles as he recalls how excited they were that they had collected \$54 all in one night. Certain key members were friendly with the bar owners, and they regularly utilized the bars and clubs for

hosting fundraising parties. Members also held house parties as fundraisers in their homes; someone would purchase a bunch of refreshments and ask for donations. This provided both an outlet for local LGBT socializing as well as an opportunity to collect necessary funds for the organization.

The first two years of the Parade and Festival went smoothly, despite the early fears. Media attention was supportive from the beginning, and they were pleasantly surprised to find that they soon became listed in local civic event calendars. The number of attendees grew in size over time, and by the late nineties they had over 40,000 people at their events. However, in 1995, several transgender drag queens riding in a convertible removed their tops and exposed their breasts. A graphic photograph of this scene (with key parts blacked out) was reproduced, in large format, on the cover of the Queens Tribune, with the title: “Too Queer for Queens?”

This greatly upset the members of Queens Pride because they had been working hard to promote the Pride parade and festival as a “family-friendly event,” and they “didn’t want them stealing our agenda.” Several interviewees noted that this was “*not* Manhattan,” where lascivious nudity and dancing go-go boys were ubiquitous. This was *Queens*, and while drag queens and transgender folks will always be a part of the LGBT community, noted the interviewees, they distinctly expressed that the Parade and Festival were intended to be events to which local families would feel comfortable bringing their children, both as marchers and as spectators.

Queens Pride, Inc.

In 2008 and 2009, the organization was made up of a small core group of board members who do the bulk of the work and attend the meetings. However, there is a large network of

volunteers that have been assisting with the parade and festival for years, and they ensure that it runs smoothly on the day of the event. The executive board members typically make up almost the entirety of the group that meets regularly, save for a few peripheral members that appear on occasion.

The board is small, made up of approximately five or six people filling the formal positions. The organization's membership as I observed it in 2008 was all male except for one female, and predominantly white. Several of the board members have been on the board for over ten years, but there were three new younger (in their early thirties) members who had become increasingly involved as I observed the organization. The board members tended to be very politically involved outside of the organization; one currently worked for a city councilman and the other was involved in the gay marriage movement and was a lawyer for immigration rights, and others were on the boards of various local (especially LGBT) community organizations in addition to Queens Pride. Most of the board members were white-collar professionals, although not all. Given that the community itself is so highly diverse, I was surprised to find such little racial diversity on the board of the organization.

The founder of the organization had been the co-chair of the organization for a long time, but had since stepped down as he became first the Democratic District Leader and later ran (and won) for the public office position of City Councilman. Two other key members—the male co-chair and the Treasurer—were older white men that had been involved in the organization for many years, and had come to know the process of putting on the parade and festival so well that it (deceptively) appeared almost effortless for them to handle the daily activities of running the events, like clockwork. They were beginning to “pass the torch” to the younger members, creating a more youthful presence in the organization. The transition from the founder running much of the organization from his home to becoming an organization that

operated separately from its founder and long-time leader was anticipated to be difficult, but turned out to be far easier than expected, as new leaders stepped up to take his place.

When I attended the organization's meetings, they were primarily held in the Jewish Community Center in the center of Jackson Heights. Rather than meeting at a bar or a café, Queens Pride deliberately chose to hold their meetings in non-commercial community establishments, creating regular and routinized links between their organization and local civic entities. Their meetings tend to be small and relatively informal, taking the form of discussions with some leadership from the higher level officers (such as the co-chair). Parliamentary procedure was not used for the most part, save for occasions when voting was conducted on issues of money expenditure or major decisions regarding the organization.

Early funding for the organization was local and based on revenue from fundraising events throughout the year, as well as sponsorships from local and then increasingly national entities. However, in the late 1990s Queens Pride began to seek and receive small and then increasingly large grants from the coffers of elected city officials. Currently, the vast majority of their funding comes from The Department of Youth and Cultural Development of the City of New York, with some continued funding from the local nightclubs and from the AIDS Center of Queens County.

Because the government grants that they receive must be used for more than simply putting on a parade and festival, the organization also has several cultural projects that they put on, as side projects throughout the year. QP supports local arts in Queens by showing films several times a year about the intersection of LGBT issues and diversity, and by providing funding for a filmmaker working a documentary about the LGBT community in Jackson Heights.

Queens Pride has also held Winter Pride, an annual dinner-dance fundraiser in a large ballroom during the winter months, each year since the start of the Parade. While the

organization may no longer *need* the financial resources that come from the event, they continue to put it on for several reasons. One of the most important reasons is that it provides an opportunity for the organization to bring together dozens of local, state, and national political representatives that attend the event from all over the New York area. In this sense, the event allows politicians to see both the numerical strength of the gay community within New York City *and* to see the other politicians willing to ally themselves with the gay community, ostensibly in return for gay votes in an upcoming political election.

Description of the Events

The distinctive experience of being at the Queens Pride Parade and Festival has several key themes. First, it is very clearly a local neighborhood production, one which reflects the extent of the ethnic diversity of the Jackson Heights and wider Queens local urban community, and the people who attend the event are primarily Queens residents. Second, the high rate of attendance by political officials is clearly perceptible, as they wave their banners and use their bullhorns to announce who they are. The parade route is only about ten or twelve blocks long, down 37th Avenue, and lasts no more than an hour as the marchers to move from the starting point to the turn that leads to the nearby festival area. The festival takes over about eight blocks, with two stages at either end, and is very densely packed with people.

Police barricades lining the parade route separate the spectators from the marchers. The sidewalks are packed with predominantly Latino men, women, and children who cheer and dance as the parade goes by; many have brought coolers, lawn chairs, and flags, and they hoist their kids on their shoulders so that the children can see the spectacle as it passes by (Indian residents have been less visible in their support of the events). Behind the spectators, the signs

of stores and restaurants are predominantly in Spanish, advertising different Latin American foods and goods. The dozens of groups that register for the march are from all different types of organizations and groups. There is a wide and varied selection of non-profit organizations such as PFLAG-Queens, SAGE Queens, Pride organizations from the other boroughs, and all the major organizations within the borough such as AIDS Center for Queens, The Democratic Club of Queens County, and many other organizations from Manhattan such as the New York City Anti-Violence Association and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. However, what is most enjoyed by the audience and gets the most cheers are the drag queens in full regalia, and the various Latin American groups that dress up in wild and dramatic costumes and perform together as they march down the street. Some are on floats, with loud music streaming from the speakers, while other floats are put together by bars and clubs in the area that are blasting their own sets of salsa, meringue, and other Latin music.

The political officials, who are easily noticeable because they are dressed in suits and ties while others are either more informally dressed for a warm day or highly costumed, are also out in full force. While public officials are also present at the HOP and other Pride Marches, the sheer number of them within what is a relatively small parade is striking. In 2008 and 2009, most of the political officials had already been in Jackson Heights for several hours; a fundraiser breakfast for the political campaign of the Queens Pride's founder (who is running for city council office) has already taken place, at which they publicly declared their support for Danny Dromm, the Queens Pride organization, and the gay community of Queens in general. The public officials march along with several assistants in tow, waving in all directions and shouting their appreciation for Queens and the LGBT community, hoping that their name on the banner is at least *recognized* when local voters go to the booths during the next local elections.

The events culminate in a festival that is held on the side streets of the area. This is similar to other Pride festivals, in that they have booths by both non-profit organizations and for-profit vendors that are selling anything from CD mixes to magnets to jewelry and artwork, and LGBT-identified rainbow paraphernalia.

The most distinctive element of this particular Festival is the Latin flavor that is immersed into the event on many levels—from the wares that are being sold by the vendors (such as soccer jerseys from one’s favorite *futbol* team) to the salsa music blaring from the two stages. On the side stage in which the nightclubs are more in control of the entertainment, the language coming from the loudspeakers is distinctively *Spanglish*—a mixture between Spanish and English that is commonly found in Latino neighborhoods. On the main stage, to which the political officials and the leaders of key non-profit organizations are often invited up to introduce themselves, local youth groups perform dances for the audience, and local LGBT entertainers sing and dance, and English is the dominant but not exclusive language spoken. The Festival lasts until dusk; a vibrant, colorful, intense, and incredibly diverse event that closes down all of the main streets of Jackson Heights for an entire day. At the end, locals head to the nearby nightclubs to finish out their Pride Day in style.

CONCLUSION

The two organizations, Heritage of Pride and Queens Pride, are both set within New York City, but have distinct histories and conditions under which they developed. One organization is a product of Greenwich Village, within a gayborhood that has a long history of gay activism (which was sparked by the event they directly commemorate, the Stonewall Rebellion) and a strong and vast system of both local and national non-profit organizations working on LGBT issues

across Manhattan. Queens Pride is located within an outer borough that has an active subculture of gay life within its host neighborhood, or a gay urban infrastructure that exists above the surface but not a dominant feature of the area. Queens Pride was one of the first organizations that brought lesbian and gay activism to the area, which quickly proliferated. QP has emphasized its connections to the political field, and also is a product of a local LGBT community that is integrated with the Latino population.

Heritage of Pride draws 750,000 people to its events, takes over the middle of Manhattan for over eight hours, and has a budget of over a million dollars that includes extensive corporate sponsorship. Queens Pride, in contrast, has a budget that is more in the area of \$50,000, draws about 40,000 people to its parades, and instead relies primarily on civic funding, working closely with political representatives as well as cooperating with the predominantly-Latino local bar and club community.

These two organizations are both operating within a wider urban context of New York City that has the space and possibility for growth out into a variety of fields—the field of corporate sponsorship, the field of electoral politics, and the field of civic life. One is situated within a gayborhood, while the other has a strong and above-ground gay urban infrastructure that it can rely on for support. There are few organized barriers to this growth within these communities, such as intense religious sentiments or widespread social conservatism. In some of the examples that I provide, particularly within Heritage of Pride, it is impossible to describe the cultural context in which the organization exists (e.g., describing the visual experience of walking down Christopher Street) or the key fundraising activities of the organization (e.g., Winter Pride’s strong political representation) without hitting upon what I will later demonstrate to be clear examples of external institutionalization that have already taken place. While these organizations are still expanding and growing within their urban contexts, they are

to a great extent largely integrated into their communities, albeit in different ways, reflecting the increasingly gay-friendly cultural conditions of the last few decades in New York City. The next chapter will examine what the process of organizing LGBT Pride looks like when these cultural conditions are far more limiting, and where the expansion of a Pride organization into its host community is still highly contested.

CHAPTER 4: BACKGROUND ON ST. GEORGE, UT AND BOISE, ID

Introduction

This chapter will provide the socio-historical background for and an introduction to the each of the remaining two Pride organizations in my study: Southern Utah Pride Association and Boise Pride. As I described in the introduction to the previous chapter, I consciously draw on an analytical perspective that links the Pride organizations to the urban environments in which they are embedded.

The two cities of St. George and Boise are very different from New York City. Neither of them is a major metropolis like New York; Boise is a medium-sized city surrounded by farmland (as well as other small cities and towns), while St. George is a small city that has a distinctively small-town sensibility. These two cities are very similar in that they both have strong religious influences on both local culture and local politics, which I did not encounter in either of the New York City cases. While New York City can be viewed as comparable to other major metropolitan areas (for example, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, Miami, Atlanta or San Francisco), the data I collected from St. George and Boise can perhaps be seen as more representative of smaller cities and large or small towns across the United States, particularly those found within Republican-leaning states.

In comparing Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride, we find cultural contexts that are similar in some respects, such as the influence of religion on local politics, the lack of political rights that LGBT people are afforded, and the low levels of multicultural diversity. However, key elements such as the density of their urban centers, the level of anonymity—most importantly—

the extent to which a public gay infrastructure exists, makes these very different environments in which to study the development and growth of a Pride organization.

In this chapter, I provide a general introduction to each city in terms of the local socio-political culture, a description of the physical qualities of mainstream urban space, and an account of existing public gay space for LGBT-identified people. In Boise, as in Queens, we find the existence of a gay urban infrastructure or public gay life that is relative to its city size, but it is neither entirely integrated into the mainstream community nor into the political field. In St. George, we find that there is an absence of gay urban infrastructure, in which public invisibility and underground networks have been the dominant paradigm for day-to-day gay life. I also offer an overview of the non-profit organizational field, including both LGBT and allied organizations. Strong religious barriers can be found in each of these contexts, as the areas are both highly observant and the political field is highly influenced by religious sentiments.

CASE 3: SOUTHERN UTAH PRIDE

St. George was settled in 1861, when Mormon leader Brigham Young sent a group of 309 pioneer families to colonize a dusty flat area within the hills of Southern Utah. Since this area was far from other settlements within the Territory of Utah, Young made sure to send only his most dedicated and pious of church members. Unlike some other Utah cities and towns which have developed around the ski and outdoor recreation tourism industry, St. George remains especially close to its roots as a town settled by highly devout Mormon pioneers.

St. George is currently the largest city in southern Utah, about a two hour drive northwest of Las Vegas, near the borders of both Nevada and Arizona. The city has a population of approximately 75,000 people. There is a small downtown area that is only a few blocks in

radius, with small independent shops, but the main street in town is St. George Boulevard. “The Boulevard,” as it’s known, is lined with both chain and independent stores, gas stations, and retro-looking neon signs for motels that light up at night, outfitted to be reminiscent of old-style Las Vegas. The city is almost entirely a “driving city,” in that there are few spaces even within the center of town that one would traverse on foot rather than in one’s car.

The small city is nestled within a small valley of gorgeous red rock mountains that jut up on all sides; some local businesses are built into the side of the sandstone cliffs, and the mountain desert views all around town are breathtaking. Moreover, one can drive from the center of the city to a hiking trail that rivals some of the most incredible trails in the world in less than ten minutes.

In the middle of the city lies the Mormon Temple, and not far from the Temple is the Mormon Tabernacle. The Mormon population uses the temple on a daily basis, while the Tabernacle is reserved for special occasions. The temple is the largest physical structure in the city; it is lit up at night, easily recognizable from far away, and the dominating landmark of the city. Also, up on the side of a hill, easily seen from the center of the city, is a large white letter “D.” This was a marker installed to represent the nickname “Dixie” commonly used to refer to the city; locals consider St. George to be the “Dixie of the Southwest” due to its historical cotton production and temperate climate. However, while driving in a car during my first afternoon with some of my key field informants, a group of friends who had grown up in St. George, one of them quipped, “We all know that the really stands for—*denial!*” By this, they mean that that the gay community sees the “D” as visual representation of the “denial” that homosexuality exists within the city limits, and the denial that Mormon families retain about existence of homosexuals within their families and their local urban community. Public social life, for a

majority of St. George residents, is organized around church events; the city is divided by the Church into “wards” that act as smaller sub-communities within the larger whole of St. George.

The city of St. George is known for its very high level of conservatism in its politics, from electoral politics to social and cultural attitudes. I was told by one couple who had recently moved to St. George from Southern California that if you were a businessman within the area and had either voted Democrat or held Democratic or liberal political leanings, you “had best keep that opinion to yourself” or your business would very likely suffer as a result. LDS members in St. George are known to “stick together” in business and other local urban community endeavors, supporting Mormon-owned businesses before a non-Mormon owned business. St. George itself is (and feels) quite small; small enough that after only a few weeks of living there during fieldwork, I began to bump into locals who recognized me while out running errands around town.

It is difficult to ignore the impact and influence of the LDS Church as a major player within both the culture and politics of St. George. In some cities in Utah the influence of the Church is tempered by catering to a strong tourism industry, or a more liberal mayor who seeks to balance the interests of the Church with those of non-church-going citizens (such as in Salt Lake City). However, this is not the case in St. George. The percent of Washington County (the county in which St. George is located) that identified as Mormon in 2004 was 61%. While this is certainly a decreasing number since the 1989, when 76% identified as Mormon, the number is still quite high.³⁶ The city had the 8th highest rate of voting for Republican voting in the nation for the 2004 presidential election.³⁷ The state’s political field is highly conservative as well, with

³⁶ Matt Canham, “Mormon Portion of Utah Population Steadily Shrinking.” Salt Lake Tribune, 6/22/06. Additional figures attached to article at http://extras.mnginteractive.com/live/media/site297/2005/0726/20050726_101404_DTTTRB24A10.PDF. Accessed April 1, 2010.

³⁷ <http://www.city-data.com/city/St.-George-Utah.html>. Accessed April 1, 2010.

Republican dominance across local and state-wide representation. However, there is a more liberal bent within the state capital of Salt Lake City (a five-hour drive from St. George), and—owing in part to the concentration of a small gay and alternative community in one segment of the capital city—there are two openly gay elected officials within the state’s legislature. However, there are no gay or gay-friendly elected officials in St. George’s city legislature, at least none that locals are aware of.

The political discussion of “gay rights” within St. George has little history to speak of; the gay community has so little political ground to stand on within the mainstream urban community that any efforts toward making political changes at a local level to be more inclusive toward gays is best understood as something of a mythical animal. Any positive changes in rights and privileges that might trickle down to St. George gays and lesbians would have to be gained in the state capital of Salt Lake City on a state-wide level. In St. George, there is a sense that the LGBT community is more on the “defensive” in trying to make sure that their federal and state-provided rights (such as the right to free speech about gay-themed issues on their public college campus) are not being *abridged*, rather than viewing local government as a place to make any sort of *advances* in rights and privileges for the LGBT community. A recent (2009) collection of bills that promoted basic legal protections for LGBT people was put together by a group of legislators in Salt Lake City, who called the effort the Common Ground Initiative. The bills were summarily defeated in the state legislature. Even the *presentation* of this set of bills was perceived as threatening to the anti-gay camp across Utah, and groups that comprise the “Sacred Ground Initiative” were formed by a group called the Sutherland Institute within both the Mormon community of Salt Lake City and St. George to ensure that no traction would be gained by gay rights organizers. A meeting to discuss the Sacred Ground Initiative in St. George caused a group of local active LGBT people to quickly throw together a public protest to

demonstrate their opposition , but no legitimate progress has yet been made—or is expected to be made in the near future—on a political level in Utah in terms of advancing gay rights. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a constitutional amendment specifying marriage as a union between a man and a woman, was passed in 2004.

In terms of cultural and social politics, the City of St. George has a grim history of mixing church and state in a fashion that serves the interests of the Mormon Church. One oft-cited example is a court case that made it all the way up to the United States Supreme Court in 1989. It was won after many years, finally ceasing the payments of the local Mormon temple's monthly electric bill by the City of St. George. Other indicators, such as scheduled period each day during several of the public schools (elementary and high school) for students to attend "seminary," a religious LDS session taught in a building directly across the street from school, also clearly indicate that the city government is highly invested in continuing to see that St. George remains a visibly and undeniably Mormon-influenced city, in local politics, education, and in public culture.

Public nightlife within the city is almost nonexistent, both for straight and LGBT people; 10 pm on a weekend night in the center of town is as quiet as an early Sunday morning. There are only two bars in the city that are open for business and almost never patronized by the younger population of the city; once a week the local Elks Lodge hosts a party with alcohol that is patronized by people of all ages seeking diversion. Permits for additional nightlife establishments have been repeatedly denied by city government. Local cafes or restaurants, such as Mocha Café that I will discuss in detail in a later chapter, sometimes host music events with local musicians, but many of these are alcohol-free and are over by 11 pm, at which time people either gather at friends' homes or simply cease their nightly activities. The City of St. George boasts such qualities as having a "family-friendly atmosphere," or being "great place to

raise your family.” Almost all businesses are closed on Sundays. The dominant cultural paradigm for young St. George residents is to marry at a young age and have large families. For example, in 1990, the average age of marriage for both men and women in Utah was 21, compared to approximately age 24 for women and 26 for men across the United States.³⁸

The city of St. George has very low levels of racial diversity; based on the US Census in 2000, the area was 92% white, with Hispanics making up approximately 6% of the non-white population. However, the city has also become, in the last decade, an area of major influx for two key types of “outsiders.” There has been major population growth within the last decade, and it is expected to increase rapidly within the next few decades. It currently—in 2009—ranks as the second-fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States. A very low cost of living in the area (housing and land prices are very low) and a very low crime rate has made it attractive to outsiders seeking a particular type of community environment. Several people I spoke with noted that they never lock their door when they leave the house.

First, a large number of people flock to the area for outdoor adventure sports, both for temporary and sometimes for permanent residence. The red rock mountains are unparalleled in their beauty and easily accessible from the center of town, and young outdoorsy types interested in rock climbing, mountain biking, rappelling and other adventure sports come to the area throughout the year. They tend to be highly noticeable around town in their hippie- and outdoorsy-style of dress. Moreover, the spas in the St. George area are considered to be world-class, and the town hosts a high number of rich clients coming from across the country to enjoy the amenities of the all-inclusive spas.

³⁸ Utah Department of Health (n.d.) “Demographic, Socioeconomic and Health Profile of Utah.” Chapter 1 in *Report on Maternal and Infant Health*, Office of Public Health Assessment. <http://health.utah.gov/oph/publications/other/mih/chaptr1.pdf>. Accessed April 1st, 2010.

However, the greatest impact on the area's changing culture—far more than both of those two types of visitors—is the fact that the area has become a retirement destination for older people from all across the country but especially from nearby California in large numbers, due to the lower cost of living and cheaper housing and land prices. It was named as a “Dream Town” for retirement by AARP in 2006.³⁹ More open-minded Southern Californian and other retirees are perceived by long-time LDS St. George residents as the greatest threat to the ongoing conservative political climate within the area. The liberal political views of these more permanent, home-owning residents—as compared to the more transitory outdoorsy-types who come through the city—may ultimately prove to have an impact on local electoral and cultural politics in St. George over time.

The Gay Community in St. George

In many ways, the gay community has always been “underground” in St. George. It has existed through friendship networks, by coming to find “people in the know,” who may introduce you to a whole world of gay people that you did not expect to find. One girl, aged 19, who I met at a Pride meeting in 2008 who had recently moved to St. George and just happened to hear about the Pride group through her cousin, looked me dead in the eye and said, “I thought gay people in St. George was a fairy tale.” Another of my subjects, a man who came out in his later years, after marriage and several children, says that he came to be in contact with other gay people in the area when one of his hairdressing clients turned around and said, “Can we stop the *double-speak*?” She introduced him to an entire world of gay friends that she knew, and he soon

³⁹ http://www.aarpmagazine.org/lifestyle/dream_towns.html/page=5. “Dream Towns,” by Sarah Mahoney. July & August 2006. Accessed April 1st, 2010.

became a leader in organizing gay social activities within the gay community, such as a monthly movie night in his home for LGBT and gay-friendly people to attend.

The key difficulty in finding the gay community in St. George is that there is no public space that is easily identifiable as gay space. Official public meeting space associated with gay identity is nonexistent, as there is currently no gay community center and no gay or gay-friendly bars that allow, on a regular basis, any explicit gay identification. Street life on the whole is very limited, for all St. George residents, since the city is spread out and designed for driving, not walking. Certainly, the few coffee shops around town have tended to be places where gay people tend to feel more comfortable, as observant Mormons do not drink coffee and would not be found within a café. Over the years there have been various sets of arrangements that bring the gay community together at different times and places, such as LGBT organization meetings and social meetings, as I will describe below. Yet, overall, it is easy to say that St. George overall has had no public gay space (either public or commercial) that they occupy on a regular basis, save for short, temporary moments of gatherings arranged by individuals.

There have been different permutations of these temporary gatherings over time. First, there has been a longstanding Yahoo groups listserve utilized to announce the goings-on within the gay community, but not all LGBT people in St. George have Yahoo accounts or are aware of the listserve. One longstanding tradition in St. George is what locals call “gay coffee,” a weekly meeting of LGBT or allied people at some coffee shop or some other public location. The meeting is loose and informal, without any identifiable leadership or ownership, and occurs for the sole purpose of bringing LGBT people in town together for two hours or so each week, to get to know one another. It was originally started by the current Pride organization’s predecessor organization—The Southern Utah Gay and Lesbian Community Center—but continues to operate today despite the fact that the Center group disbanded a number of years ago.

This social event—“gay coffee”—has moved around over the years; at one point it was held at Starbucks, until the manager informed the group that it was no longer welcome to meet there since it was making the other patrons uncomfortable. For another stretch of time, gay coffee was held at a group of tables behind a fast-food Chinese restaurant in a strip mall. When a prominent member of the gay community (she was also a board member of Southern Utah Pride) owned her own café with her girlfriend, gay coffee was held there. Unfortunately, the owner received a number of phone calls from concerned local citizens “alerting her” that there were “gay people regularly hanging out” at her café. The notoriety of the café as a hangout for gay people may have caused it to become ostracized by the local population and contributed to its eventual closing as an establishment due to insufficient patronage. At the time of my fieldwork, gay coffee was held at Mocha Café, a coffee shop in the center of town patronized by a wide variety of people; it will be later shown to be a strong supporter of the Pride organization. However, even the owner of Mocha Café for a time had a sign posted at the register informing his patrons that his café to be a place for “any and all people” to meet, and that he neither “endorses nor opposes the beliefs of any of the groups that meet here.”

The importance of finding a group of gay people that one can relate to within a highly politically- and socially-conservative local urban community cannot be underestimated. One of leaders of SUP said that he moved to St. George from a far more gay-friendly area, and spent several months in the city without meeting any other gay people. He reports that he was “thrilled” to hear through the Yahoo group listserv that there was a weekly social event, where he could “find his people.” He recalled, with great emotional affect, that when he first went to gay coffee, as he got out of his car and was walking over to the group, he realized that they were waiting for him—they even called out his name and asked if he was who they were looking for. This man later became a major player in the Pride organization, and during his tenure with Pride

his house was known as an open door where you could come in and meet with other gay people if you felt so inclined. He clearly recognized the lack of public and commercial space for being “out” and gathering with one’s LGBT community, and it was a motivating factor in his leadership with the Pride organization.

In the St. George area there are a large number of people who have lived either inside the closet as a couple, or only half-outside the closet, insofar as they have been out to certain close friends but mostly closeted to coworkers, often referring to their long-time partners as their “roommate” and not daring to be publicly affectionate. There are others, however, like one particular older couple who make it a point to disrupt the heteronormativity of public space by acting as they would if they were a heterosexual couple out in public, holding hands or otherwise showing affection. One particularly rebellious young man told me that he sometimes wears red high heels to go shopping at WalMart, just for the fun of seeing the reactions of the locals. I heard varying levels of reactions from the people they encountered; most of the LGBT people I met said they never encountered more than an impolite stare when out displaying some form of minimal affection with their partner, or when displaying gender-nonconformity. However, others reported hearing groups of people dropping deliberately snide and nasty comments about them as they passed by, pointing out their gender nonconformity or that they suspect the person or couple might be gay. I heard no reports of local gay-bashing or violence in the area. However, this fact may also reflect the lack of public space for gay community members to congregate—i.e., a lack of opportunity in which a straight individual might encounter a person who they clearly identify as LGBT and have occasion to engage in violence against them.

I heard, on numerous occasions, comments that some of the heterosexual people in St. George are actually *entirely unaware* of the existence of a gay community or set of ties between

gay people, or even the existence of gay individuals or couples, within St. George. Moreover, there is also a lack of knowledge within the older, mainstream, Mormon-church-going population about what a gay person might “look like” or “act like.” A woman who owns a bookstore in the downtown area describes an encounter with a local St. George resident:

There’s a lady who comes in here quite often; she’s probably 60 years old. She just found out that she has a lesbian daughter. So she came in to talk to me, to get the PFLAG card to call Julia, ‘cause she wants to volunteer. One of the first things out of her mouth is that she wants to help teenage boys who’ve just discover they’re gay, and they’re Mormon and they’re having a problem with it. And I applaud that. Two seconds later, this kid who I know, 18 and gay—and I mean, *flamboyant* as all heck; there’s just no way he’s not gay! I mean, I’m not trying to stereotype, but.... So he comes walking in and he knows her personally. They hug each other. He leaves, and I suggest she helps him, but she says, ‘oh, he’s not gay.’ And I’m like, wowwww. Even when I said, ‘he does need help...’ she said, ‘oh, no, I know his parents’—meaning, he can’t be gay! [laughing] That’s the kind of ignorance we’re dealing with here in this community!

While many (gay and non-gay) people do feel isolated in St. George, it is also important to remember that it is not geographically isolated. St. George is only two hours away from Las Vegas, which has a well-developed gay club scene and an LGBT community center, as well as a gay bookstore and other local gay community establishments for youth. St. George is also a five hours’ drive from Salt Lake City, in which there is both of those as well as an “alternative” or very gay-friendly part of town that has a larger number of amenities for the gay community. Moreover, the Internet connects these communities, as well as the availability of printed copies of gay media such as QVegas and QSalt Lake that keeps the St. George gay community in-the-know on regional activities.

LGBT and Allied Organizations in St. George

Within the city of St. George, there were approximately a half dozen LGBT organizations and several allied organizations in operation that I encountered during my fieldwork in 2008 and

2009, outside of Southern Utah Pride. In large, part, these organizations were run by a small and interconnected group of people, most of whom knew each other either intimately or casually, served on various boards with each other, or came into contact with each other at events while representing their organization or at social occasions. The leaders and key members of these organizations are of a “known quantity”—by which I mean to say that, after spending a certain amount of time in and around the LGBT community in St. George in 2008 and 2009, I could easily list, by name, most if not all of the individuals who regularly work to provide services and support for LGBT people in St. George.

The longest-running and most stable organization within the LGBT community was the PFLAG organization (“Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays”). This organization is run out of the home of a woman, Julia, who has been lauded as a hero within the St. George LGBT community. The PFLAG meetings were attended by both parents who are coming to terms with their children’s sexual orientation, as well as by LGBT people seeking a safe space and social support, particularly in their early days of coming out. Julia is often mentioned as the “first person you should contact when you decide to come out,” regularly fielding phone calls at her home from young people who are struggling to cope with their family’s religious Mormon beliefs condemning their sexual identity, as well as Mormon parents who are in need of guidance after learning of their own child’s sexual identity. Julia was a devout Mormon until her son came out a number of years ago, at which time she struggled to reconcile her commitment to the LDS church with her love for her son, who was summarily rejected by the church and struggling with severe depression. She chose to leave the church and, as she puts it, “to join the gay community!” She now provides what is widely recognized by St. George’s LGBT community as an invaluable service to those who are coping with the same issues that she experienced. She sees opportunities for interpersonal activism around the issue of homophobia everywhere; she

often self-deprecatingly jokes that she introduces herself to everyone—such as the women she meets at the local gym or at a dinner party—by saying, “Hi, my name is Julia, and I have a gay son!”

The Dixie College Gay-Straight Alliance Club (GSA) is also a key organization for local LGBT people, based on the local college campus. Dixie College is considered to be a highly conservative educational institution in the political leanings and the social values of its students and administration; even though it is officially a public institution, it is often sarcastically referred to as “Brigham Young University Junior,” since much of the leadership of the college is unabashedly LDS in its orientation. Students at this college report that they are careful about which classes in which they “out” themselves as gay; while a few professors are very progressive and even host social gatherings at their home for LGBT students, other professors may be highly homophobic and have been rumored to grade LGBT students more harshly than others.

The Dixie College GSA is comprised of several young college-aged students as well as several older returning students. The organization has had to actively fight to retain the same rights as other organizations on campus—in terms of their ability to post flyers about events, or to show gay-themed films on campus—and the members regularly complain that the administration treats them differently. As of 2009 the GSA began to receive some support from the ACLU of Utah (headquartered in Salt Lake City) and was beginning to see some results, as the university leadership was “reminded” of the First Amendment rights afforded to all clubs on college campuses. The leaders of this GSA organization, two people in particular, were especially important for keeping information flowing throughout the LGBT-identified youth within St. George.

The Tri-State HIV/AIDS Task Force (previously The Washington County HIV/AIDS Task Force) has been in existence for several years, and conducts free HIV testing at a community

health clinic once a month. They organize an annual Dance-a-Thon and Walk-a-Thon to raise money for those services. It is run by an older heterosexual couple who moved to the area some years ago. In early 2008, the Stonewall Democrats Club, a newly-established LGBT political club, was struggling to get off the ground, trying to build its membership by networking with other organizations. I was also made aware of a group called Affirmations, a support group for gay and lesbian Mormons that met regularly within St. George, but did not encounter anyone in the Pride community that spoke of their experiences with that group. A counseling center, offering therapeutic and social services counseling, was also run by two gay men who were also board members on the Tri-State HIV/AIDS Task Force. They were particularly well-trained in the difficulties of coping with homosexuality as a member of the LDS Church, or with people whose families are LDS. I was told by a member of Southern Utah Pride that, as he was struggling with coming out as a devout Mormon while living in Las Vegas a number of years ago, he encountered a small advertisement in the back of a newspaper saying something like “Gay and Mormon? We Can Help.” that directed him to the services of these two men, which, as he put it, “saved his life.”

The local Planned Parenthood was also an important ally for the LGBT community; key staffmembers helped to organize Pride events and provided non-judgmental services to the LGBT community. Several other non-profits organizations in St. George proved to be supporters of Southern Utah Pride, such as the local Democratic political club and a local animal welfare organization.

A heterosexual couple whose two children had come out as gay also became very important activists in the LGBT-allied community. Until several years prior, they had both been very observant and involved members of the LDS Church; they left the church as a result of the Church’s policies toward homosexuality. The repeal of their son’s gay marriage in California as a

result of Proposition 8 caused them to become especially active in the gay marriage movement, and they can be spotted at most LGBT events across the West Coast toting a large, laminated, colorful sign that says “We Love Our Gay Kids!” They maintain e-mails lists for LGBT and other progressive events, show up at meetings for anything related to LGBT issues within St. George and the surrounding area, and feel that they have adopted the gay community as their “new congregation.”

One informal social event that was popular during my time of fieldwork was also a loosely-organized “gay/straight softball league” that met regularly on Sunday at a local park. It was advertised on the Pride organization’s website and made up mostly of people involved with or friends of members of the Pride organization; it was family-friendly and kids of both straight and gay couples were often present. It is likely that different permutations of this informal but regular event have occurred throughout the recent years in St. George.

As I spent time in St. George, I was surprised to find that, while the majority of the local mainstream population might be very socially conservative (including towards LGBT people) in spirit, many—although certainly not all—of the LGBT individuals I spoke with said their families actually supported them after they came out. For some, this occurred only after a long period of family turmoil; for other individuals, this process was far less dramatic.

Moreover, I found that the density of private friendship networks within the gay population could provide somewhat of a bubble in which LGBT people could exist, shutting out the socially-conservative mainstream Mormon public culture that dominated St. George. By surrounding themselves with friends, friends of friends, and supportive family members, and avoiding places and occasions that would be oppressive in their homophobia, many of the LGBT people in St. George were able to create a positive self-identity and satisfying gay life-universe. Moreover, some of the people in St. George who were not gay but identified as “alternative”

(Goths, open-minded people with liberal attitudes and political leanings, or people who were simply non-Mormon) tended to be drawn to the gay community and their social events. The friendship networks for this segment of the St. George population were dense and tight, so the social opportunities could provide a social space for LGBT-identified people to be “out” in a limited but comfortable fashion. In this sense, there was a distinct underground network of the LGBT community largely invisible in public urban space and unrecognized by the mainstream Mormon population, but nonetheless active in its social activities and dense networks.

The Beginnings of Southern Utah Pride

Like many LGBT Pride organizations across the country that have emerged in recent years, the Pride events started off as a small, informal gathering put on by a few LGBT leaders (in this case, as part of another organization’s efforts) and grew over several years to become a larger event with a more structured organization behind it. When I encountered Southern Utah Pride, the organization itself was very new, and the Pride events had only been going on (as part of a different organization) for only about six years.

In late 2001, a group called The Southern Utah Gay and Lesbian Community Center was founded, in order to raise money to establish a center in St. George. They were told (by advisors at a nearby city’s LGBT community center) that it would be crucial to gather both LGBT and mainstream St. George community support before they could think about collecting enough financial resources for an LGBT center. Thus, a Pride event was first held in November of 2003 as part of the community center leadership’s effort to bring the LGBT community together for a social gathering, and as a small fundraiser. One early attendee notes that it was “very low-key; just a small get-together at a straight bar and restaurant in Springdale [a nearby city] that was

gay-friendly.” He continues, “The event wasn’t advertised; it was just promoted by word-of-mouth. And it was just *community*. It was just [people from] St. George, Cedar City, and the community. It was just a community event.”

The first Pride event in southern Utah was held in Springdale, a small tourist town about 45 minutes away from St. George. The town has shops and restaurants that line the main road leading up to Zion National Park. The park is a breathtaking collection of incredible red rock mountains, which draws hundreds of thousands of tourists in the form of hikers, campers, and rock climbers throughout the year.

The reason the events have always been held in Springdale, rather than within St. George, is that the organizers were able to secure a permit from Springdale in order to hold their events. Although they had never applied for a permit to hold the events in St. George at any point, the common understanding was that it was, at this point in time, simply an “impossibility” given the conservatism of the St. George city government. While several members expressed that ultimately they would like hold the event in St. George, in the sense that they wished to be able to reach a point where that would be possible, they were pleased with the attractive natural background of Springdale. The Chief of Police in Springdale is openly gay (and the town has many non-Mormon outsiders who live in it), which provided the organization with a key ally in the town of Springdale who helped to smooth the relations between the organization and the Springdale civic entities.

Since the first year of a Pride event was a moderate success in bringing the local LGBT and straight allied population together for an afternoon, the LGBT community center organization decided to do it again the following year, in 2004. One man who was involved early on notes: “Again, it was really low-key. That second year, we had a picnic and then a drag show; just local people who got up to perform.”

By 2005, the LGBT community center organization was struggling to survive due to internal conflict; they were unable to do little more than host Pride and maintain a listserve. A mostly-new but not particularly well-organized board coalesced to put on the annual Pride event, a few months before it was scheduled. This Pride group predominantly utilized word-of-mouth advertising and arranged the details only a few months before the event was to take place. There were no sponsors or major entertainment acts, and a few local organizations set up booths to educate the LGBT community about their work. There were one or two food vendors, who were likely friends of the organizers of the event. The first year, says long-time St. George member Scott, “there was about 50 people there [in 2004]; the next year, about 85. The next, about 400. And last year [2007], which was the fifth year, I think we got up to about 1000 people who came to the event. It was still mostly just a picnic in the park, though.”

In terms of booths that registered for the festival that they held, there was little to speak of, even through 2006. Scott notes, “Two years ago [2006] we had six vendors, six little tent booths! Two years ago it was basically a booth selling jam, a t-shirt guy, that glass guy, a counseling booth run by [two local gay social workers and counselors], and PFLAG. Then someone selling Mexican food. That was it!”

In 2007, as a few key LGBT residents of St. George got together and pushed a little bit harder to make the event more expansive, and the event grew in size and the number of attendees. Scott goes on to document the growth he saw in 2007: “This past year, 2007, we had 38 vendors show up! Art, pottery, political organizations and non-profits like PFLAG, Log Cabin Republicans, stuff like that. It was really the first year that it was *organized*. Nobody had even kept records before that.”

One of the people that was involved peripherally in the organization in 2007 saw what he considered to be “potential” for the event to become bigger, and decided to take it upon

himself to call a “Town Hall Meeting” of the LGBT and allied community (advertised through the community center’s listserve, word-of-mouth, and social networks of LGBT people). His goal was to find committed volunteers to turn the 2008 Pride event into a more serious endeavor. From that “Town Hall Meeting” he was able to put together a more formal board that was committed to turning it into a Pride that would resemble the Pride events he had seen in other cities. Thus, The Southern Utah Pride Association (the name that this person soon formally registered with the state as the new name of the organization) grew from the ashes of the Southern Utah Community Center, which ceased to exist at that point.⁴⁰

Becoming Southern Utah Pride Association, Inc.

The event had been run by the LGBT community center for a number of years, but there were few records and little previous connections to draw on when the new leaders of the Pride group decided to create a new and separate organization. In 2007, the Southern Utah Pride Association had started the paperwork to become an official and independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization, consulting the bylaws of nearby Pride organizations as a guide for their own set of constitutional bylaws and organizational structure. In 2008, when I first encountered the organization, SUP was growing rapidly in a way that had not been seen prior, in terms of its organizational structure and its procedures for operation.

There are significant differences between the two temporal points at which I studied the organization (both in 2008 and in 2009), and I will be careful to distinguish them here. In 2008,

⁴⁰The specific goal of creating a community center in St. George would reappear in another form later on, but during the organizational growth that I encountered in 2008 that goal took a back burner to the more immediate concern of simply producing a strong and impressive Pride event that would rival that of larger cities, and ultimately bring in money that would be funneled back into the local LGBT community (and put towards a community center).

the organization was largely focused on putting on a successful Pride event with the ultimate (but not clearly present in their daily thoughts) goal of earning enough money to establish an LGBT community center at some point in the distant future. The immediate focus of the organization at that point was on making Pride an impressive event that would live up to the standards of larger Prides found in other cities around the country, and hopefully put money in the bank towards a community center. However, in 2009, for financial and interpersonal reasons that will be discussed in detail in later chapters, this organization was specifically re-formulated around the goal of establishing an LGBT community center in St. George, and ceased to put on an annual Pride event.

The year 2008 was the most organized and formalized that the organization had ever been. I witnessed the attempts by SUP leaders to dramatically increase the standardization of the organizational form within a short period of time, from a small, informal group to the more formal structure of a traditional non-profit or corporate organization. This was seen as the key to growth and financial support from possible sponsors, who would expect to see financial records and other standardized elements of an organization.⁴¹ Despite the formal structure, however, the organization was simultaneously built around friendship relationships that intermixed with the organization's goals of task achievement. The organization also struggled with board members who had difficulty in completing their expected roles but were nonetheless part of the group (this would turn out to be a recurrent theme in 2009 as well).

The type of people who took on leadership roles with SUP tended to have been raised outside of St. George. For example, the president, vice president, pride director, and secretary/vendor director had all moved to the area as adults, although some had family ties within the area. Moreover, none of them had been raised as strictly Mormon, and they did not

⁴¹ An important point that I will return to in detail later when connecting external institutionalization with internal institutionalization, in chapter 6.

directly struggle with the issue of personal religious conflict. This may have positively impacted their willingness to be publicly out as representatives of a gay organization.

For their 2008 Pride event, SUP needed funds. They regularly held small but public fundraisers—such as carwashes, drag shows, and parties—throughout the year in order to produce financial resources for their organization. While they also received several larger donations from individuals, SUP made the bulk of its money through small donations and through fundraisers that required sweat equity. Organizing and putting on these small fundraisers took up the most time during the year of preparation for the Pride events, held in September.

In 2008, SUP organizational meetings were held regularly and throughout the year, not just for a few months before the events, as it had been in years past. The number of people in the core of the organization was about 10; peripheral members and volunteers probably add up to 30 people, and 40 to 50 volunteers made themselves available (in addition to the 10 core members) during the weekend of the events.

Organizational meetings took place a number of different places. Most often, they took place at members' homes, particularly the president's home, as well as at the Mocha Café. The meetings ranged between somewhat formal in nature, during which minutes from previous meetings were read and voted into the archive, to more informal sessions that included frequent food and smoke breaks. Meetings tended to last for several hours. As I will discuss further in the later chapter on internal institutionalization, it was personality clashes and issues of authority and decision-making which posed the greatest problems for the organization.

What is most important to note about the Pride organization was that it contributed significantly to the gay community life within St. George when it emerged. Other groups such as PFLAG, Affirmations (for gay Mormons), the gay-straight alliance on the college campus, and

weekly gay coffee provided regularly-scheduled meetings to attend, but SUP created the most active and intensive LGBT organizing that had occurred in St. George since the dissolution of the community center several years prior. As I will demonstrate in more detail in later chapters, it was the frequent fundraising activities of the organization that found the points of cultural opportunity to push open doors that would allow them to use public space, and turn it “gay” temporarily for its own purposes. While there was never a public area of the city or an institution (such as a bar or club) that was explicitly gay, through its organizing activities SUP created moments of a semi-public gay life within St. George on a distinctly temporary and fleeting basis through their activities.

Description of the Events

The Southern Utah Pride event consisted of an entire weekend of activities at the base of Zion National Park; in 2008 attendance was estimated to be approximately 2500 people. Festivities began on Friday evening with a show and small party put on by the Pride organization, but the main events occurred on Saturday, all day and evening. The parade occurred at midday on Saturday, a festival was held throughout the day on Saturday in a large grassy area, and a nighttime show and dance was held at a nearby amphitheater.

The parade started with a classic Pride parade tradition, as several “dykes on bikes,” or butch lesbian women, led the march with their ear-splitting, roaringly-loud motorcycles. After a few women on bikes broke the silence of the main road in the quiet Springdale town at the base of the national park, an assortment of people followed, in trucks or on floats pulled by trucks, or just marching down the street as individuals. Some of the people held the formally-printed signs of the organizations they represented, while others simply marched, holding hand-written

signs and/or outfitted in wild and brightly-colored costumes, rainbow garb, or simply waving small rainbow flags. A large Obama puppet, ten feet tall, was easily visible from far away, and other groups included The Stonewall Democrats Club, the Washington County Democratic Club, PFLAG, the Dixie Gay-Straight Alliance, a large float for the Southern Utah Pride group, and PAWS, the animal welfare organization. A number of individuals decorated their dogs in rainbow and other festive garb, which they led on leashes during the parade. Dani Campbell, a lesbian reality television celebrity who had been hired at great expense by SUP as the Grand Marshal of the parade, waved from the inside of a truck. A group that calls itself ROTC, or The Righteously Outrageous Twirling Corps, marched in unison and tossed large rainbow flags into the air with skill and flair for the bystanders to watch.

The marchers tried to make as much noise as possible as they walked down the center of Springdale. Overall, I estimate that there were about fifty to seventy people participating in the parade. What was most distinctive about this Pride parade was that there were very few people on the sidelines who had gathered to actually watch the event take place. There were no protesters that I saw or heard of that made an appearance. In some parts of the route there were small groups of people from the Pride festival who had come up the road to watch, joining a collection of surprised tourists who had been summoned from their leisurely vacation shopping at stores along the road by the loud noises coming from the street; they comprised a small crowd in some areas along the parade route.

However, in other spots along the route, there were almost no bystanders or onlookers whatsoever—in fact, we passed several older women sitting on a bench and waiting for the local bus, who looked absolutely puzzled as to why a parade was going down the street or for what its purpose it was being staged. There were no barricades in place on the side of the road, since

there was no crowd to keep separate from the marchers. This all occurred against a backdrop of the beautiful stately red rock mountains jutting up on all sides of the main street.

During another section of the march we passed some farmland, sectioned off from the main road by a wire fence, to prevent the farm animals from wandering into the streets. At one point, a large bull was attracted to the noise and people passing by, and positioned himself right up against the fence to watch the parade go by. The sight of a large farm animal as a viewer of the parade was perhaps the most visible and even humorous example of the contrast between this event and those parades and marches in major cities in which hundreds of thousands of people are held back by the barricades put up by the local police. The Southern Utah Pride parade took about twenty minutes to make its way from the formation area down to the festival. During that time, participants made as much noise as possible by cheering and singing along to upbeat music blaring from the various pick-up trucks. At the end, the marchers blended into the festival area and relaxed on the grass with some food and drinks sold by the vendors.

At the festival, which lasted from morning until dusk, there were approximately 40 booths arranged within a grassy area, as well as a stage for entertainment in the background and food vendors. The booths included non-profit organizations providing information, such as the ACLU, Equality Utah, PFLAG, Planned Parenthood, and others. Moreover, there were a number of local artisans and service providers who had rented booths to either sell their wares or advertise their services; this includes professional masseuses with their massage chairs, vitamin drinks, graphic designers that offered services to small businesses, and a booth selling gay pride paraphernalia such as rainbow flags, posters, and decorations. There was also a Kidspace for children's entertainment, as well as a beer garden and a van conducting private HIV testing nearby.

The crowd throughout the weekend spanned a wide range of ages; there were gay families with young children, older groups of friends and couples, and even straight parents of both younger and older LGBT people who had invited their family members to participate in the festivities. Young adults had the most visible presence throughout the weekend, showing up in large groups of friends and in pairs, and they were clearly thrilled to be able to gather publicly in a space created for their diversion. People came from a radius of several hundred miles for the event, from across Utah and Nevada, and many camped out for the weekend in tents and slept in their RVs.

In the evening on Saturday, the crowd reconvened after the festival at a nearby amphitheater to watch the scheduled show. The show was emceed by a well-known Salt Lake City drag queen and included a musical theater performance as well as a drag show and lip synch competition. The drag performers ranged from nervous first-timers in elegant and dramatic gowns to a well-practiced drag king troupe from Salt Lake City, and a sophisticated Liza Minelli impersonator. At the end, a DJ played dance music for several hours, which provided a rare occasion for the southern Utah LGBT-identified residents—particularly the youth under 21, who are unable to travel outside of southern Utah to attend gay nightclubs—to dance openly in same-sex couples and flirt with each other in a public setting. There was palpable sense of heightened expectations and a sexually-charged energy, as the southern Utah LGBT community let loose for a precious few hours amongst their gay peers.

CASE 4: BOISE PRIDE

Boise is a mid-sized, centrally-dense city in the mid-western section of the state of Idaho, located in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. Boise is by far the most populous

metropolitan area of Idaho; the rest of the state is primarily made up of small farming communities or facilities that cater to outdoor sports. Downtown Boise is the cultural center of the city, and is home to many small businesses as well as to corporate offices. City government and local business associations have carefully labored to retain the presence of independently-owned shops, boutiques, restaurants, and bars downtown, with pristinely clean streets that combine to create a small-town feel with medium-sized-city urban density. This has created a downtown area buzzing with activity during the day, and streets that come alive on weekend nights and summer evenings. Boise State University and satellite campuses for two other state universities are located within the city, and there are a number of independently-owned coffee shops and theaters that provide entertainment for locals, creating a mix between students, young professionals, and people coming in from the surrounding metropolitan area.

Boise is an overwhelmingly Caucasian city; according to the 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, 87% of the population of the city is non-Hispanic White, with 6% of the population made up of Hispanics and 2% and 3% of African-American and Asian, respectively (factfinder.census.gov). Following 2008 Census Bureau estimates, Boise's city population was slightly more than 200,000, with the metropolitan area comprised of approximately 600,000 people. A number of large corporations—such as Albertsons/SuperValu, a supermarket chain, and Micron, a computer company—are headquartered in Boise, with major companies from the high-technology sector also maintaining a strong presence as an employer. It has been cited as a “business-friendly” urban environment; in 2004 it was rated the seventh best city for businesses by Forbes.

While the largest group of religious adherents across the state of Idaho and in Boise belongs to the Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS, or the Mormon Church) there is also a sizeable population of Roman Catholics and various Protestant denominations, particularly evangelical

Protestants. The city as a whole is an observant one, and religion is highly integrated into the political and social sphere. Sundays are quiet as businesses are largely closed, and it is not uncommon for a local resident to inquire what church a new acquaintance belongs to. On one warm evening during my fieldwork in June, I sat outside at a table of a local ice cream shop discussing Boise politics and religion with several people I had met through the gay community's event the night before: Joe and Adrian—two young gay men—and an older straight couple who had been members of the same football fan club as Joe for years. The conversation eventually moved to a long discussion on Joe's upbringing as the son of an evangelical minister, and to the troubles that the other young man, Adrian, had experienced in coming out to his observant Catholic family, who had sent him to conversion therapy. We couldn't help but chuckle and shake our heads at the level of irony as our conversation was interrupted by a group of evangelical Christians who politely approached us and dropped off their religious pamphlets entitled "Five Things God Wants You to Know" onto our table.

Politically, Idaho as a whole is staunchly conservative and has tended to vote strongly Republican in local, state and national elections for years. According to an article in the LA Times, "America does not get much more Republican than Idaho. President Bush pulled in 68% of the vote in 2004, and the state has an all-GOP congressional delegation [in 2006] (Hook 2006).⁴² However, as I will more discuss below in detail, the capital city of Boise is somewhat of a liberal oasis within Idaho. Even so, according to the straight couple that had lived in Boise for years, it is still the type of city where you might, especially as a business-owner or parent of children in the community, keep your Democratic political leanings to yourself. I was told by a local Democrat that when Obama came to town on his campaign for the presidency early on in the political season, the city was overwhelmingly shocked by the number of Democrats that

⁴² Janet Hook, "Inroads into GOP Country." *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 19, 2006. Accessed April 10, 2010. <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/oct/19/nation/na-congress19>

“came out of the woodwork” and showed up to the local arena, which was insufficiently large to accommodate the crowd. Democrats waited outside for hours in the bitter cold in long lines to be let in, and the stadium was standing-room only, filling thousands of seats within the arena. Currently, one of the state officials in the House of Representatives is a Democrat who won his election by a very narrow (2%) margin; his district is made up primarily of the (more highly Democratic-leaning) Boise metropolitan area.

Since Boise is the state capital, there is a melding of city and state political issues, as well as greater amount of awareness of political developments, that one would not likely find in another part of the state, due in part simply to the proximity to lawmaking. Local protests are held in the center of the city, in front of the State Capitol and City Hall, directed at both state and city legislators passing through the doors. In terms of politics associated with gay rights, however, there has been little positive change for LGBT people to speak of in recent years on a legislative level. In February of 2006 the Republican-led State Senate overwhelmingly approved The Defense of Marriage Act, a constitutional amendment barring all forms of “domestic legal unions” except marriage between a man and a woman (*NY Times*, Feb. 16, 2006).⁴³ In February of 2009, a bill that would have added basic protections for gays and lesbians to the Human Rights Act, such as the right not to be fired from one’s job for being gay, was defeated in the Senate committee before even making it to the legislative floor.⁴⁴ However, there is currently one openly lesbian legislator in Idaho, Nicole Lefavour, who was a State House Representative in 2008 (during my fieldwork) but has since been elected to the State Senate as a representative of Boise. Nicole Lefavour, a long-time activist in the LGBT community, was part of an instrumental

⁴³ *New York Times*. “Gay Marriage Ban in Idaho.” Feb. 16, 2006. Accessed April 10, 2010. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=980DE1DB133EF935A25751C0A9609C8B63#>

⁴⁴ 365gay.com. Accessed April 10, 2010. <http://www.365gay.com/news/idaho-lgbt-rights-bill-dies-in-committee/>

group that organized the No on 1 Campaign in 1994 (with the assistance of the national gay rights organization Human Rights Campaign). They were successful in narrowly defeating Proposition 1, a highly conservative piece of legislature that would have prohibited the state from including gays and lesbians in anti-discrimination laws, restricted library access to books that mention homosexuality to adults only, and prevented schools from presenting the homosexual lifestyle as “normal” or “acceptable.”

The influence of religion on the whole and the Mormon Church in particular on state politics is widely recognized within Idaho as the largest impediment to gay rights. The influence of the Mormon Church is especially powerful in smaller towns across Idaho, and can have an impact on state politics through direct pressure on district representatives. According to Joe, when the constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman came up for a vote, there was one state representative who was seen as the swing vote; his daughter was a lesbian and he publicly supported her. Joe was able to speak with this man in his office at the capitol, who said (in Joe’s words, recounting the experience): “I’m on your side, but I’m going to have to vote against this. I’ve talked to my daughter; she loves me, and she knows that this is what I have to do. Leaders of the Mormon Church came in to my office yesterday, and told me: ‘If you vote for this tomorrow, you’ll never run for office in this state again. Your career is over.’ And it’s the truth—[name of small town] is 75% Mormon, so you either do it or you don’t. I’m not going to lie to you—this is how I’m going to vote, and this is why. This is my livelihood; this is what I do.” The legislator lamented the fact that the gay community was not sufficiently organized enough to put someone into office based on his support of gay rights, to mobilize around him to ensure that if he *did* vote against the amendment. The political influence of the Mormon Church and its ability to mobilize voters

against small-town politicians who support gay rights legislation was too strong for this legislator to fight against.

The city of Boise, however, feels like somewhat of a “split” city in terms of representation from the conservative influence of the state as a whole and the inevitable liberal impact of high population density and anonymity within an urban environment. While there are two mainstream newspapers that are widely distributed throughout the city, there is also a thriving alternative scene that is well-represented and talked about in the Boise Weekly, an alternative paper. The Boise Weekly is available at almost all coffee shops and many shops in the downtown area, providing a public space to advertise and discuss the goings-on in the alternative community. Within Boise, one can find the presence of a small live music scene, theater scene, club scene, art scene, and both LGBT- and non-LGBT community-organizing opportunities typical of a smaller metropolitan area—enough so that one could easily create a world of alternative life within the city. Several of my key informants in the gay community during my fieldwork worked for this alternative newspaper; the Boise Weekly also put out an annual Pride issue that covered all of the events and presented interviews with the spokespersons for various LGBT community organizations.

The Gay Community in Boise

Boise’s relationship with its gay community first took center stage on the national scene in the mid-1950s as what has become known as the “Boys of Boise” scandal, which rocked the city of Boise for a number of months. A sweeping investigation of a supposed “homosexual underground” created a moral panic within Boise about perversion and depravity within their own local urban community. Hyperbolic allegations made public in local newspapers about a

ring of adult homosexuals having sexual relations with underage boys led to over a thousand people being questioned and fifteen men charged with jail time, most of whom were guilty only of consensual homosexual relations among adults (Gerassi 2001). More recently, however, in 2007 the city was again made famous by one of its public officials. U.S. Senator Larry Craig was one of the Republican Party's most staunchly conservative senators, voting against pro-gay legislation numerous times in his career. He was arrested in an airport by an undercover police officer "tapping his toes," which was a signal to other men that he wished to engage in sexual activities. This incident became the butt of many jokes for Americans across the country, but it was especially popular in Boise since it seemed to perfectly exemplify the hypocrisy of their elected officials on the politics of homosexuality.

Since Boise is the state capital and the largest city in Idaho, gay people have flocked there from small towns seeking anonymity in city life for years. The extent of gay public life in Boise far outweighs what you would find in any other city in Idaho. However, while the bars and gay-friendly cafes tended to be located downtown, there was no specific area within the city that was designated as a gay neighborhood, nor was there a particular part of downtown that was easily detected as dedicated to gay bars and gay establishments. While it is true that the gay-friendly cafes and the gay bars and clubs were within walking distance of each other downtown, and at night it was not especially difficult to make one's way from one place to another, these do not constitute what one could call a gay public space, in the form of a "gayborhood." The bars typically did not hang large rainbow flags outside; there was no obvious indicator the establishments were geared toward a gay audience. There was no cohesive public space that was densely populated by LGBT people or gay-oriented establishments that would be in any way recognizable to the average pedestrian.

In terms of gay public life, however, while there was no gayborhood to speak of, there was what I call a well-developed “urban gay infrastructure” in place within the city. This includes such features as gay bars and clubs, LGBT and allied social, cultural, and political non-profit organizations, an LGBT community center, and at least *some* use of public space or funding for the benefit of the gay community.

At least five or six thriving gay or gay-friendly bars and clubs of varying sizes and trends were in operation at one time in Boise. One of these clubs, The Emerald City Club, is the oldest gay bar and dance club in the state. The passing away of the female owner of this club in 2008, which occurred during my fieldwork, was publicly recognized as the loss of an “old mother head” of the gay community, coming from a generation in which operating a gay bar in a socially-conservative city was quite daring and gutsy. Other gay clubs and bars are well-populated, several of which are considered more hip and exclusive, playing the latest electronic music releases or eighties classics. One of the larger dance clubs in the city is predominantly gay-patronized and gay-owned, drawing in a mixed straight and gay crowd on most nights, and a newly opened (in 2008) trendy lounge that is gay-owned but geared toward the mainstream non-LGBT population also pulls in a mixture of gay and straight clientele. As an LGBT-identified individual in Boise, there is a limited but lively gay nightlife circuit open during the weekends, as would be expected of a small capital city, with some events during the week to keep oneself occupied. However, like other small cities, Boise’s gay nightlife can soon become quite a small place, in which people within and without the LGBT community come to know and recognize each other.

Opportunities for diversion both inside and outside of the bars are available for Boise LGBT people throughout the week. Much of the gay social life in Boise does center around the bars, which—it can be argued—is highly typical of a smaller urban environment that has a

limited gay scene (within New York City, until more recently, many LGBT people complained for years that there were few opportunities outside of the bars for them to engage in; bars provided the only spaces in which they felt comfortable to “be themselves”). A quick look at the social calendar listings in the monthly newspaper, *Diversity*, published by Boise’s local LGBT community center, has many listings for various activities that take place *inside bars*: “free pool” on Sundays at the Emerald Club, “poker” on Mondays at The Balcony, “karaoke” on Tuesdays at the Lucky Dog Tavern, and “drag bingo” at The Balcony on Tuesdays as well. Clearly, gay bars and clubs play a large role in the activities of the LGBT community as a whole, providing a space for openly-gay socializing and entertainment.

As I will discuss more in detail later, Boise Pride has relied heavily on bars, clubs and parties for their fundraising activities. The organization draws on the active local drag queens in the city to act as emcees for many of their events; one favorite drag queen in particular can be found holding the microphone at a majority of their nighttime fundraising festivities, as well as at the Pride Festival. The Imperial Gem Court of Idaho, an organization made up of drag queens that regularly perform at bars and clubs and donate the proceeds to local LGBT and other non-profit organizations, has been active in the area for several decades.

However, outside of the bars, there are also some social and cultural gatherings that occur on a regular basis for the LGBT community. To list only a sampling (taken from a gay social calendar): on Sundays, there are several gay and gay-friendly churches that hold services. On Mondays there is a gay choir that meets weekly for practices in the evenings, and Boise State University’s gay-straight alliance holds its weekly meeting on campus. The Emerald City Club (which is a bar) has a softball team that meets weekly for games. There are HIV support groups in Boise, such as weekly meetings specifically for “Men under 35.” Events such as “card night” and meetings of the LGBT youth group meet weekly at The Community Center, or TCC for short.

The Community Center is an important resource for the LGBT community, providing a meeting space for various organizations and the city's LGBT youth group. The monthly newspaper published by TCC, called *Diversity*, has maintained a consistent and well-respected presence within the gay community over the years, keeping LGBT and allied people updated on important issues. However, the Center's space is sparsely patronized and TCC regularly struggles with obtaining the financial resources to keep its doors open. Since it has consistent financial troubles, TCC is unable to afford a downtown location, the furniture is clearly second-hand, and the décor could use an upgrade. It is staffed by an incredibly dedicated but predominantly older (many of them are retired) group of activists; these individuals tend to be more skilled at community activism than at cutting-edge non-profit fundraising and marketing, and TCC has earned the reputation of being slightly "un-hip." The community center hotline, consistently staffed by core TCC members for calls from people in need of assistance and direction, unfortunately receives more crank calls than calls for help from people with questions or concerns. Staffers are unsure as to whether this is a "good sign," in that people are finding their resources elsewhere (such as the Internet) or whether it is a negative sign in that they are not sufficiently tied in to the gay community's needs.

As for formal organizations serving the LGBT community, there are a number of non-profit organizations and service providers active in Boise, some of which regularly meet at TCC. As compared to a place like New York City, in Boise the LGBT and related organizations are of a limited and quantifiable number; knowledgeable locals could alert you as to who the key organizations are in the field at any given time. For this reason, I describe Boise as having a well-developed urban gay infrastructure (similar to that of Queens), but lacking the density and public visibility of a full-fledged gayborhood (such as Greenwich Village). However, given the racial and ethnic homogeneity of Boise (as compared to a city like New York), one does not

encounter any organizations serving sub-populations distinguished by different racial, ethnic, or class backgrounds.

First, there is a political group in Boise called Idaho Equality, a statewide network of organizations and individuals using grassroots tactics to promote rights and privileges for the LGBT community through the legislature. Idaho Equality was formed right after the YFFN group dissolved in 2008; many of the members were interested in being more politically engaged, rather than simply participating in social and cultural organizing for LGBT people in Boise. There is a PFLAG chapter, or Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, in Boise. The Idaho Safe Schools Coalition organizes and lobbies against bullying and discrimination in schools for both LGBT and non-LGBT students and teachers, and at Boise State University, there is a gay-straight alliance on campus.

In the related field of HIV/AIDS services, there were several non-profit organizations active within Boise providing testing, education, and supportive services, as well as a state-sponsored testing clinic. Outside of the LGBT or HIV/AIDS groups, there are several other non-profits with which gay and lesbian organizations collaborated. This includes groups like Project Filter (an anti-smoking organization with a special targeted initiative to combat smoking among LGBT people); the Idaho Women's Network, and both Idahoans for Fairness and the Idaho Human Rights Education Center, human rights groups that occasionally collaborated with local LGBT groups.

At Boise State University, located in the center of Boise, an extensive archive on the history of the LGBT community is included within the Special Collections section of the library. This collection was created by a long-time member of the LGBT community (who works at the library) as an effort to preserve documents associated with various ethnic, religious, and social

groups in Boise. Thus, while there may not be an archive in the local *public* library (as we saw in New York City), it is available in a higher education public institution funded by state monies.

From this overview of the gay community in Boise, one can see that there are certainly opportunities to get involved in various LGBT social, community-organizing, and political groups, although these are of a limited and known quantity. Many of the same people are involved in several of these organizations, and names and faces soon become familiar over time as one became integrated into the local LGBT non-profit, political, and service community.

Thus, life for an LGBT person in Boise—as it may be in most cities, towns, and suburbs across the country—is contradictory in its sense of opportunity and acceptance coupled with religious and political conservatism that pervades the local environment. The lack of formal political and social rights provided by the state can be overlooked or ignored by a local LGBT person, as she may feel comfortable being open about her sexuality at work and find ample opportunities for social and cultural activities that suit her interests. Yet for another LGBT individual, it may be exceptionally difficult to weather the pressures from family, church, and employers to stay in the closet, and Boise may feel oppressively conservative and unfriendly toward an LGBT person.

On the one hand, a number of the people I interviewed, particularly two key leaders of the Pride organization, noted that they felt entirely comfortable being out as gay men, particularly in the downtown area of the city. In my daily comings and goings in the city during fieldwork in Boise, I saw several people who were engaged in gender-nonconforming displays, wearing gender-opposite clothing as they patronized the local alternative coffee shop.

On the other hand, I found numerous examples of individuals who felt pressure to keep their gay identity secret, at least within certain contexts. For example, one of the key members of the Pride organization, John, who was my key informant and with whom I accompanied to his

job at an elementary school, was not “out” at school. He felt that while several of his colleagues would have no problem with his sexual orientation, the school administration or the higher levels of school board authorities would likely not approve, and that his job might be at risk. This was an entirely legitimate concern, since it is entirely legal to fire someone in Idaho for being gay (as it is also currently legal to do in Utah).

During fieldwork with John, we visited the school to collect a few of his belongings at the end of the school year, and during our visit we bumped into a fellow teacher. In casual conversation, the man politely inquired as to my reasons for visiting Boise. This necessitated some quick thinking on my part, when I had to instantly make up a false explanation as to my connection to John without any mention of my research or my interest in Boise’s gay community. Moreover, later that day John was asked to provide a brief interview on local television about the Boise Pride events to be held that weekend. He was quite apprehensive about “outing” himself publicly, since he felt that it might jeopardize his ability to return to the school district the following year if it became known that he was gay. He eventually decided not to return to his job as an educator—in part due to the stress of dealing with the conservatism of the school district—and instead pursued higher education in a much larger city on the West Coast.

A gay-themed store in Boise that sold novelties and rainbow flags burned down several years prior to my first visit in 2008; the cause of the fire was ruled to be the result of homophobia-motivated arson. Currently, there are no stores that are specifically LGBT-identified (although there is one novelty shop currently in operation that sells lingerie, sex toys, and costumes). However, when I ask one of the leaders of Boise Pride, Mitch, to describe the environment in Boise towards gays and lesbians, he states:

It [Boise] has come a tremendous way in five years. It really has. There was a man who lost his eyesight several years back [as a victim of gay-bashing]; that

was very much the environment. Now, I wouldn't have a problem holding my boyfriend's hand downtown; we do that. We feel comfortable in most of the—I say “progressive”—bars, like Lush is a good example. You probably wouldn't want to go to one of the cowboy bars and hold hands and kiss, though!...There's very much a...conservative culture here, and while I think it's a very tolerant place now, gay marriage and gay rights will be a continual push and will lag behind the country. But I think the California influence that has come into the [Treasure] Valley over the past five years, which has really done a lot to change the acceptance factor.

Moreover, as a note regarding John's experience as a schoolteacher, he found out after leaving his position that the school district recently hired a woman who clearly stated in her first interview that she was a lesbian, which caused him to ponder, out loud to me in conversation, whether his fears about the repercussions of being out at his school were, perhaps, unfounded.

Thus, following what Mitch said about the changes over time, it is important to consider the pace of social and cultural change around the issue of homosexuality. Boise is a perfect example of how uneven and paradoxical the experience of gay life a small urban setting may be.

In short, this is not an urban setting in which one would find a gayborhood, in which LGBT people experience ownership over a certain arena of public space. However, LGBT people in Boise do have pockets of places where they feel they can be out, and many feel that public space is not entirely hostile to the freedom of expression of their identities. There is a moderate amount of anonymity in this public space, for those who might wish to remain anonymous. Boise is a city, but it is a medium-sized city, and someone who has lived there for a number of years might feel that anonymity is not possible. However, the urban gay infrastructure that exists within the city provides a certain amount of variety of LGBT non-profit and community organizations available to meet the LGBT person's basic needs, albeit of limited quantity and diversity.

The Beginning of the Pride Events

The organization that put on the Pride events for many years called Your Family, Friends and Neighbors, prior to the establishment of the currently-operating Boise Pride organization, was highly integrated with several other organizations and drew on many of the same volunteers and board members. One of these other organizations was The Community Center (TCC), which was established in 1984. TCC was a small organization, operating out of a small rented space and focusing mainly on the publication of *Diversity* magazine. TCC also worked a lot in conjunction with the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC, a national LGBT church) during the early years (and continuing until today); MCC has held a picnic in the park for members of the church since the early 1980s during Pride Month. In 1990, one key member of TCC decided that it was time to have an official Pride event, one that would be public and involve a march through public space. According to an early member, “Most people were like *horrified*—they were like, “we can’t do a Pride; we’ll get shot!” And they were all freaking out about it. He pushed and pushed and they refused to do a Pride.”

Thus, Your Family, Friends and Neighbors (YFFN) was formed for the explicit purpose of putting on Pride events, although it also soon took on other programming for the LGBT community. This organization, YFFN, had members who were involved in the other key organizations such as TCC and MCC, and had its own distinct members as well. The first Pride event was a March along the sidewalk downtown and a small picnic at a local park; this would later (by 1993) come to incorporate a Rally on the Capitol steps, a March, and a Festival in a central downtown location.

In 1990, the broad goal of the newly-formed YFFN was to provide education and awareness about LGBT people in Boise. In addition to the Pride events in June, they ran a year-long program called Speak Out, which organized people to go and talk directly to their

legislators as representatives of the LGBT community, simply to let the legislators know that there were LGBT people within their districts. YFFN also ran all of the groups that were housed in The Community Center during the early years, when TCC was able to afford a physical building location—this included the Youth Alliance for Diversity (a program for LGBT youth). When March or April of each year came around, members describe that a sort of panic would hit the organization as they realized that they had to scramble to make arrangements for the upcoming Pride event.

The integration of the Pride events into the core of YFFN was, reports one early member, “killing us! We hadn’t learned to do our committee meetings for Pride outside of the board meetings, and it just took up so much time.” YFFN ran Pride for many years, from 1990 until 2007, but it was always something that was a challenge for the organization. As the years went on, there were many people in YFFN who wished to focus on more programmatic endeavors, or who wanted to turn YFFN into a state-wide political organization. Pride was an event that drained funds from the organization, rather than operating as a fundraiser; YFFN did not begin to draw on corporate sponsorship or local urban community fundraising in a significant way until just a few years before they disbanded. However, members knew that it was crucial that they continue to hold a Pride day in Boise. In 1999, one member of the LGBT community voiced complaints that the events were not sophisticated enough, and that they seemed to be unprofessionally produced; he believed that he could do Pride “better” with large corporation funding and more impressive entertainment acts. He put together a committee and hosted Pride for one year, but he soon realized that this was not quite as easy of a task as he had anticipated, and shortly abandoned the effort to its original organizers at YFFN.

YFFN existed until 2007, when it disbanded and turned over its records to the current Boise Pride organization that was in existence when I visited for my fieldwork in 2008 and 2009.

Some of the members of YFFN simply turned more of their efforts to working with TCC (as they were members of both organizations), others went on to establish the more explicitly political organization called Equality Idaho, while others continued to operate the same programs they had staffed under YFFN—such as the youth group—but moved it over to become a part of The Community Center.

In describing the organizing by YFFN in the early days of Pride, an early member recalls:

We found more people that were feeling the oppression, since there were more public threats directed as us—but also that people were feeling more able to come out, in public, and we just kept gathering more people who were *willing* to be out in public. And the first Prides that we had, we had people come to Pride *but wear a sack over their face so nobody would recognize them!* But they made the effort to be there. And boy, we had lots of hecklers those first years too! And there were times that, as we were marching in the Pride parade, that we really were afraid, that somebody might get *hurt*, that somebody might get shot.

According to this same early member, in the early days, they had a relatively small march, and the festival involved about a hundred people. In the 1990s, as the No on 1 Campaign took center stage in Idaho politics, the Pride events became more populated, drawing out perhaps six or seven hundred people. Of course, she notes, this political attention also multiplied the number of protesters and hecklers, who were out in especially-strong numbers as well during those years.

The organization constantly struggled with financial problems; while in the mid-90s they began to take on local sponsors—one or two corporations but predominantly local independent gay-owned or gay-friendly businesses such as hairdressing shops or flower shops—they never were able to make Pride into a financially self-sustaining entity.

Becoming Boise Pride Inc.

In 2007, YFFN disbanded, due to reasons of financial insolvency and the desire of key members to join more politically-oriented organizations. Several male friends—including one who had been a volunteer at the LGBT community center on and off for the past few years—in their early thirties who heard about the discontinuation of Pride decided to come together and take up the reins. These men were passed along what they describe as a messy box of receipts and papers, with little documentation of finances over the years that was clearly decipherable. One of these men had extensive business experience, having set up several of his own businesses in the past, and he quickly incorporated Boise Pride to become Boise Pride, Inc., setting up a website and e-mail account. They took over the organization in August of 2007, and began meeting once a month at a local coffee shop that had a meeting room. By advertising their meetings on their website and the Boise Weekly, they put together a small committee. These men wanted various LGBT and non-LGBT non-profit organizations to be members, so they established a system in which both individuals and organizations could be members; representatives from TCC, MCC, the Boise Bondage, Domination, and S & M Society (BBDSM), and the local gay choir were often present. Representatives from the BBDSM Society soon became on-going board members and provided extensive assistance.

They envisioned Boise Pride (BP) as a new type of entity, different from what it had been in the past as YFFN: they saw the organization as having potential to be the *fundraising arm* of the Boise LGBT community, in addition to putting on the Pride events every year. They wanted to allow organizations such as TCC, Youth Alliance for Diversity, Idaho Equality, and Alpha to be able to focus on their core programming, rather than constantly struggling with a lack of funding. BP founders also set up college scholarship funds for LGBT youth, and have to this date awarded several small scholarships. However, this was combined with a specific and

definitive rejection of the previous organization's—YFFN's—emphasis on politics and the connection between Pride and political organizing.

This emphasis on fundraising was a key part of how these men (and eventually one woman who joined them) approached their organization. It was run very efficiently as a business, and they focused on hosting events that would not only bring in enough money to fund Pride but also to produce money for their wider goals. They retained the same format as YFFN had held, hosting a March, Rally, and Festival. They made connections with the sponsors that YFFN had found in the past, and also spent extensive time seeking out additional local sponsors for their events.

Both in the first year (according to members' recollection) and during the time that I visited them on my fieldwork trip nine months after the inception of Boise Pride, Inc., their meetings were run very informally; they used little to no parliamentary procedure. Decisions were made by consensus, particularly since there were often no more than six or seven people at the meetings. The organization maintains a website that is currently very well-developed and has extensive amounts of information about primarily LGBT but also other local urban community events on it; other organizations are welcome to add their events to the calendar. One of the key members of BP is also connected to other key organizations in Boise's alternative scene; he is on the board at TCC, and the vice-president of BP was also a founder and board member of The BBDSM Society, an organization that provides extensive help to BP during crunch time. There is a good amount of communication within this small core association of organizations, within this medium-sized city, which has a sort of known quantity of activists that get to know each other and work together.

BP has remained small in membership size, and is made up of a core group of people who run the events; in 2009 it was made up of about five or six key people that met regularly to

put it on. Within this group of people are three men who are close friends and spend a lot of time socializing together; oftentimes information is passed very informally amongst them. Work sessions are often held at someone's house with a six-pack of beer by their side. While one of the members is good about reaching out to other organizations, the people who run the organization have become somewhat insular in a "we can do it ourselves" mentality. While they do have additional volunteers who help break down the festival at the end of their events, they do not seem to lament the extent to which the organization is run by a small group of people.

They often held their monthly meetings at a local gay or gay-friendly bar, particularly during the Pride month when there are a lot of bar fundraising events that they are attending. They earn the bulk of their funding from a combination of bar events and corporate sponsorships. They have partnered with local bars and clubs to do fundraisers, and for the bars to hold their own fundraisers (such as drag queen bingo) and to donate money. They have some smaller local funding sources, such as small businesses in the area, and the anti-smoking campaign. However, BP also receives sponsorships from major companies, including Albertson's, HP, and Wells Fargo, some of which are newly-found connections and others which had supported the events since the days of YFFN. While they are trying to move away from holding all of their events in bars, the majority of their socializing activities as an organization revolve around alcohol and clubs. In response to criticism about this fact, a frustrated board member complained to me: "when we planned a family-friendly event for everyone to go skiing last month, nobody showed up!"

Their decision to hold their events in bars is not surprising given the strength of the gay bar community in relation to the other options in the area, such as the political oppression that they experience. The bars are extremely active in providing spaces for fundraisers, and are integral parts of the fundraising that is done not only for Boise Pride but for all of the

organizations in town. The bars are seen as a key resource for the LGBT community organizations, and are a central aspect of the local gay infrastructure that exists within Boise to support the organization.

Description of the Events

Since its inception in 2007, Boise Pride (BP) has held several events during the weekend of Pride, and a number of fundraising and social events during the week leading up to Pride Weekend. The day of Pride, held on a Saturday, begins with a Rally, traditionally held on the steps of the State Capitol. At the end of the Rally, several hundred people gathered together for the March of approximately a mile and a half, down to the park in which the Festival would be held. The crowd was very diverse in terms of age (although almost exclusively Caucasian in racial representation), and included drag queens, decorated cars, people dressed in colorful and wild costumes, and members of LGBT and allied organizations carrying their group's banner. There were several floats, such as the brightly-decorated in red, white, and blue float by the Ada County Democrats or the one for Mr. and Miss Boise Gay Pride, which all had rainbow-colored balloons and streamers attached. A large portion of the marchers, however, was on foot and made up of small groups of individuals or pairs. There were no barricades along the side of the March route; there were also not too many spectators, save for a few people who may have wandered over after the Rally and cheered us on as we walked by.

Of note during this march were several important elements that I wish to point out. First, I noticed a large number of young adults in attendance, in addition to the older folks that were part of the organizations; these ranged from teens dressed in punk rock outfits with purple hair, to young couples holding hands, and then finally to a group of five young women of

college-age who had come from a town in Northern Idaho, who had all written in marker on matching white t-shirts "Straight But Not Narrow!" The second element of note was the number of families that participated in the March; there were both gay parents with signs saying that they wished to be able to marry, and a number of heterosexual couples who were pushing strollers with their toddlers in tow, who told me directly that they were straight allies of the LGBT community.

The third element that critically defined the experience of being in this particular March was the presence of religious protesters at the March. First, there were about ten to fifteen protesters along the side of the route, holding signs that ranged from vague admonishments to "Love Thy Lord" to more directly challenging statements such as "Come to Repentance." One marcher, however, was prepared for these protesters, and had brought signs to neutralize the tension through humor, by standing next to the protester with various signs that read: "I'm with Stupid!" or "This Jackass Votes. Do You?" Some of these protesters began to sing Christian hymns as we passed them; this only created more cohesion and collective energy for the marchers as they responded by singing the hymn "God Loves All His Children" to drown out the sound of the protesters.

Interestingly, I also found that there were a number of gay-friendly churches that participated in the Pride events. There were five churches, such as the Unitarian Universalists or other smaller local churches (in addition to the explicitly-LGBT church The Metropolitan Community Church) present at the Pride festival. Thus, while I saw a good deal of Christian-sponsored anti-gay sentiment from the protesters, the gay community in Boise also had strong and visible support from the local gay-friendly churches that showed up in significant numbers to the festival.

Several of the corporate sponsors that year also had representation in the March. Both Citibank and Wells Fargo provided large, tall banners that displayed their company's logo for their marchers to carry. Again, as I had discovered in the HOP March, the marchers were members of the company's diversity employee groups. They had been involved in organizing their company's financial sponsorship of Boise Pride, and were proudly marching as openly LGBT and allied employees.

The March led into the Festival, which ran from noon until dusk. The Festival included dozens of booths from a very wide variety of non-profit social, cultural, religious, and political organizations in Boise, individual people selling artwork and jewelry, and had a large stage that featured local entertainment from LGBT and gay-friendly musical talent, emceed by a local drag queen celebrity. There was a van for HIV testing, booths by progressive political organizations collecting signatures and contact information for future political events and actions, food sold by The Community Center as a fundraising effort, and a large beer garden. Notable for this particular Festival was the large representation of gay and gay-friendly churches, each with their own booth and handing out literature about upcoming meetings.

The Festival lasted for hours and was packed with several thousand people relaxing in the grass and under sun umbrellas. It was a low-key event that provided an opportunity for both adults to consume alcohol in a separate area and an open space for LGBT individuals, families and allies to come together for a day in the park, after a Rally and March in the center of Boise.

CONCLUSION

Boise Pride's event draws several thousand people to their Festival and several hundred people to their Rally and March. These events have been growing steadily since the new organization was formed, and they have been successful in bringing in small numbers of corporate sponsors and a wide variety local organizations such as the gay-friendly churches and progressive political organizations. They did, however, draw attention from religious protesters, who showed up in full force to demonstrate their disapproval of the gay community within Idaho. Southern Utah Pride's events were steadily growing, and the organization was successful in providing a weekend of diversion for the LGBT community that has little other opportunity to gather in public. Their events (particularly their March) drew little resistance from Springdale residents, in part because they were prevented from holding the events in their own city as a result of such politically- and socially-conservative conditions that it was not even feasible to stage a march within the city of St. George.

Boise Pride had a growing annual budget, with some local corporate sponsorship and a strong leadership with extensive business experience. They appear to be a small and somewhat unstructured but highly effective organization, and were poised for growth. Southern Utah Pride, on the other hand, experienced significant setbacks in their efforts to create a viable organization over time. Despite a strong start in the year 2008, they had difficulty in maintaining their executive board over time due to internal conflict and personality clashes. Ultimately, they were decided to change their focus and to re-group for the following year, after which point they were plagued by many of the same problems as they encountered previously.

The two organizations operated within very different contexts with respect to the level of gay infrastructure that existed within the city. In Boise, the extensive urban gay infrastructure provided ample support for an organization that was seeking to grow dramatically in the next few years. The bars, clubs, LGBT community center, and even other fundraising

organizations such as the Idaho Gem Court were available as vital resources for the Pride organization. Moreover, there was a wide network of politically-oriented and social non-profit groups that work on behalf of the gay community. They have public representation of their culture within such places as the university library.

In St. George, on the other hand, there is no public gay infrastructure to speak of. The gay community in St. George has largely operated underground, with virtually no public space that they can call their own. Temporary spaces of gay socializing are created, but these “clubs” are frequently forced to relocate, or are staged in private homes that require integration into social networks to find out about them. There are few organizations that exist for the gay community, although they are close-knit and mutually supportive. Some important advances were made in the area of creating public support for their organization, as Southern Utah Pride organization relied on small openings of cultural space within various gay-friendly (but not gay-owned) social and commercial institutions. Boise Pride, on the other hand, drew heavily on their dense gay bar infrastructure for creating the success for their organization. In the succeeding chapters, I will expand on this discussion of the reciprocal and interdependent relationship between gay urban infrastructure and the development of Pride organizations, particularly as I examine the relationship between public space, social change over time, and external institutionalization.

CHAPTER 5: EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION

In this chapter, I explain in detail the practices of *external institutionalization* and *cultural resource mobilization* for LGBT Pride organizations. I show that, as organizations engage in external institutionalization, they generate social and symbolic capital. Through a process that I call *cultural resource mobilization*, Pride organizations display that symbolic capital as a form of *legitimacy* to the local and national public, as a strategy for reducing the social marginalization of gender and sexual minorities. I base my theoretical arguments about these various concepts in extensive ethnographic and archival data from my four empirical urban cases.

External institutionalization (hereafter EI) is the process through which an organization becomes a regular, established actor within its local, national or global community, creating instrumental and meaningful ties to cultural, commercial, corporate market, political, and/or civic entities operating in that environment. EI is specifically a *process*, rather than an event or one-time occurrence. It is a practice of growth, during which an organization fosters connections to its host community through the routine, everyday activities of organizational self-reproduction. EI involves a reciprocal relationship of development with the host community; the organization pushes deeper into the local environment, encountering positive reinforcement or resistance to its advances. EI is highly contextualized in its expression, taking on varied forms and exemplified in different ways in distinct urban social environments. EI is not unique to LGBT Pride organizations; rather, it is a generalized process through which social movement organizations expand out into communities and integrate their marginalized constituents (and their interests) into mainstream society (Ferree and Martin 1995; Staggenborg 1996; Landriscina 2007; Fleischer and Zames 2001; Schmitt and Martin 1999; Katzenstein 1990; Schmitt and Martin 1999).

By taking note of EI, we see that institutionalization does not signal the end of a social movement organization, but rather is an indicator of growth and success as an organization becomes an established actor within its host urban community. This is especially important for social movement organizations comprised of members of a highly stigmatized group, since their social inclusion may be actively opposed by other members of society. As illustrated in chapters 3 and 4, urban cultural and physical factors—such as population density, the existence of an alternative culture, religiosity of the urban population, or the structural form of the city—differ widely among cities, and play a significant role in shaping the process of EI for a cultural movement organization.

The most elementary goal of a Pride organization is to reproduce itself; essentially, to gather enough financial and both LGBT and mainstream urban community support to put on its major annual Pride celebration. Pride organizations seek out funding sources, find vendors willing to host a booth at their event, find physical spaces in which to hold their meetings and their events, and drum up public support for their activities. This compels the organization to make contact with local and corporate commercial, civic, and political institutions as it goes about the business of organizing Pride. As a byproduct of the routine activities of Pride organizations throughout the year, and/or as a result of strategic and intentional decisions to develop associations, Pride organizations find the cracks and fissures in what may be a generally non-gay-friendly urban environment in which they can create ties to various community entities. Or, as we might find in the case of Pride organizations situated in a city with substantial gay urban infrastructure, the organization may increasingly build on those local ties and expand outside of its local urban community to national and corporate entities for their financial and public support. EI is a push-and-pull process of growth and development as organizations forge ahead into their local environment for resources of varied types and forms, and are invited by

various local urban community institutions to create ties. Over time, EI produces a more deeply-integrated relationship between the Pride organization and various local community and national entities.

In this chapter, I show that there are three distinct modes of external institutionalization that I encountered in my fieldwork with Pride organizations. The first mode is a) *ties to local commercial, social and cultural institutions*. This can involve a number of different types of relationships. One example of this form of EI is when a local commercial entity (such as a local bar or café) allows the organization to hold a fundraiser at their establishment. Another example is when a small retail establishment provides either cash or an in-kind donation, such as a gift certificate from a bakery or dog grooming shop, possibly for use as a raffle prize to generate revenue for the Pride organization. This category also includes financial donations from an individual or a partnership with a non-profit organization in which the organization donates money, donates the labor of its members, or co-hosts events with the Pride organization. It also includes the ties that are created when a business or non-profit organization rents a vendor booth during their event, or when a local newspaper provides free or low-cost advertising. In this mode of EI, the ties between the Pride organization and the entity are highly localized, and the brands or non-profit organizations are typically only recognizable to locals who are familiar with the urban community's institutions—in short, the significance of these ties are only meaningful to those with *local* cultural capital knowledge. These benefits are typically provided in exchange for a “sponsorship” in which the entity's name (and logo if available) is displayed as a supporter of Pride on the organization's website, t-shirts, and/or banners, as well as in print advertisements. Higher sponsorship levels would also include free float registration in the Parade and a free booth at the Festival. These ties are typically

developed through extended personal contacts between a member of the organization and the supporting entity.

The second mode of external institutionalization is b) *ties to the corporate market*. This mode is when the Pride organization establishes relationships with multi-million-dollar corporate entities that have a national public presence, such as well-known brands and commercial entities that have widespread and generalized name recognition to the average American. Pride organizations create agreements with corporate sponsors in which they receive money and/or product from the company that can be sold or used by the organization to generate resources. For example, an airline would provide cash and/or free travel for Pride performing artists, or an alcohol company would donate cash and/or alcohol to be sold at a Pride event for revenue. In return, the corporate sponsor's name and logo is displayed as a supporter of the Pride organization on banners, t-shirts, on the organization's website, and in print advertisements, and a large sponsorship would include a free float and/or booth registration at the Pride events. Media sponsorships, which refer to free or low-cost advertising in national newspapers and magazines, also make up a portion of this category. These ties are developed through a variety of methods, including personal contacts, employee diversity groups, initiatives coming from the corporate entity to the Pride organization, and/or applications submitted by the Pride organization to the company for sponsorship.

The third mode of external institutionalization is c) *ties to the political and civic field*. Civic institutionalization involves the building of relationships to public government entities, and shows that the civic field is accessible to the Pride organization. This signifies that the group has access to various public entities without contestation and that one can find civic institutions holding events in honor of LGBT Pride. Examples would include entities as public libraries that hold public LGBT events or exhibits, museums that have gay-themed exhibits, or a publicly-

operated entity such the U.S. Postal Service offering a commemorative stamp for Pride Month. I also include in this category the hosting of Gay Pride celebrations by such public entities as the Mayor's Office or the City Council—using public funds—as well as the announcement and advertisement of Gay Pride events in public, mainstream urban civic calendars, such as in a police precinct's calendar or a borough president's office calendar. Civic institutionalization also refers to cases where a civic entity—such as a public utilities company—rents and staffs a vendor booth at a Pride event or advertises in an organization's annual journal.

Political institutionalization refers to ties fostered between the Pride organization and politicians seeking or holding political office. While this category overlaps slightly with civic institutionalization (since those in city government who grant access to civic institutions are, of course, individual politicians), it refers more specifically to ties to individual politicians or to groups of political candidates or political parties. In the case of political institutionalization, one would find politicians seeking the support of the gay community by appealing to the Pride organization, such as by showing up at the Pride events, marching in their parade, or appearing at the organization's fundraiser. Politicians do this with the intended goal of retaining or acquiring the gay community's support in electoral political campaigns. Indicators of political institutionalization include the presence of many political officials at an organization's fundraising event, or advertisements by politicians in an organization's annual event journal (e.g., in the Pride Guide). Ties to politicians who have an extra-local presence, such as a U.S. congressperson or senator, as opposed to a local city councilmember, indicate greater degrees of political institutionalization. However, this can also vary by context; winning over a well-known local conservative politician from an enemy to an ally—and having his or her public support at one's event or his/her purchase of a journal advertisement—can also indicate an advance in political institutionalization. Like all forms of external institutionalization, political

institutionalization requires a certain type of cultural capital knowledge in order to recognize the symbolic significance of the ties.

These three modes should be viewed as “ideal types” in a Weberian sense, rather than exclusive categories that represent what can be found in specific Pride organizations. Of the four organizations I studied, each organization clearly exhibited a *dominant mode* of institutionalization (or, in one case, a combination of modes). Southern Utah Pride operated in the dominant mode of local commercial, social, and cultural external institutionalization, while Heritage of Pride fit into a corporate sponsorship model. Queens Pride was overwhelmingly involved in political and civic institutionalization. Boise Pride was a combination of local commercial/social/cultural EI and corporate market EI, relying on both in equal measures. I should point out that ideal types are only that—they do not exist in pure form in empirical reality. As an organization moves from one mode to another, it does not entirely abandon its previous mode of EI, but instead privileges the new mode over the others.

I found that a Pride organization will typically move between the three modes of EI over time, building upon each other, in a sequence that evolves from ties to local commercial/cultural/ social entities, to corporate market entities, and then to civic and political institutionalization. A Pride organization will typically start out in its early days by drawing on local commercial entities to get support, gather some corporate sponsorship as it grows and becomes attractive to larger commercial entities, and at a succeeding moment will reach political and civic institutionalization. However, I did also find that an organization may decide to remain at the corporate sponsorship mode, if it suits the leadership, or move ahead with political and civic institutionalization and then *backtrack* to relying primarily on corporate sponsorship at a later point in time. In any case, what was clear from my findings is that an organization typically does not start out by engaging in civic and political institutionalization, but

rather works up to it as it moves through the other two forms by generating social and symbolic capital. This is a loose process of development that cultural movement organizations follow, based on my research with the four Pride organizations in this study.

This progression from one mode to another is not entirely based on the decisions of the Pride group. Rather, it is the product of an interactive relationship between what the local urban community will allow *and* the inclinations and strategic decisions of the organizational leadership. I consciously choose not to call these “stages” of institutionalization, and instead refer to them as “modes.” An organization does not “leave” one stage to enter another; it does not follow an exclusive developmental pattern in which it abandons a previous stage as it enters the next. All of the organizations exhibited at least some of each form of EI in its resource mobilization repertoire, in varying quantities. Instead, I see these modes more as building blocks that are incorporated into the organization’s resource mobilization repertoire, a process in which a dominant cultural resource mode will be deployed as the organization develops and gains legitimacy within its local urban environment over time.

An organization operates within a particular EI mode as a function of *both agency or strategy* and the *local cultural context* in which it is located. The EI mode is not determined entirely by context nor entirely by the strategic moves or goals of the organizations’ leadership. With respect to cultural context, a Pride organization cannot build civic ties to a local community in which the local government is highly influenced by a conservative religious population and generally opposed to the progress of gay rights (although it can develop relationships with particular progressive politicians or civic entities). A Pride organization also will not find extensive corporate sponsorship in a setting in which corporations believe they will suffer a massive backlash from the local community for supporting a gay organization. Alternatively, an organization operating in a city in which there are hundreds of thousands of corporate

sponsorship dollars available to them may find themselves privileging that form of EI over others, by virtue of ease of access (or they may *choose* to privilege civic and political EI instead, as a function of strategic choices by their leadership). Thus, I emphasize the fact that external institutionalization is a process through which Pride leaders seek out and mobilize any and all resource options available to them within that context, and then reach ahead to see if they can find additional sources over time, in new cultural arenas.

The Pride organization exercises strategy and agency when the organization's leadership and general membership lead the group in one direction or another. There may, for example, be a push factor toward corporate sponsorship when the organization seeks to grow rapidly using the most time-efficient means of generating financial resources for its events. Or, they may be a strong push factor that comes from a critical mass of politically-oriented Pride group members that privilege political and civic institutionalization—pointing to strategy as the impetus for moving in that direction. As the urban environment changes around the organization—as a result of the organization's own efforts, the efforts of other LGBT organizations, increasing tendencies of corporations to allow LGBT employee groups to form within their companies (which will lead to ties between corporations and Pride organizations), legal changes from the state or federal level, or any number of cultural, social, economic, or political factors—opportunities open or close, and the Pride organization may choose to pursue a different option for generating the necessary resources to produce their events. The extension of the organization into the local urban environment is a function of both strategy and culture—perhaps alternatively expressed as the classic tension between “agency and structure”—as they interact in real time and space. External institutionalization is necessary for organization growth, but the form and dimensions of that EI is a product of both strategic choice and environmental context.

How Does EI Create Social Change?

The practice of external institutionalization by Pride organizations produces three key effects within a local urban community: a) it *disrupts the heteronormativity of public space*; b) it *builds social capital*; and, as a product of that social capital, it c) *generates symbolic capital*. Social capital and symbolic capital are *cultural resources* that emerge as byproducts of external institutionalization, as the Pride organization goes about creating ties to various community institutions. These cultural changes can be either unintended byproducts or intentionally-produced effects on the local mainstream urban community, depending on the case and the organization. Symbolic capital can act as a marker of *legitimacy*, in whatever local expression that it takes within the urban environment that the Pride organization is operating.

Cultural resource mobilization (hereafter CRM) is the strategy of displaying symbolic capital, or legitimacy, to the rest of the local urban community. Pride organizations use CRM to show that they are not marginalized by at least some members of their local urban mainstream community, with the hopes that other sectors of the mainstream community will come to perceive sexual and gender minorities as non-deviant and non-stigmatized, thus decreasing homophobia and social rejection on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. CRM is the mobilization of the capital created through external institutionalization, towards the end of establishing the organization as a legitimate organizational member of that local urban community. The goal of CRM is to advance the LGBT population from marginalization to incorporation as an ethnic or subcultural group, by displaying the social and symbolic capital ties that they have generated through external institutionalization. CRM operates at the level of cultural symbols and meanings, but also represents the material resources that their supporters

have provided for them through external institutionalization (money, free advertising, free product that the Pride group can sell, etc.).

Cultural resource mobilization is the general term that I use to describe the cultural effects of Pride organizing on a local urban community. External institutionalization is the mechanism through which Pride groups generate that cultural capital. What are the effects of external institutionalization, as evidence in Pride organizing across different urban contexts? First, Pride organizing *disrupts the heteronormativity* of public space. In an oppressively-heteronormative environment, the sheer visibility of homosexuality in public is perceived as threatening.⁴⁵ To hold a fundraiser for gay people in a public space can be transgressive—it forces mainstream heterosexuals to be confronted with the presence of gay life in their local environment, rather than “out there” (as seen in St. George, Utah). On the other end of the spectrum, in an environment that is accustomed to seeing gay culture on urban streets (such as in gay bars or clubs), the use of official public space owned by the city by a gay organization or the celebration of Pride Month by the New York City Council can be seen as pushing the boundaries of where and when LGBT life is normally present. The official naming of a streetcorner for a gay man who died as a result of a gay-bashing incident can be understood as a disruption of heteronormative public space (as seen in Jackson Heights, Queens). A parade and festival that take over a large portion of the city for an entire day also breaks up the heteronormativity of public space. Signs in the public transit system that explain how to move around the city on “Gay Pride Day” (since the Manhattan Pride event can significantly alter traffic flows) is also a significant intrusion into the heteronormativity of public transit space. These symbolic disruptions have an impact on both LGBT people—as closeted individuals may feel less isolated

⁴⁵ This is not to suggest that “visibility” is a simplistic concept that automatically denotes equality in political rights or genuine social acceptance of LGBT people. I will discuss the issue of visibility further in a later chapter. However, in the context of exclusively heteronormative public space, visibility is still a basic and crucial factor contributing to the advancement of LGBT social acceptance.

and stigmatized—and on those who harbor sentiments about LGBT people as “deviant” or non-normative. The visibility of the LGBT community and its allies in places and spaces that are not in the dark corners of urban life (such as in clubs and bars) but in the light of Borough Hall should be recognized as a very important symbolic development for a local urban community.

The second way EI works is by *building social capital*. Pride organizations generate ties between themselves and community organizations, particularly through their regular fundraising and vendor-seeking activities. As the organizations are forced to go out and find allies in the community, the ties that they establish are a form of social capital that they can draw upon. This social capital is a very important building block, because LGBT people have historically been stigmatized and marginalized from mainstream society. The Pride organization collects local and national entities that are willing to work with them, who treat them either as traditional (e.g., non-stigmatized) business partners or are available to make a stand by showing support of the group in a time of need. The process of fundraising, seeking out vendors, and seeking out political or other supporters forces the Pride organization to push the boundaries of who may be willing to be a part of their circle, and can lead them to find allies in unexpected places.

Lastly, that social capital is *employed* by the Pride organization as *symbolic capital*. As the organization creates ties to various institutions, it presents those ties to the rest of the world as symbolic “social credit,” through the display of their sponsorships. The more symbolic capital an organization can gather, the more that the members can demonstrate that they are not, in fact, deviant and abnormal, but rather that they have allies within the local or national mainstream community who will stand by them. It is this capital that is most useful for the widespread cultural change that I argue can be seen as a result of Pride. The focus on getting bigger and “better” sponsors, I found, is not just about the amounts of money or advertising

space that the organization can garner, but rather about collecting “social credit” that has symbolic significance to those whose with the cultural capital to recognize it. Through that “social credit,” or *legitimacy*, Pride organizations seek to display the “symbols” of social acceptance, aimed at combating the social marginalization of LGBT people. Certain sponsors, for a marginalized group, hold great symbolic significance that extends far beyond money. As I will demonstrate below in an empirical example from my fieldwork, the money or advertising credits are only a part of why Pride organizations value sponsorships. Instead, the significance of sponsorships for Pride organizations operates largely in the arena of *public meanings*, for those with the cultural capital knowledge to appreciate those meanings.

All three of these together—the disruption of heteronormativity and the building of social and symbolic capital—are the result of external institutionalization practices. Traditional resource mobilization theories direct their attention to such concrete elements as financial support and manpower. While some research in the traditional RM field does recognize “legitimacy” as a resource, the theory is not equipped with the cultural interpretation tools to accurately assess and consider how the gathering of legitimacy operates and is displayed for the benefit of the organization. CRM, instead, directs our attention to the symbolic meaning of resources, viewing them as potential representations of power or social inclusion. CRM allows us to critically analyze and understand the meaning of a logo on a Pride organization’s website, which represents a material economic tie but also a symbolic tie between an organization and an outside entity. The multi-institutional approach, advanced by Armstrong and Bernstein (2008), is similar in that it does not divide culture and structure, and helps us to understand the process of CRM through external institutionalization as both instrumental and expressive. In this view, an organization can gather both material *and* symbolic resources through cultural movement strategies, rather than only one or the other. Moreover, this approach legitimizes

the work that Pride organizations do in the realm of the symbolic. Even when we look at that Pride organizations have with the political and civic realms, it is possible to see how this is not an issue of targeting the state for political rights, but rather targeting it for cultural representation, in symbolic forms. For cultural movements—and especially for cultural movements dealing with a stigmatized identity group—this realm of the symbolic plays a crucially important role in the movement’s development, as it may also do for all types of social movements.

Building Pride from the Ground Up: The Case of Southern Utah Pride

Creating Social Capital through Fundraising, Advertising, and Finding Vendors

For Southern Utah Pride, fundraising and finding vendors for their annual Pride event is based primarily on finding small, local businesses, non-profit organizations, social groups, and individuals that are willing to support their organization, and by conducting small fundraising activities within their local community. The way that SUP generated the majority of their operating money was through small fundraisers and procuring sponsorships from local businesses. The fundraisers that they put on themselves included such activities as: carwashes (they held two in the parking lot of a major chain store during my fieldwork); rummage sales, parties that asked for a donation such as a “Summer Solstice Party” and a Halloween party held in a member’s home, and a “Dani Campbell Slumber Party” where attendees gathered for a night to watch a marathon of a popular reality television show in which a main character was a butch lesbian. Other fundraisers were held by outsiders for the organization in nearby cities; they received donations from fundraiser held specifically for them by such entities as the Salt Lake City Imperial Gem Court (part of a national drag queen fundraising association), a gay club

in Las Vegas, individual drag queens in Salt Lake City, a group called the Righteously Outrageous Twirling Corps, and from Mister Utah Bear 2008. SUP also received donations from a number of different individuals, from small local donations to a very large donation from a gay philanthropist in a nearby city. Members relied primarily on their own sweat equity labor and from donations from gay entities and individuals from their extended LGBT and allied community.

The organization held a number of parties and events within the city of St. George in their local fundraising efforts. From the perspective of understanding how public gay events disrupt the heteronormativity of daily life in St. George, this was a particularly important phenomenon. One board member notes that her work as a Pride leader in St. George was a case in which “we were just kind of *representing* in a small town where people don’t want to see you or hear you. And we’re like, ‘too bad! We’re here; get over it!’”

Leaders of the organization found it quite difficult to find public space to hold their events. States one member:

We tried to get a few of the bars here in town to agree to be venues for fundraisers. It was like pulling teeth. Even if we did get a hold of someone, they’d be like, ‘ummm, let me get back to you...I have to find this out...’ and then never call us back. ... We tried everywhere! We tried the Holiday Inn, we tried convention halls, we tried the bowling alley.... It was just such a *rough time* finding venues for our events. We were rejected left and right; no one would let a gay group do a fundraising event there.

Given that it was difficult to find spaces to hold their events, members spent a lot of time searching out different venues within the St. George community to host them, in exchange for the venue being listed as a sponsor. Over time, SUP came to know that there were two places that would let them hold events: Mocha Café and Desert Art Village, which is a residential community and art village on the outskirts of St. George. Mocha Café is one of the few coffee shops located in the center of town; it often hosts bands and other entertainment events in the

evenings. According to one member of SUP, the owner is straight, but “really open-minded; he’s awesome. He’s really open to whatever. He’s like, ‘you guys want to have Gay Coffee Night here? Sure, bring ‘em on!’ Which is cool, ‘cause he’s worked so hard on this place. It’s his livelihood, and he’s not afraid to let us represent our community here.” In exchange for a Platinum Sponsorship, the owner of this café allowed them to have several fundraisers at his establishment for free. Desert Art Village was managed by an openly gay man who had been peripherally involved with Pride for some time. He agreed to let them use the performance space for such fundraisers as drag shows, service auctions, and dances that they wished to hold as fundraisers. Pride also planned to hold a silent auction/sit-down dinner at the establishment later in the year. It is important to note here that once the owner of Mocha Café allowed them to hold their fundraisers at his coffee shop, this became a regular hangout and weekly meeting space for SUP members. The owner’s generosity in sponsorship was rewarded with extensive patronage of his establishment; the gay community came to spend a great deal of money on food and café drinks over a long period of time at a place that they knew to be gay-friendly and supportive of their cause.

The story of Mocha Café is particularly revealing about the way that these fundraising events severely disrupted the heteronormativity of public space in St. George—and the reaction that it provoked from the city. It illustrates several important aspects of what it means to hold a gay fundraising event in a public space, within a local urban environment that is generally unreceptive to the gay individuals.

I mean, just having a drag show fundraiser in this town is a big deal. We did a ton of advertising for a drag show that we were going to hold at Mocha Café, putting out flyers everywhere, so that’s how it probably came to be known by the city that we were doing it. The city started calling and getting on [the owner’s] case about his maximum capacity; they even sent the fire marshal over to let him know that he could only have fifty people there. His maximum capacity is way more than that, but...they were just trying to make things *difficult*. He’s been having events there for months and months and months—

tons of bands have played there and he's *never* had the fire marshal visit! They also sent cops over to count heads while we were holding the event. They were just babysitting us while we were doing a drag show, which is something that *they* think is 'dirty and kinky'—with probably *nudity* and 'bad things happening.' They thought 'cabaret' meant strip tease! It was nothing like that! The police, they just came in and looked around, and said, 'looks good to me.' They were bothered at the fact that they even had to come check it out. But they *got that* instruction from somewhere. So it's somewhere in this city. What they *don't* know is that it ended up working out even better for us in the end, because we had to have three showings of the event and we ended up making triple the amount of money!

We see here how the event dramatically ruptured what is normally heterosexual-only public space across St. George. Moreover, only when the Pride group decided to hold a public gay fundraising event did the city come to be aware of and have an opportunity to repress the group's "gay activities"—until that time, there had been little to no contact with the city government (recall here that they held the actual Pride event in a nearby town that was more liberal). Here we see the organization coming up squarely against the mainstream community's social boundaries and public resistance, as it took over public space for an evening to host a gay-themed event. The hosting of a drag show in a city like St. George made gay cultural entertainment forms available for the LGBT youth in the area to experience—cultural forms that they would otherwise may not have been exposed to.

Fundraising events also activated the existing dense local gay population's networks in St. George by bringing members and allies into public space to staff and attend the various fundraisers. The events provided an opportunity for gay and gay-friendly people to gather and come to know each more intimately, and to be able to express themselves openly, creating a collective identity and a public space for LGBT people to feel accepted and welcome. I asked one board member, "If someone were to give you \$20,000 tomorrow, would you still do the local fundraisers, like the parties and carwashes?" She responded,

Yes, absolutely! Because the fundraisers...well, we didn't raise a whole lot of money each time we did them; we only got about \$300. But what we also did was bring in new faces, and had an opportunity for members of our community

to come out and enjoy themselves without feeling *stigmatized*, without feeling judged. They could just come out and enjoy themselves and just *be gay*, and be okay with it. I think there's a whole lot more that came from the fundraisers than just the money. Okay, maybe I wouldn't do the carwashes if I had twenty grand—those are a pain! But the rest of them, definitely! The drag shows—those are so much fun. A lot of people—straight, gay, otherwise—come to enjoy it. Because we wouldn't have anything like that if we didn't bring it in, as far as an alternative form of entertainment. I'd definitely keep the drag shows, the masquerade ball, the service auction, the Valentine's Day Red Party, all of them.

Clearly the fundraisers are important for internal LGBT community-building, not only for generating money. They bring out LGBT residents of St. George into the public sphere, and also connect them with members of the straight community that are either open-minded enough to attend or who may happen upon the event by accident (for example, the presence of a “gay car wash” representing a “local gay organization” in the parking lot of a chain store). This is very significant in a city that has no public gay life outside of these events put on by SUP.

I asked this same individual about how the group decided where to put the flyers advertising the fundraisers and main Pride weekend event. She notes that she turned to a strong underground system of people and businesses that are known, by members of the organization, to be either LGBT or straight allies. “We put the flyers up in grocery stores, restaurants. Coffee shops. Just in the front windows of different businesses that are supportive.” I asked, “How do you know which businesses are supportive?” She answered, “Well, some of them we have friends that work there. So that helps. And then some of them are gay or lesbian owned; that helps. And...others...it was just where we were, and we asked, and they said yes. For the most part, it was a ‘friend of a friend’ or somebody that we knew ahead of time who wouldn't shun us or turn us away.” This suggests that the Pride organization's fundraising activities and publicity activities are a crucial means of *finding and activating social networks of people* that the individuals know within the local urban community. The organization draws on those social ties to create public visibility and cohesiveness of their

support for their organization, both *disrupting the heteronormativity of public space*, and *making visible the existing social ties that can be activated as social capital within the St. George community*. This process of building social capital formalizes the relationships that already existed through informal friendship networks, and reinforces a more concrete set of social capital ties that they can be relied on in the future for movement mobilization.

Another way that the Pride organizing produces social capital as a function of routine activity within the organization's local urban community is by forcing the members to find vendors (i.e. people to host a booth during the weekend of the event) and people to donate raffle prizes for their main Pride weekend event. I spent time with Nicky, the Vendor Director of SUP going over her list of vendors that had signed up to have a booth at the festival, asking questions about how she came to find each one. She pointed to a few of the vendors, saying:

That company, she gave \$200 in gift certificates for her spa. She's local; she was a close friend of my ex's, actually. She's straight. And the photography company—he used to be John's roommate. He'll be donating some of his artwork for the raffle too. And then that next vendor—she's a friend of mine. The mobile pet grooming van that will be there—he's Julie's best friend. [Name of major chain] Pizza, he's related to me, actually. I've known him and his kids all my life. This guy, he's trying to set up a Dutch oven business; I knew him through a friend of a friend. This candle company, she found out about us through a friend of a friend and called us up, actually.

Here we see that most of the people that were vendors or donators for the organization are people that members knew through pre-existing extended social networks. Vendors included both LGBT and non-LGBT people from the St. George and surrounding area, such as open-minded friends, friends-of-friends, or extended family members. The more vendors that the Pride group was able to bring in, not only could they expect to have a more exciting festival, but the more they could to show to the LGBT and allied community that they, in fact, have extensive support from a wide variety of sources within the St. George and surrounding area. In 2008, SUP brought in over 70 vendors to its festival (up from 20 the previous year). This included a range of entities from commercial businesses (including food vendors), non-profit organizations,

and individuals who informally provide services and goods such as massage or hand-made products. By ferreting out and solidifying the relationships that SUP had to their supporters within their local environment, they effectively *built and solidified social capital ties within their local urban community*.

I asked Nicky about her experience going out into the mainstream St. George urban environment to find vendors. She sighed, and said that it was very difficult:

Even this last year [2007], as big as we were of a team, we probably had about 20 food vendors from around here turn us down. There's a restaurant in Springdale that always has a booth at the Springdale Fourth of July festival, and they turned us down. ... I went to the mall with two other Pride people last weekend and we probably handed out 60 applications to everyone in the mall, to everyone we met. And we did not get one phone call from it. We even followed up with them with phone calls. We hit *all* the shops—Bath and Body Works, Hot Topic, those little cellphone booths—*not one person* responded. We didn't reach our goal, but...what can you do?"

I ask why she thinks it didn't go well. Nicky pauses, then shrugs. "I think it's just the exposure of being a gay event. They think it's going to hurt them. You know, when I look at it, I'm thinking, 'money is money. It doesn't matter if it's from gay people or not.' But some people, they don't see it that way."

However, she also tells a story about how they found one of their vendors, which included a surprising result:

Oh, those women...That's an interesting story, actually. Me, Graham, and Lacey, we were out doing vendor stuff, trying to sign people up, and we walked into this barbeque shop. I had heard their fish was really good! I said that we should give them a packet, see if they would be a food vendor, and Chris said, "Oh, definitely no—they're *very Mormon*." Well, I went in there to eat anyway, and I had on this rainbow ring that I always wear [which signifies LGBT identity], and the lady at the counter leans over and say, "Ohhhh, so you're *family*?" And I thought she was talking about me, Graham, and Lacey, and I said, "nah, that's not my brother!" And she goes, "well, this is my partner!" and points to the other woman behind the counter! And we're like, "what the heck!" So we signed them up—they're closing their restaurant, but they'll be selling some Pride t-shirts and other stuff at the festival.

So, here we see that Pride organizing brings out LGBT people from the community that the members did not even know about. Now this lesbian couple is tied in with the rest of the LGBT

community, because Pride was one of the few ways for them to even find others in St. George who publicly identified as LGBT. The Pride organization and its events are one of the only regular opportunities that an LGBT person has to participate in public—and, also significantly, in which they can involve their business. This process of reaching out to various vendors creates social capital and community strength not only outside the community to allies that they reach out to, but within the existing—but not connected—LGBT community too.

The following year, the organization began working on a membership discount card that they could offer to individual members of the organization. They sought to sign up businesses that would provide a 10% discount to cardholders. This was similar to a discount card program that already existed in St. George called “Dixie Direct,” to which many people in the city already belonged. SUP members put together a sponsorship team “whose main goal was to go door-to-door, from business to business, asking, ‘Do you support us?’ And they’ll say yea or nay, and we can maybe put ‘em on the list to be one of our sponsors.” I asked Rachel, a member of the sponsor team, about why the group thought about going to businesses first. She answered, “I don’t know; maybe it comes from the whole Dixie Direct thing. Maybe it comes from just the idea of finding local support for our *cause*, and going out into the *general* community, not just the gay community.” I asked if she thought it was going to be difficult to find sponsors. She answered, “Oh yeah! God, it’s scary as hell! Walk into a Holiday Inn and you don’t know *what* you’re walking into...!”

The process of finding vendors, just like the methods of finding venues in which the Pride group can hold their events, means that members of the organization are forced to go out into the community and find who their supporters are. While this is difficult in a place like St. George, since the mainstream community is largely non-receptive, members build social capital through whatever fissures and cracks that they can find within a predominantly oppressive

environment, and through which they establish a combination of dense and loose ties to people who are willing to brave the stigma of being involved with a gay organization.

Using Sponsorships and Logos as Symbolic Capital

The Pride organizations also spend a lot of their time finding *sponsorships* in addition to holding fundraisers and finding vendors for their events. In exchange for a financial donation, advertising credits, product donation, or service credits to the organization, SUP put the name and/or logo of the sponsoring entity on their website, flyers, and on banners at their event. It is in this practice of finding sponsorships that we can see clearly the relationship between social capital and symbolic capital.

As I note above, the organization seeks to find whatever social capital ties it can gather within the community; the president of SUP noted that he just picked up the phone and called “anybody and everybody in southern Utah and the surrounding area who I thought might be willing to sponsor us!” Most of SUP’s sponsorships came from LGBT individuals, gay-owned companies, and gay-friendly non-profits from within St. George, Las Vegas, and Salt Lake City area. However, there were important and revealing moments in which they came to find supporters from the St. George and surrounding area that were clearly a departure from the rest of their sponsors.

The president of the organization, Graham, in his search to find local sponsors, he called up the local newspaper, which I will call St. George News. St. George News, while it did have some gay-friendly reporters, was known within the gay community as a very socially and politically conservative paper, with a predominantly-Mormon readership base. Graham, with little expectation of success, decided to take a chance, and got in touch with someone at the

newspaper to ask if they would provide some free advertising in exchange for a sponsorship (which the newspaper regularly did for non-gay non-profit organizations). The woman who answered the phone was surprisingly receptive; she told Graham that her son was gay, and that she would be more than happy to provide a substantial amount of free advertising for his organization.

George was thrilled, and immediately put the newspaper's logo up on his website and displayed it on all of their flyers and in a major advertisement they had just purchased in a national gay magazine. He viewed this sponsorship by the St. George News as a coup for the organization, and hoped that it would be a source of encouragement to local gay youth and others who may be afraid to come out. He felt that this represented that the local newspaper was becoming more supportive of the gay community. During fieldwork with SUP in March of 2008, George was elated about this sponsorship, and pointed to it as a surprising but important sign of progress toward increasing gay acceptance in St. George. However, when he called the newspaper again in June to further solidify the dates for the advertising that was to occur in July and August, he found that the woman no longer worked at the newspaper.

He contacted the senior editors of the paper, who told him that they had no record of such a sponsorship. They also informed him that they had decided that they were not interested in sponsoring his organization. He fought with them, forwarding e-mail messages that clearly showed their existing agreement. The newspaper ultimately provided them with some of the agreed-upon advertising credits. While this is clearly a story of discrimination that demonstrates the uneven attitudes toward homosexuality that one finds in St. George, it is even more significant because of a comment that Graham made to me while we were discussing this issue. He stated, "It's important to have as *many* local sponsors as *possible* on our website. Even in they *hadn't* granted us the sponsorship in the end, I still would have said, 'Is it alright if we

keep your logo [on our website and on our flyers], because it just makes the community—especially *the youth of the community*—see that they *do* have a little bit of support.”

What this comment reveals is that the symbolic capital that one generates from having a mainstream, conservative newspaper show support—even *if it is false*—is more important than the tangible benefits (i.e. free advertising) that the Pride organization receives from its sponsor. In the mind of the SUP president, using a symbolic capital approach, if a local LGBT youth believed that the St. George Newspaper had become supportive of the gay community, then he or she would experience less self-hatred as an LGBT person and be more likely to come to terms with their sexual orientation in a healthy way. This is an example of how Pride organizations trade in *symbolic capital*, not only in social capital. When a gay youth from St. George, someone who may have grown up reading anti-gay articles in St. George News, sees that they have the symbolic support of the newspaper, he or she may experience less trepidation about coming out because he believes that his or her local urban cultural environment is slowly changing to become more accepting of his sexual orientation. Moreover, if other companies could see that the St. George News is sponsoring Pride, then they might be more likely to sign up as a sponsor as well—which would indicate a waterfall effect of expanded social and symbolic capital. This demonstrates effect of symbolic capital *on local LGBT people*—increasing their feelings of acceptance and support from their local urban community and decreasing their experience of stigma—in addition to the display of that symbolic capital to the non-gay community who might be more likely to participate with Pride the following year if they saw that a mainstream entity such as St. George News was supportive of the organization.

In order to understand how Pride organizing operates, one has to take into consideration not only social capital, but also how that social capital generates symbolic capital. That symbolic capital, as noted by Graham in the above quote, is used to point out to the public

that the gay community has support, which may help LGBT people feel less stigmatized, and may in turn cause non-LGBT people to *see them* as less stigmatized and to be more accepting of LGBT-identified individuals.

There were also two additional cases in which SUP received either financial or direct technical assistance from a business and they were specifically asked *not* to list the business as a sponsor of Pride. These situations show the limitations that the organization experienced in trying to build social and symbolic capital in southern Utah. A member of the organization had a family member who provided extensive support in drafting maps for the festival using professional mapping technology, since she worked at her family's business that had this application. The Pride organization wanted to put up the business's logo on their website, but was asked by the owner of the business to remove it for fear of retribution from the Mormon community if the company were to be associated with a gay organization. Moreover, a major bank gave SUP a financial donation, but asked that their logo be used only in association with the "health fair" at the festival—a slightly separate grouping of booths that provided STD testing and information on sexual and reproductive health—and not displayed on the organization's website page. Their contact at the bank noted that he would have "loved to help you guys more, but it's just not feasible at this time, given the state of the community. But maybe down the road a little, we'll be able to do more for you...let's see how it goes."

In these two cases, we see a resistance to providing the symbolic capital of the business, for fear of reprisal from the largely-Mormon and socially conservative mainstream population in St. George. They were willing to provide material and financial assistance, but were not comfortable with providing the *symbolic capital of their business's name and logo*. Clearly, members of the organization experienced challenges in finding symbolic capital support in St. George, since they were so marginalized. While they were grateful for the material and

practical support, they were losing out on the symbolic benefits of having mainstream businesses attach their names to their organization. These businesses recognized the symbolic effects that their association with a gay organization would hold for their *own* establishment, and, while they were willing to provide the financial capital or practical assistance, they were unwilling to attach their symbolic capital to the Pride group for fear of retribution.

Some of the people in SUP were focused exclusively on the tangible and material goals of gathering sponsorships, finding venues for their events, and finding vendors. They understood that there were some community institutions in St. George that were of “more significance” to have on one’s side than others, but some did not think too deeply about the symbolic logic that underlay their actions. However, one particularly astute member of the organization was able to very clearly articulate the process of generating symbolic capital as a function of building ties to local commercial, social, and cultural institutions. She had spent a number of years living in St. George in a lesbian relationship, almost entirely closeted except to a few choice friends, until she became involved with the Pride group. Affiliation with the LGBT group gave her the courage to start being more open about her sexuality and lifestyle. Having so strongly experienced the direct symbolic effects of a *lack of LGBT visibility*—specifically, the visibility of *support*— in the St. George community, she was able to state very clearly why she believed it was so important for the organizations to get local businesses on their side—not only for the financial support, but for the symbolic capital that it supplies to those who hold the ability to appreciate it:

If I know that the community supports us, then I’m not going to stay in my closet so much. I absolutely don’t believe that it’s a money thing, because the individuals tend to give more money than the businesses do—but if we can just get some *names* out there, like if you walk by a sign, and it’s the Golden Arches, you think “McDonald’s” and you know what that *is*. So I think it [sponsorship by businesses] works as a two-way street: it helps the [straight] community recognize that [parts of] the community accepts us, and it helps *us* recognize

that the community accepts us. That's my thought process on the issue of sponsorship.

The local commercial, social and non-profit mode of external institutionalization was the only form of institutionalization available to SUP in St. George, Utah, as the members sought to find social and symbolic capital in whatever avenues were open to them. They were unable to attain any significant corporate sponsorship or political support, and instead focused their attention on the local entities that were recognizable within their local urban community. Because St. George a small, tight community, Pride members sought out local supporters who would not only help to put on their events but would also signal to local LGBT people within the city that they had allies in that city, and to the straight population that they did, in fact, have supporters in St. George. In turn, SUP members responded to a business's symbolic support through regular patronage of that business, as we saw with Mocha Café. As I will explore more in a later chapter, the approach of the organization was to work *with* and *through* the local urban community, particularly with local businesses, rather than against it, to build up local social capital that would serve to increase social acceptance through symbolic displays of capital resources.

"The Mother of All Prides": The Case of Heritage of Pride and the Corporate Market

In contrast to Southern Utah Pride, the organization Heritage of Pride as I encountered it in 2008 relied on corporate sponsorship for the majority of its funding. It became clear to me through my interviews with HOP members that the organization had, in its early years, relied on local gay and gay-friendly businesses and local social/cultural entities for its fundraising and sponsorships, and transitioned into the dominant mode of corporate sponsorship over time. According to a

long-time member of the organization, “The corporate sponsors showed up in the ‘90s; when I arrived it was minimal, but by the end of the ‘90s it had dramatically increased.” In order to investigate this statement as a verifiable fact, I consulted a sample of Pride Guides produced by the organization over the past several decades. The advertisements in these journals, I found, reflected changes mentioned in my interviews. Coding these advertisements provided me with quantitative evidence of trends that HOP followed during its lifecourse as a non-profit organization: from a local commercial, social and cultural mode of external institutionalization to a corporate sponsorship mode of external institutionalization.

After a presentation of the empirical data from the journals, I discuss below critiques about corporate sponsorship, how HOP members responded to them, and how members thought and felt about corporate sponsorship in general. I show the challenges HOP members faced when trying to find the social and financial capital that would help them to effectively put on their events. We see that corporate sponsorship provides its own form of symbolic capital—one that is easily perceivable by the average American, since the names of the companies are widely recognizable and can be seen as providing mainstream legitimacy for the organization. Many members of HOP felt that this is a powerful form of symbolic capital, one that can be harnessed and used for the advancement of the LGBT community, while others saw it as a “necessary evil” that reflects the exigencies of running a large non-profit organization that requires significant flows of financial capital to achieve its instrumental goals. I also show that the divisions between corporations and the LGBT population are not as clear-cut as some may have imagined, which changes the way we understand the nature of the relationships between Pride organizations and corporate sponsors.

Whether corporate sponsorship is inherently “good,” “bad” or “neutral” for the Pride movement—or the LGBT movement as a whole, or even all non-profit organizations—can be

framed as a matter of standpoint and adherence to either a “queer politics of social movement organizing” or to a more “pragmatic” and mainstream social movement approach to achieving social rights and privileges. This is not a debate that will be resolved anytime soon. My intention here is not to paint corporate sponsorship in either a positive or negative light based on pre-existing sentiments or affinities to models of social movement organizing. Instead, I present the ethnographic data that I encountered regarding corporate sponsorship as a mode of fundraising, and show here what we can gain by viewing corporate sponsorship through the perspectives of EI and cultural resource mobilization. Moreover, I also show the challenges that corporate sponsorship poses for a cultural movement organization that seeks to remain relevant to its local urban community, as viewed through the analytical lens of external institutionalization.

Pride Guide Analysis: From Small Local Businesses to Major Corporate Companies

HOP moved from a local commercial, social, non-profit and cultural mode of external institutionalization to a corporate mode over a number of years. A simple examination of the size of the Pride Guides over the years (from 1985 to 2008) shows an overall decrease in the number of *pages* as well as the number of *advertisements* in the journal.⁴⁶ At that (pre-Internet) time, the Pride Guide reflected a wide variety of local gay and gay-friendly entities that had a unique chance to communicate directly with their potential consumers or clients. In the earlier years (peaking in 1993, then rapidly decreasing), there were many small advertisements in the journal, some of which were only the size of a business card. These were from all types of local retail

⁴⁶ Again, I point out that is a similar approach as the one used by Armstrong (2002) in which she analyzed material produced by LGBT organizations that included cultural, commercial, and political entities, across several decades, to understand changes in the LGBT organizational field over time.

shops and independent businesses, gay bookstores or video stores, bars/clubs, professional services, churches, and local “people-finding services” such as roommate or dating services. In the late 1990s, I found a dramatic decrease in the number of advertisements by local shops, bars/restaurants and retail services. For example, in 1985, there were 30 ads for local shops and miscellaneous services such as hairdressers, graphic designers and courier services, while in 2005 there were 9 and in 2008 there was only 1. We see a similar pattern in the decrease in advertisements by local bars, clubs and restaurants: In 1985, we see 34 advertisements for local bars, clubs and restaurants (gay and gay-friendly combined), while in 1997 there were 18. In 2005 there were 11 ads, and in 2008 there were 2.

Moreover, particularly in the 1980s or early 1990s, an LGBT person could not assume that any service provider or medical professional she or he encountered would necessarily be gay-friendly. At that time, this journal served as an important resource directory for LGBT people to find other LGBT community-members or allies. Thus, I found very high numbers of advertisements for both therapeutic counseling and professional services in the journals from the 1980s. In 1985, I found 34 total ads for lawyers/investment services/realty companies, therapists, and medical or dental practitioners. In 2005 I found 3 ads for all of these categories combined, and in 2008 I found none.⁴⁷ (See Table 1 below)

Table 1. Corporate Sponsor Advertisements in Heritage of Pride Journals

YEAR	TOTAL ADS	NUMBER OF CORPORATE SPONSORS	% OF TOTAL ADS

⁴⁷ It should be noted here that this was replaced by a myriad of other printed and, later, online lists of resources for people seeking LGBT-friendly service providers. The need to find gay-friendly, or, especially, transgender-friendly service providers remains an important reality for LGBT people, even in increasingly LGBT-friendly cities such as New York.

1985	162	1	<1%
1989	124	1	<1%
1993	209	9	4%
1997	138	5	4%
2001	82	6	7%
2005	100	14	14%
2008	46	10	22%

What took the place of these local gay and gay-friendly advertisers over the years? As advertisements by local, gay and non-gay commercial, service and retail entities declined, we see a large increase of advertisements by major corporate sponsors. There was also an increase in advertisements by LGBT and other non-profit organizations, churches, HIV services and medications, and LGBT community centers that accounts for the difference. Local businesses, bars, and professional services became less prominent, as corporate sponsors and other types of entities took over.⁴⁸

Major sponsors are always provided a free ad in the HOP Pride Guide as a part of their sponsorship package. This allowed me to track the influx of corporate sponsorship into Heritage of Pride by counting the number of ads by category and recording the names of those companies that fit into the category of “national/corporate and non-gay identified.” Here we clearly see a picture of the extension of corporate funding into HOP reflected in the Pride Guides over time. In 1985, I found only 1 corporate, non-gay company sponsor: Remy Martin Cognac.

⁴⁸ Space prevents from discussing the specifics of these trends in greater detail. However, I will note that I found confirmation of the fact that the HOP Pride Guides accurately reflect cultural and social trends over time in the rise and fall of other categories of advertisements. For example, in the early 1990s I saw a dramatic increase in the rise of HIV services (and later HIV medications), which slowly declined throughout the 2000s, reflecting the impact and immediacy of the AIDS crisis during the late 1980s and 1990s for the gay community.

In 1989, there was also only 1 corporate sponsor: Lifestyle Condoms. These two are not surprising as the “first” sponsors of Pride, as I heard from interviews that liquor companies were the first to become interested in sponsoring Pride organizations (as well as tobacco companies, but Pride organizations have largely if not entirely stayed away from them), and there is a natural affinity between a sexual minority group and condom companies. In 1993, we see a large jump in the number of corporate sponsors to 9 companies; 3 of them were alcohol companies (Miller Lite, Fris Vodka, and Absolut), Naya Water, Solgar vitamin company, Stonyfield Farms organic yogurt, an ad for a Diana Ross CD, Stadler Pharmacy which is a national pharmacy chain, as well as a socially-responsible investment company based outside of the New York area.

Moving to 2005, we see 14 ads from corporate entities. These companies become increasingly mainstream—not only do we see several nationally-marketed alcohol companies as before, but we also see Tylenol PM, Redken Hair for Men shampoo, Travelocity travel website, Delta Airlines, and two major media companies: Showtime (advertising its gay-themed show *Queer as Folk*), and Time Warner Cable (advertising its gay channel, LOGO).⁴⁹ In 2008, there are 10 corporate advertisers (within a total number of 46 advertisements, which is a much smaller number than previous journal issues). Here we see additional major companies come on board such as Diet Pepsi, Bud Light, W Hotels, Bank of America, and Google. By the late 2000s, there were virtually no local businesses advertising in the PrideGuide, save for a few large gay nightclubs hosting Pride Weekend events.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The fact that major television networks are beginning to show gay and lesbian programming is, on its own, an indicator of institutionalization of the LGBT community into the media field.

⁵⁰ I should also note here that, in the interest of space, I do not discuss here at length the political and civic institutionalization (or, rather, the lack thereof) of HOP as I encountered it in 2008. I coded all of the journals for ads by political officials, politicians, and electoral political clubs. In the early years there was a significant presence of ads that fit this category; for example, in 1985 there were 12 ads from political entities, in 1989 there were 0, in 1993 there were 4, by 2005 there was 1, and there were 0 in 2008. As

Just the small amount of coded data presented here speaks volumes about the myriad of changes that occurred in New York City's gay community over the past three decades. However, in the interest of space, my goal here is to demonstrate that over time, HOP no longer relied on local, small gay and gay-friendly businesses and the local gay bar and club community within Greenwich Village as its base of support for its events. HOP moved away from the local commercial/social/cultural mode of external institutionalization and largely replaced it in the 1990s with a corporate market mode of external institutionalization. However, I should also point out here that Manhattan as I encountered it in 2008 was already the site of extensive ties between the LGBT community as a whole and mainstream political and civic entities. I do not have the space here to discuss the role of HOP in *creating* those ties over the last 20 years, but it is important to note that Pride Month in Manhattan in 2008 had become a time of the year when a wide variety of entities across the borough showed the influence of previous commercial, civic, and political institutionalization of "gay pride" as an annual, ritualized cultural phenomenon. For example, the fact that the Manhattan Borough President, the Mayor, and the City Council all held their own Pride Month celebrations (independently of HOP) during June is of significance, as is the fact that such commercial entities such as some local Barnes and Nobles bookstores had window displays during Pride Month that featured LGBT authors (also organized independently from HOP). While HOP may no longer be directing its efforts toward producing local commercial, civic, or political institutionalization, it is important to note that these public displays and events were occurring without the direct involvement of the Pride organization as I encountered it in 2008. HOP in 2008 was squarely operating in the EI mode of corporate

we will see below, this is dramatically different from the case with Queens Pride. While in the early days, political officials used the journal to demonstrate their support of the gay community, this quickly fell off over time.

sponsorship, but this does not mean that Gay Pride in Manhattan was not to be found in fields other than the corporate arena.

Corporate Sponsorship: A Measure of Success or a “Necessary Evil”?

In this section, I discuss how members of HOP thought and felt about corporate sponsorship and the relationship between Pride organizations and major multi-national companies. I found that members typically fell into one of two broad categories: a) members who saw corporate sponsorship as a “necessary evil” to be utilized in order to accomplish the goals of their cultural movement; or b) members who perceived corporate sponsorship as a reflection of success of the LGBT Pride movement, viewing the attention from corporations as a show of genuine support for their cause.

For many of the long-time members, asking about the relationship between HOP and corporate sponsorship was a sensitive issue. HOP had been under general criticism from the gay and straight media for a number of years for being “overly corporatized.” One member noted, when asked about corporate sponsorship: “If you read the gay press, there’s always tons of criticism of the March: ‘it’s too commercial, it’s not political enough, it’s not progressive enough.’” Each year, at least a few newspaper or magazine articles in the gay and straight press point to the presence of corporate entities at the Pride events, and question whether a company such as Tylenol PM has anything to do with the LGBT movement. This has also been an issue discussed in the social science literature; Chasin (2001) and Sender (2004) criticize the gay movement overall for “selling out” to corporate sponsorship. In this perspective, the (heterosexual) corporate world is simply using the LGBT community, advertising to them in

order to grab the “gay dollar” without necessarily providing any privileges or advantages to the gay community in return.

I witnessed this criticism from members of the NYC gay community directly at a March committee meeting. Two white men in their late 30s or early 40s, dressed casually but appearing middle- or upper-middle class, walked into the office for the meeting and sat down with us at the table, joining about eight members of the organization who had showed up for the meeting. They politely waited their turn until they could bring their concerns to the group. One began by stating: “Me and my friends, while attending the March last year, felt like it was just one commercial after another. Also, when the Marriage Equality float went by, there were no cheers, but when Delta came by throwing stuff out to the crowd, everyone went nuts. I just hope they are paying you guys a lot of money!” He goes on to say: “As being gay becomes more accepted, of course we will have more companies that want to be connected to us. But my question is, What’s the filtration system that’s in place? Are you guys priced high enough, so that maybe you might not need quite so *many* sponsors?” Members of the March committee were polite, and nodded along with his criticism to show that he was being taken seriously.

The visitor continued, saying: “I just felt discouraged because I feel like the soul is being taken out of our event. After Pride last year, I almost said I didn’t want to go anymore.” His friend added: “I felt the same way about Pride last year. There were lots of religious floats for the first section, and no one was cheering for them. I remember when it was just gay people marching from the Village to Central Park, and we were proud to be gay. Now, I ask, what the hell does this have to do with being gay?”

Although the members of HOP at the meeting were very polite to the visitors, there was a mixed reaction from the group. Some long-time members were reserved but slightly defensive, and used a problem-solving approach to fixing “the issue.” One board member’s first

suggestion was that they would better train the group marshals of the March to rile up the audience to cheer for the “less exciting” sections of the March, such as the religious section which is very large and more subdued than other sections. This problem-solving approach entirely sidestepped the critique of commercialism, viewing it as an issue of audience reaction. Another long-time member pointed out that they were operating at a budget deficit each year, and that they were not at liberty to turn down corporate sponsors. Newer and younger members also responded, stating that they were very glad that these two men had come to voice their opinion, and that they would think hard about how to work to make the March a better event for the LGBT and allied community. The two visitors left at the end of the meeting and were not seen again. I had hoped that this would spark an in-depth conversation within the organization about the relationship between HOP and corporate sponsorship, and/or the direction of the March as a whole. However, later discussions about the visitors’ comments were, as I observed during the organization’s board meeting, cursory and largely directed to solving the problem of audience reaction to less-colorful sections of the March.⁵¹

⁵¹ I discuss the contradictions involved in HOP’s “silence” around corporate sponsorship as a cultural resource mobilization strategy in a later chapter on the meaning of “gay pride” and activism. HOP is experiencing a subdued organizational identity crisis about “who they are”—are they an event planning organization, or a civil rights organization? Their unwillingness to deal with the men’s critique about the predominance of corporate sponsorship at the March reflects a broader unwillingness of the leadership of HOP to engage in self-examination as an organization—and/or an inability to come to a consensus, given the wide range of people and opinions within in the organization on the issue—regarding who they are and why they continue to put on the events. Moreover, as I will also discuss in that chapter, this silence, or unwillingness to confront the meaning of the March and or corporate sponsorship, also ties into the deliberate “openness” of the meaning of “gay pride” as whole. The meaning of gay pride is deliberately left open, fluid, and up for interpretation (both individually and on an organizational-level), which allows for HOP to avoid talking about a number of issues. HOP as an organization does not publicly or explicitly claim corporate sponsorship as a deliberate *resource mobilization strategy*, because the leaders are aware that the radical queer community within NYC would be highly critical of that claim. As I show in the section above, in interviews some of the members see it is as a necessary evil, while others see it as a boon to the movement that they have such public corporate support. They walk a fine line in their public representation as an organization regarding the issue of corporate sponsorship, deliberately failing to identify how they feel about corporate sponsorship as a group—which fits into their approach (as well as the approach of Boise Pride) of not wanting to specify the meaning of pride for all people, not even for all members within their organization.

Sponsorship as a Necessary Evil

I heard from many long-time members in HOP such comments as “We’d be glad to cut our corporate sponsorship if someone else would pay for it.” Or, “We’re a victim of our own success; they expect us to put on enormous, fabulous events, but how are we supposed to be able to do that and still not charge money for admission? You don’t just get money falling out of the sky!” Another member humorously notes the irony of how the LGBT community expects them to “have great, free events, but *not sell out!*” One woman who was a very active member of HOP for many years, and currently is employed by a major national LGBT rights organization, states:

One way the March has changed is that it now includes a lot more commercial entities, like Starbucks, and...there’s a lot of complaining about that. There are people who say, ‘we shouldn’t have for-profit entities here, we shouldn’t have straight businesses!’ Okay, well, then, write me a check for \$15,000! I mean, Port-a-Potties aren’t free! And t-shirts aren’t free. The paint for the Lavender Line, it ain’t free. Sound systems, they’re not free either. We could do this without any of these, but you’re gonna have to hold it for five miles [without a bathroom], and you’re not going to know who your group marshal is [because they won’t have special t-shirts], and we won’t be able to communicate with each other because the two-way radios aren’t free either! So you decide. If you can make up the difference, from what we get from corporate sponsorship dollars, we’ll tell them all to go home. But until you can raise that money for me, sorry Charlie!

Another woman with extensive experience working in the LGBT non-profit field relates HOP’s dilemma to a broader issue that all non-profits face when they experience organizational growth:

Frankly, there were times when our organizations wouldn’t have gotten the payroll paid if we didn’t have the support of these corporations. Because trust me—if there was money coming from foundations and individuals, and people with money who are LGBT or allies, we wouldn’t need to go to the corporations. Once you have an organization with a million-dollar budget, you can’t be having house parties and people writing you hundred-dollar checks. It’s a *necessary evil*, as I like to call it.

These examples highlight the frustration that some members feel when they are expected to put on major events without using corporate sponsorship. They argue that it is not easy to generate the kind of funds that are necessary to fulfill the LGBT community's high expectations for Pride events by using older models of fundraising. Older board members of HOP have become weary of criticism that they feel is unfair or uninformed, since they argue that they are open to other sources of financial support if they were available in the quantities currently needed to keep their organization financially viable. They point out that without multiple sponsorships of \$50,000 or more, the events simply would not happen without having to charge an admission fee.

Members who fall into this group also point out emphatically that the sponsors do not make any demands on them in terms of content for their events, in exchange for their donations. I was acutely sensitive to this claim, and was hawk-like during my participant-observation to find an example of the organization bowing to demands of sponsors, such as planning to change the content of the five events that they put on.⁵² I found no examples of this occurring, despite my initial suspicions about how corporate money might influence the events. The only two times I observed that the sponsors' expectations came into play were relatively

⁵² I did not observe anyone stating that they should change the content to be, for example, less political or less radical to suit the corporate sponsors. For the March, they hold a very strict policy of not prohibiting anyone from registering as a group. In an previous era, this was an issue when the NAMBLA group—the North American Man-Boy Love Association, registered. HOP's policy of non-discrimination against groups registering stood, and NAMBLA was allowed to march, despite the general disapproval of the group from within HOP. Interestingly, I *did* hear numerous times that HOP members planned to limit the political content because they thought the *audience* would not be interested in hearing it—ironically, during the *Rally* event! This will be discussed in the later chapter on activism in which I talk about how some Pride organizations imagine their audience to be *apolitical* or uninterested in hearing about “the issues.” With respect to the *Rally*, the fear was that it would be perceived as “too boring” by the audience, and the organizers tried to intersperse the political speakers with a lot of musical acts. In my humble opinion, I think that this actually contributed to the decline of the *Rally* as a central event for the LGBT community (among other factors, such as the rise of other more radical organizations that were more skilled and oriented toward putting on major political rallies), as the *Rally* simultaneously tried to appeal to an audience that was presumed to be non-political but were unable to offer the attraction of major musical acts that would draw an audience specifically for the music talent.

innocuous occasions. First, when members were deciding on how to arrange the banners at the fundraising dance, they had to ensure that the banners were placed *above*, rather than behind, the sound equipment since the names of the sponsors needed to be visible. The second example was during the women's dance, when the alcohol sponsors asked that there be a VIP lounge around set up (something that already existed at the men's dance). While this may be seen as promoting elitism, it was not related to the content or the overall tone of the event, and I considered it to have had a relatively insignificant impact on the organization.⁵³

Corporate Sponsorship as an Indicator of Success

Many of the members of HOP saw corporate sponsorship as a very positive development, a coup for the organization and for the LGBT community as a whole. These members saw corporations as demonstrating their support for the LGBT movement, and putting money behind that support. They genuinely appreciated the generous philanthropic donations, and some even said that they paid close attention to which companies support Gay Pride and would actively purchase that company's products over others in return for its financial and symbolic capital support.

One member summed it up nicely by saying, "Actually, I don't see anything bad about it. As far as putting a logo out and saying, 'We're a supporter of NYC Pride'—to me, that's saying to the community that we've paid a great deal of money to be here so that you understand that we believe in your fight and we support you." Along those same lines, another member states:

I see it [corporate sponsorship] as positive. There are companies like Delta and JP Morgan that sponsor floats and it's good that people know these specific

⁵³ However, one member of the organization made an excellent and quite self-aware point when he conceded during an interview that, "perhaps it's not that we turn ideas down because they would offend the sponsors, but that they just never even come up [as a possible option]."

entities. You could be gay, straight, bisexual; you can be who you want to be and it doesn't matter. The corporate sponsorship message says that if you're willing, able, and competent, and you're good at what you do, you can compete for a job at their company just like any other straight person can. When these groups sponsor Pride, for them it's more of a civil rights issue. They want to be seen as friendly to the community, as supporting the message [of the March].

And that message is about equality; it's about civil rights.

For those who viewed corporate sponsorship in this light, it was a major coup to have these companies displaying publicly that they were in support of the LGBT community. One member used the term "corporate citizenship" to describe the way that he saw corporations as social actors that can act as important allies in the LGBT movement. For members who saw corporate sponsorship as a positive development for the Pride movement, *the corporation acts as a widely-recognizable form of symbolic capital*, an indicator from a mainstream institution that LGBT people are not to be marginalized but instead to be treated with respect—either as an employee or a consumer. Members who viewed this as a form of symbolic capital were glad to have the public support of corporations.

Moreover, in this case, the symbolic capital that they garner from corporations is far more wide-reaching than local symbolic capital; Bank of America, Google, or Delta Airlines do not require local cultural knowledge in order to earn recognition from the average American or even by a foreigner. This form of symbolic capital can be seen world-wide as a signal of inclusion and support, recognizable to both LGBT and non-LGBT people all over the world. Along with a financial donation from these companies, members who viewed corporate sponsorship as a positive development saw a garnering of symbolic capital that could have wide-reaching effects. They saw it as reflecting major advances in social inclusion for LGBT people in the corporate world that should be celebrated, not rejected. The external institutionalization of Pride organizations into the corporate market, according to these members, is a mutually-beneficial relationship in which Pride gains not only financial resources, but cultural resources through the display of symbolic capital.

Employee Groups

The above interpretation, while it may have purchase in understanding corporate sponsorship, was already part of the debate as I knew it walking in to the fieldsite. I understood ahead of time the basic reasons for why an organization would desire to have corporate sponsors—both for the financial need and for symbolic capital that comes with the display of a logo from a major company that is willing to put its resources into a gay event. However, the most striking thing that I discovered through my ethnographic about these sponsorships was not that they were so extensive, but that there were, by and large, arranged through corporate employee groups, or what are also called “diversity groups” or “affinity groups” that exist within many large corporations today. This challenged the dichotomy that I had pre-established in my mind (based on social science literature and media articles) about the presumed relationship between the “gay organization” and the “straight corporation.” Based on my evidence from the field, I find that this is a largely false distinction—and that doing away with this distinction is an important advancement for understanding the operation of Pride organizations, external institutionalization, and cultural resource mobilization.

First, the majority (not all, but a vast majority) of the corporations that register for the Pride March today, including the ones that have the large floats, are in fact employee groups that are part of the sponsoring corporation. During an interview with the Development Director of HOP, he shared with me the process through which he finds most of the major corporate sponsors:

What happens is that their gay and lesbian group inside Delta Airlines puts pressure on the company and said, ‘We want to be a part of NYC Pride—make it work!’ So we got a phone call from Delta Airlines saying, ‘hey, we got an overwhelming response from our employees wanting to be in your march. How

can we make this work so that our employees that are LGBT feel welcome and feel a part of your event?’ And that’s how we knock out the sponsorship. Here we see that there is a *pull* factor for HOP to establish corporate sponsorships with major corporations, in that the impetus for the sponsorships is coming from *within* companies whose employee groups are making that request to their own corporate leadership. A woman who owns a communications and marketing company whose clients are predominantly LGBT non-profit organizations, and who is very familiar with the current status of how these corporate sponsorships are being created throughout the LGBT non-profit industry, confirms the HOP member’s comment above:

I think what we’re finding is that there are a tremendous number of people who *are* LGBT who *are on the inside*, who are pushing for the change. And who are saying, ‘We’re bringing forth a proposal so that you sponsor these organizations in our community.’ ... So, there’s still corporate sponsorship where they throw money at you and just want visibility, but it’s far less common these days.

As Raeburn (2004) shows in her study of gay-inclusive policy changes within corporate America in the last two decades, corporate employee groups have played an extremely important role in the movement to expand domestic partner benefits, nondiscrimination policies, and gay-inclusive diversity trainings within the corporate workplace. Several members of the HOP organization were also members of their employee groups at their corporate offices; one young member brought in a large contingent of his friends to join HOP who were involved in these groups at their respective financial firms. Another board member of HOP pointed to the misleadingly strict characterization of a corporate world that is oppressively heteronormative, and the reality of the increasingly pervasive corporate employee groups, saying: “When it comes down to it, I work at a corporation [at my day job]—and I’m gay! ... When you have corporate sponsorships, people have this idea of a board of old white men making decisions for the world. I mean, even the corporate world is changing...it’s becoming a bit simplistic to think about corporate sponsorship through such a narrow view.”

My intention here is not to claim that all corporate sponsors of Pride organizations are strident allies in the movement for LGBT rights; instead, my goal is to demonstrate that there have been very rapid changes within the corporate world regarding LGBT policies, and that divisions between the two worlds (corporate heteronormativity vs. outsider gay Pride members/activists) may not be as clear-cut as they were even five or ten years ago, given the proliferation of employee groups that have emerged just recently. The Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index has become a widely-known and important marker for companies, rating them by their gay-supportive policies and benefits. Just in the last year (from 2009 to 2010), the number of companies that have received 100% ratings on that index jumped from 206 to 305 (compared to just 13 companies in 2002).⁵⁴

Corporations that tend to sponsor Pride organizations usually rank very high on this index, or are trying to actively improve their ratings. As one interviewee with a long history of activism in the LGBT non-profit community points out, "You're not going to be stuck with the dilemma of whether or not to take Cracker Barrel's [a company known for being very socially conservative] money, 'cause they're not going to be knocking at your door with a check!"⁵⁵ She does acknowledge that there are some companies that use the Pride events simply as part of a product launch—Nair for Men, for example, had a large float in the HOP March in 2008 when their product was released to the market. On the other hand, however, she also (accurately) points out that there are many companies that take their commitment to the LGBT community very seriously, combining financial support with public, social support that champions gay rights,

⁵⁴ The 2010 Corporate Equality Index is available online at <http://www.hrc.org/issues/cei.htm>

⁵⁵ Cracker Barrel has been the target of (and lost) lawsuits and community protests over its racially discriminatory policies and sexual harassment practices, and (up until 2002) had a policy in place that required employees to display "normative heterosexual values." It still rates very low on the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index.

even when they come under fire from conservative religious groups (for example, see Erbentraut 2009)

In addition to formal sponsorships involving the exchange of cash and product, I also observed a number of different types of sponsorship and other relationships that were built between corporations and HOP that demonstrate external institutionalization, which were *developed through gay contacts*. Again, this disrupts the strict contrast between a “gay outsider” organization having to “sell out” in order to earn the financial or other support of the “straight insider” corporation. One prime example of the corporate mode of external institutionalization was the tie that was built between Virgin Records and HOP in 2007. Virgin Records (a multi-national corporation) has a large store in the middle of one of the busiest centers of Manhattan, Union Square. During Pride Week in June, Virgin Records had a large display about Pride Week in their window with the Heritage of Pride logo on it, and held an outdoor music festival in front of their store featuring LGBT artists. This festival was put on because the New York City Mayor’s Office had cancelled the permit for the HOP Pride Festival at the last minute. The sponsorship with Virgin Records was achieved because a HOP member had a gay friend who worked at the music store who was able to arrange the agreement from inside the company. This gay individual was either in a position of decision-making power or had legitimate access to the higher-up authorities at Virgin Records, who agreed to put on the event. Thus, we see a tie that developed through gay personal contacts—one that resulted in a very significant overtaking of both public space (Union Square) and corporate space (Virgin Records) by LGBT culture for the weekend. It was both a public display that dramatically disrupted the heteronormativity of that urban public space, and put the symbolic capital of Virgin Records behind an LGBT Pride organization.

Again, in this case we do not see “straight American corporations” marketing to “gay Americans,” but rather that gay influence has begun to be integrated into the corporate world—the corporate world can no longer be seen as exclusively heterosexual in major urban centers. Just the way that we see in Southern Utah Pride where they rely on local LGBT contacts in order to build their levels of social capital, we see that process happening in New York City as well. However, in this case, the relationship is being developed to a major company that then provided the widely-recognizable symbolic capital of the Virgin Records logo.

To illustrate the historical continuity of this process of using LGBT social networks to produce symbolic change in NYC, I will refer to another case that was related to me by a founding member of Heritage of Pride about how the organization was able to turn the Empire State Building lavender during the annual Pride Weekend. The exact details of this (now dated) story may be less than one hundred percent verifiable, but it suggests how the members thought about how to make cultural change in New York City in the early years—though their personal, gay contacts in positions of insider influence:

How we got the Empire State Building to turn lavender—that’s a funny story, actually! It was a matter of finding out who the gay guy who does Leona Helmsley’s [the owner of the Empire State Building] hair and make-up was, talking to him, and getting him to talk to her and convince her that she should light the building up in lavender! It was a multi-year process, and involved more than that, of course, but that’s how we started the process out. Here we see that the organization, in its early years, used contacts in positions of “influence” (albeit as a hairdresser) to achieve its goals. If we think about the relationship between HOP and LGBT people who are currently either in positions of decision-making power within corporations, or who have influence on individuals with decision-making power because they are valued employees or are members of strong employee groups, it changes the dimensions of the relationship. The relationship between the two entities—“corporate sponsors” and “cultural movement organizations”—becomes one that is less about marketing and more about

the accommodation *by* LGBT people, from *within* corporations. This perspective clearly does not sidestep the existing critiques of HOP's mode of external institutionalization and the organization as a whole for being overly commercialized; I am not arguing that corporate America has become entirely "gay-friendly" *nor* am I claiming that these companies are not thinking in some way about how best to capture the "gay dollar" through niche marketing. However, we do see here a new wrinkle in the way we have previously understood the relationships between Pride organizations and the corporations that sponsor their events. Any discussion of the contemporary ties between corporations and LGBT organizations, given the dramatic advances of LGBT people *into* corporations into recent years, and the benefits that they have been granted there (such as domestic partnership health insurance coverage)—which, it should be recognized, have largely *not* been granted through the state—must take those advances into account.

Limitations to the Corporate Sponsorship Mode

There are, however, some limitations to the corporate sponsorship mode of external institutionalization, which remain in view when we use the perspectives of EI and CRM (in addition to the standard critiques launched against the corporatization of the gay movement, particularly the Pride movement). Most importantly, the key limitation of the corporate mode of EI is that it does not *force* the organization to have to reach out to its local mainstream urban community on a regular basis, although it also does not prohibit the establishment ties to local community or mean that there are not examples of local ties in HOP today. If taken to the extreme, this can lead to organizational disaffection and estrangement from the rest of the

LGBT and other local non-profit and social movement communities. I am suggesting here that this is a risk factor, but not an inevitable or irreversible process.

In the early years of the organization, up until the late 1990s, the members made a significant portion of their money by staffing a merchandise table on Christopher Street during the day and evenings. They sold buttons and t-shirts with their logo on it, tickets to their upcoming fundraiser dance, and rainbow Pride decorative items. When I ask one of the other long-time members about the experience of being out on the street selling merchandise was like, he points very dramatically to this as a key moment in a shift that he noticed within the organization. He says that the most detrimental effect that corporate—as opposed to “sweat equity”—funding has had on the organization has been an issue of *community contact*:

I think one of the things that has hurt us immensely as an organization, the thing that to me is where the organization took a turn downhill is that we used to do merchandise, selling on the street. ... We sold t-shirts and buttons and dance tickets and we talked to hundreds of people on the street. It was actually a lot of fun. And now we outsource it; we don't have that street contact. When we stopped selling merchandise on the street as a public activity, we shot ourselves in the chest. I mean, it was definitely a brutal thing to do, to be out there. It took immense resources of human effort and it was not always pleasant and it was difficult, but I think the harm that *not* doing it has done to this organization is immeasurable.

This sentiment was echoed by a couple of the long-time members; sometimes in relation to what the meaning of the Outreach committee should be, and other times in relation to corporate sponsorship. In the early days, “outreach” was something that occurred in tandem with fundraising, because the fundraising required them to reach out into their communities (as we see with the local commercial/cultural/social mode of institutionalization). A board member that has been involved with HOP for many years notes: “We’ve gotten more corporate in some ways. I mean, it was much more grassroots in the past, I think. It had a better...it may sound odd, but I think people had more time and were more interested in how we work, within the

[LGBT and mainstream urban] community as a whole. People had time to go to other meetings, go to other groups, and see how they were doing things, and ask if they needed help. We seem to have gotten more insular, in some ways.” I ask him to provide examples of how this can be seen in the organization, and he says, “Well, we used to be much more concerned about...for instance, when I was co-chair a while ago, I went to the Christopher Street Block and Merchant Association meetings. A local group that was just for Christopher Street. I used to go to the LGBT Concerns group for the community board too. We used to do more of that stuff, like try to keep our presence around the community, and I think at this point, we’re more focused on trying to run our events in the organization, and that’s it.” This, I believe, is one of the challenges of the massive growth that the organization has seen, as they have taken on five separate events that they run each year, with hundreds of thousands of people in attendance and a great amount of coordination to produce in order for the events to run smoothly.

While this must be taken with a grain of salt given the general tendency of people to sentimentalize the past of their non-profit organization when it was “more grassroots,” I found that a couple of members brought this up during their interviews without much prompting, when I asked generally about corporate sponsorship and how it has changed the organization. Another member, who has been involved with HOP for about a decade, points to a poignant moment when he realized how their lack of contact with the local urban community was manifesting itself:

Our board tries to be community-organization-focused, but it’s not done well. There was a rally at the [LGBT] Center for a particular issue in the last year or two—I think it might have been for marriage equality—and the rally was sponsored by a *long list* of organizations. HOP wasn’t one of them. So, the rest of the community *didn’t think* about HOP being a member of the community *on that plane*. That bothered me a lot. Either they didn’t think to contact us, or they did and we failed to respond to them. It could have been either one, but they would have reason to think that we wouldn’t be interested. That memory has stayed with me for a while.

Here we see that because HOP no longer *needs* the *social capital* that they would gain through working with other non-profits, local businesses, and local community institutions in order to generate their organizational life-sustaining funds, the organization sometimes struggles to maintain its local ties. In a subdued way, I felt that the organization's long-time members were grappling with a sense of isolation and disconnection from other parts of the LGBT activist and non-profit community. HOP is able to survive *financially* without that *local form of social capital*, by bringing in large sums of money that provide *some* symbolic capital—the big names of major corporations who are demonstrating their financial and social support for the LGBT cause—but are no longer forced to seek out local social capital, at least in the short run. This was an underlying tension that the organization was struggling with when I encountered it in 2008.

However, some members of the organization *did* push the organization to increase contact with the New York City community, arguing that HOP needed to be reaching out into the local LGBT and allied non-profit and social services field (an issue I will discuss further in the chapter on the meaning of “gay pride” and “activism,” as it has important consequences for the organization's self-identity and relevance to the rest of the LGBT community). I also found that there were smaller projects that certain board members were working on, such as a Miss Gay Pride New York City contest to be held at various bars within the downtown Manhattan during the springtime, which would have created ties between HOP and the local gay bars (a form of local social capital). However, some HOP members often felt over-extended with the amount of work they were doing simply to keep the events running smoothly each year—and while they supported outreach and strong community relations in theory, it was not a priority to all members who were struggling to keep up with the direct responsibilities of putting on their events. At one point the two different approaches were reflected in two separate “camps”—

one group that wanted to focus on increasing local LGBT- and mainstream-community ties, such as the Outreach Committee—and others who were more interested in simply making the organization function well enough to put on the events each year, with a more direct focus on the fiscal health and successful bureaucratic operation of the organization.

On the other hand, I found a few important new developments in which HOP was beginning to create dense ties to the corporate employee groups, and to rely on these groups for the organization's needs—such as drawing on Google's employee group for technical assistance, or another corporation's group for providing a large number of volunteers on the day of the March. There were also some efforts to involve the LGBT and allied community in certain other ways, such as the hosting of open focus groups with a wide variety of local LGBT and other progressive community organizations when they were trying to re-envision their PrideFest event to ensure that it remained relevant to the concerns of the wider LGBT population in New York City. However, the challenge of retaining ties to the local urban community when these ties are no longer absolutely vital for fundraising proves to be a point of tension for HOP and its self-identity as an organization. In this sense, then, it is community legitimacy—social capital—that they need to build up, rather than their symbolic capital through the display of corporate logos. Yet, as I will discuss later on, the process of community isolation is neither inevitable nor irreversible, and can be addressed through strategic organizational leadership attuned to the pitfalls of overreliance on corporate sponsorship without grounding in the local urban community.

Corporate sponsorship offers one type of symbolic capital, one that has great purchase in the mass media market and allows the employees of major corporations to be involved with Pride, but also comes with limitations and challenges of connecting to one's local urban community and staying relevant. While Southern Utah Pride struggled arduously to generate

funds and to find places to hold their fundraisers in a socially conservative community, and may continue to battle with financial solvency that could easily lead to the demise of their organization, HOP's challenge is one of *excessive success* in the fundraising and sponsorship area. Their problem is one of *growth*, which poses a different set of difficulties for the organization's leadership once they have achieved a level of stability and financial solvency for their organization. As the cultural urban context within New York City has become more gay-friendly, as there is a dense gay urban infrastructure and other forms of institutionalization (including of Pride *outside* of the direct influence of HOP) that have taken place across Manhattan, the contemporary challenge of being HOP has become one of (re)finding a place in its own community.

Straddling the Middle in a Red State: The Case of Boise Pride

Boise Pride displayed a combination of the previous two modes of external institutionalization; the organization draws equally on its ties to local commercial, social, and non-profit entities as it does on corporate sponsors. However, differently than we see for Southern Utah Pride in St. George, Utah, Boise has an extensive gay urban infrastructure which allows the organization to find and establish dense ties to both gay and non-gay local commercial and social institutions without much difficulty. Boise Pride relied heavily on its local bars and clubs for a great deal of their fundraising activities, while also garnering some corporate sponsorship that contributes to its rapid growth as an organization.

Since the two modes of external institutionalization have already been clearly explicated above, I will refrain from discussing in detail how they are expressed in the case of Boise Pride. Instead, I will briefly present the way that the organization is straddling these two different

modes, and show what each of these modes looks like when put into a very different socio-political context. Specifically, I first show what SUP's current dominant mode—ties to local commercial, cultural, and non-profit entities—looks like when it is in a city that has extensive public space in which gay life can proliferate. Second, I show how corporate employee groups are exerting a “pull” factor toward external institutionalization from within corporations in Boise that we also saw in New York City with HOP.

A brief review of the events that took place during the week of Pride in Boise can provide a sense of the extent to which Boise Pride—as well as other LGBT non-profit organizations in Boise—relied on the bars and clubs for their fundraising. Each night of the week involved a party at a club or bar that had been organized by Boise Pride, and on two nights there were additional fundraising after-parties that were planned for after those earlier parties had ended. By Pride Week in June, Boise Pride had been holding a fundraiser called The Beer Bust each Sunday at a local gay bar for the previous three months, in which they took a \$5 donation at the door from each patron. For the month before Pride, they had also held an additional fundraiser each Wednesday at another gay-friendly bar (with a gay owner) where they held a raffle for a large prize donated by the owner of the bar. At one of the club events held during Pride Week, they pulled over \$2500, and that amount was matched by the owners of the club in which the event was held. They also partnered with another LGBT group to hold a fundraising event at a well-known college-type straight bar, whose owner was very gay-friendly. These bar events were a means through which the Pride organization could produce the financial support that they needed, by drawing on their own LGBT and allied community, in public space, to produce the revenue to put on their own Pride event. This kept them highly in tune with the other activists and gay community members, as well as local commercial and social entities within Boise's gay world.

Clearly, the bars and clubs were a highly lucrative source of local commercial fundraising. While Boise Pride did have other local sponsors, it was the ease with which they are able to pull in money from these events that made them so attractive. Members of the organization all generally reported that they were most interested in drawing on local commercial entities for their fundraising. In the words of one member, “If we had all the money we needed, I would go more *local*; I wouldn’t go to the bigger companies. Like, I want the local places to have the exposure of being a gay-friendly place to go. As I said before, it’s a *community—we’re* a community, Boise is. So if we don’t support each other, and we’re just going corporate, it’s not going to work out.” However, another member expressed the challenges involved in reaching out to those local commercial businesses: “In a lot of ways I can understand why you would go corporate, because it’s a lot *easier*—corporations are very structured, so you kind of know what to expect, and you can put together a sponsorship packet for all of them and just get a check...whereas it seemed like every small business that we went to, they wanted you to come over and talk to them for three hours a day, for several weeks, before they’d even tell you they’d give you the money! I don’t have time for that!”

Here we see the dilemma of Pride organizing, in that as an organization grows larger—with increasing LGBT population expectations for the quality of the event, which raises costs—and the corporate money is more available, it becomes cumbersome to sustain that growth through small donations and parties. With respect to the corporate sponsorship, I found that, like in the case of HOP, the corporate sponsorships that Boise Pride had were largely initiated through diversity groups within that corporation. Two of the three corporate sponsors of Pride had diversity groups that marched under their corporation’s banner in the parade as representatives of their company and had booths at the festival; members of these employee groups had directly arranged the sponsorship from within the company.

While members of Boise Pride were largely focused on growing their organization, in terms of producing larger and better events that would be more attractive and entertaining for the LGBT and allied community members, they were also aware of the importance of having the symbolic support of one's mainstream urban community. In the words of one member, "Idaho has a grim history with gay rights here. So, these *sponsors*, more than anything, help *demonstrate* to our [LGBT and allied] community that there are businesses, there's people here willing to support them, and that they care about them." Another member, when asked why he thought it would be important to have sponsors, he notes, "It's *very* important! I mean, it shows that they are accepting; that they don't discriminate. You know, that they want to support the [LGBT] community—and Pride is that once-a-year opportunity for organizations and businesses to show their support."

We see here that Boise reflects a lot of the same sentiments about understanding how symbolic capital is reflected through the support of local and corporate businesses as we found in Southern Utah Pride. The Pride group in Boise relied extensively on their gay bar and club infrastructure for fundraisers, but also recognized that—especially with respect to finding a variety of vendors to be present at their festival—they wanted to generate and display the *local symbolic capital that comes with the support of local entities such as local businesses, non-profits and gay-friendly churches from within the wider Boise community*. However, as they are also hoping to rapidly grow their organization, to have events that are increasingly expensive to produce and to begin providing scholarships and other amenities for the LGBT community, Boise Pride may find themselves overly burdened with seeking out financial support from small entities and, over time, may move towards corporate sponsorship as their primary funding mechanism. Moreover, as corporate diversity groups grow in number within major and smaller corporations in Boise, these employee groups may also present a "pull" factor that moves the

organization away from bi-weekly bar and club events toward larger funding sources, due to the ease of which the Pride group can collect money through corporate sponsorship. It will be an issue of strategic leadership to balance these tensions as the organizations continues to grow and externally institutionalize within a variety of arenas, and to pay close attention to the effects that their change in financial support might have on their place in the local LGBT and business community.

“That’s How We Got \$50,000 in the First Place”: The Case of Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee

Like Heritage of Pride, Queens Pride also began in the local commercial, social, and cultural mode of external institutionalization. Only a few public officials were willing to support the organization at first, and members relied on local clubs, bars, and restaurants, and other organizations for financial support and fundraising efforts. Like HOP, it also began to attract some corporate sponsors in the late 1990s as their event became established within its urban setting. However, I will demonstrate below, after this organization moved into the corporate sponsorship mode of external institutionalization, it quickly developed into an organization that privileged political and civic institutionalization over the two other models. This is a function of both strategic choice and environmental context, in which they had enjoyed success in externalizing in the other two arenas, but the leadership of the organization was very interested in pushing for political and civic institutionalization.

QP still retains pieces of the other modes, maintaining strong relations with Queens’s local businesses (particularly bars, clubs, and restaurants) and non-profit organizations, while also drawing on corporations for some of its financial and product-based needs for its events. However, QP members are consciously focused on a model of institutionalization that

emphasizes building and nurturing ties to the political and civic field in addition to the other sets of social capital ties. Again, we see here that it is a combination of leadership strategy and the conditions of the local urban environment, in that they had success in other arenas and are interested in forging ahead into the political and civic areas of Queens life. QP members view social capital relationships with political and civic entities as the most effective means of generating symbolic capital that will produce social, political, and cultural change around the issue of LGBT rights and social acceptance. In their view, the three major events that they produce all combine to create social capital ties between the organization and politicians and key civic representatives and institutions. Members of the organization still embrace the other two modes of external institutionalization as a form of support, recognizing the importance of those ties as vital scaffolding around a community organization. However, they viewed political and civic institutionalization as the arena in which they sought to push ahead the agenda of the organization, generating social capital ties between the organization and political and civic institutions. This points to the extent to which the form of external institutionalization is not only a function of environment or context, but also of strategic choice made by the leadership of the organization, and the members that are attracted to leaders who work through that form of EI.

I begin by presenting evidence of this shift through analysis of two sets of journals produced over the years by Queens Pride: the Parade Pride Guide (which was distributed during Pride Month in June) and the Winter Pride Guide (distributed to attendees of the Winter Pride Dinner and Dance).⁵⁶ As we see in the charts below, the number of political advertisements overall is far higher in the Winter Pride journal, since this event has become a large attraction

⁵⁶ I should note that the “political ads” category includes ads by both individual politicians and ads by electoral political clubs. Overall, there are only a limited number of political clubs in the area—the highest number I found was 6—and they are far outnumbered by the number of individual politicians in this category.

for both seated and hopeful politicians in the New York area. As we see in the chart below, after the first year (1994) where political and civic advertisements were only 14% of the total, they shot up to 31% of all ads found in the journal. Political and civic ads remained between 25% and 35% of the total ads until the current date. Thus, we see that Queens Pride began to garner attention from politicians early on, and has retained that strong tie to the political field ever since.⁵⁷ (See Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2. Political and Civic Advertisements in Queens Winter Pride Journals

WINTER PRIDE GUIDE				
YEAR	TOTAL ADS	NUMBER OF POLITICAL ADS	NUMBER OF CIVIC ADS	% OF TOTAL ADS, COMBINED
1994	21	2	1	14%
1997	51	14	2	31%
2000	71	17	0	24%
2003	75	24	0	32%
2006	59	19	2	36%
2008	61	16	1	28%

⁵⁷ I should also point out here that as opposed to HOP's journals, there were a large number of individuals who took out small ads in these two journals. Thus, if we look only at the total number of advertisers who represent more than just one individual who may have been either a current member of the organization or a volunteer for the organization (i.e. meaning, if we only look at ads taken out by entities such as companies, non-profits, medical/dental or other professional services, bars/clubs), the percentage of political and civic ads would be even higher.

Table 3. Political and Civic Advertisements in Queens Pride Parade Journals

PARADE PRIDE GUIDE				
YEAR	TOTAL ADS	NUMBER OF POLITICAL ADS	NUMBER OF CIVIC ADS	% OF TOTAL ADS, COMBINED
1993	46	1	1	4%
1996	32	5	1	19%
1999	51	3	0	6%
2002	25	4	1	20%

From the above charts, it is clear that the *civic* institutions are not represented in high numbers as advertisers, since civic entities do not tend to take out advertisements in journals—evidence of civic institutionalization was found more in my ethnographic material (and historical reflection through interviews) than is reflected in the journals. However, if we look at the details of the few civic institutions that did take out advertisements, the results prove to be interesting. Looking at the Parade Pride Guide, the civic ad in 1993 was by the Mayor’s Office Volunteer Corp. In 1996, we see the United States Postal Service as a sponsor of the organization. This is part of a larger arrangement that they made with the Postal Service, which also included an official stamp produced for public purchase with the name “Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee” on it. One of the board members of Queens Pride worked at the post office, and the stamp was produced for a number of years each June in Queens. In 2002, one of the last years that Queens Pride produced an annual parade journal, there was an

advertisement taken out by Keyspan Energy Corporation, a public utility company in New York City. Clearly, this is a very mainstream and non-LGBT-identified company, belonging squarely to the civic sphere. Both of these examples of civic institutionalization were seen by members, at the time, as a major coup for an organization that represented a sexual identity category which struggles with marginalization and stigmatization in the public sphere.

In terms of corporate sponsorship, we find a pattern that mirrors HOP in its growth over time, as corporations began to become involved in Pride organizing. However, it significantly differs from HOP in terms of its total percentage of sponsors or financial supporters. The Parade Pride Guide shows 0 corporate sponsors in 1994. In 1996 American Express is the sole corporate sponsor; in 1999 we see Bell Atlantic as the only corporate sponsor, and in 2002 we see Citibank (which remains a corporate sponsor of the organization until today—in 2008 they contributed \$3500 towards the Parade). We see growth in corporate sponsors in the Winter Pride journal as well; in 2003 there was only 1—Verizon—but in 2008 there were actually 4 corporate sponsors: Target, Fuze beverage company, Verizon, and Citibank. However, I know from ethnographic data that Target and Fuze contributed only free products for the organization's Winter Pride gift bags for attendees, rather than acting as a financial supporter of the organization in a way that would be comparable to a HOP sponsorship (which reaches into the tens of thousands of dollars).

I should also note here that Queens Pride also retained its ties to local gay and non-gay bars, clubs, and restaurants, in numbers that remained at the same level throughout the years. From 1993 to 2002 (the last year that the Parade Pride Guide was published), we see the numbers in this category hovering around 5 to 7. Moreover, if we look at the Parade Pride Guide's *list of sponsors* which are printed at the front of each issue (rather than *advertisements* by sponsors, on which the rest of the above analysis is based) which are broken down by

sponsorship level in the Pride Guide, we see that the same few local bars and clubs in Jackson Heights that were sponsors in 1993 were still present as sponsors at a steady level even up into 2008. My ethnographic data with the organization in 2008 showed that one club donated \$3,500 to the organization, while a couple of other bars and clubs donated between \$500 and \$2000. Thus, we see that while Queens Pride was focused on developing ties to the political and civic field—as I will discuss using ethnographic and interview data in more detail below—they still retained extensive ties to the bars and clubs in the area, relied on the bars’ assistance and financial contributions, and worked with them to feature the clubs’ performers and staff on a secondary stage during the Pride events in June. Ties to the corporate field were also retained in some capacity, but, as I show below, the fact that they received the majority of their funding from the City of New York’s Department of Youth and Cultural Development (in the area of \$40,000 to \$50,000) made the search for corporate sponsorship largely unnecessary. Thus, while Queens Pride was clearly in the political and civic mode of institutionalization, they had not entirely abandoned the previous social capital ties that they had developed to other local community institutions.

Generating Political and Civic Social Capital in Queens

The extent to which Queens Pride has been successful at generating social capital ties to the political field can be easily seen in a fieldnote I took in February of 2008:

I attended the Winter Pride Gala held by Queens Pride this evening, held in a formal ballroom in Astoria, Queens. I sat with a large table of Heritage of Pride members, who were all in fancy dresses and tuxedos for the occasion. There were approximately four hundred people at this event, which lasted several hours and included a cocktail hour, a formal sit-down dinner, and dancing. I recognized a number of them from having been in the field for a few months. While I was having a drink at the bar, the co-chair of Queens Pride casually pointed out a man standing nearby as the Bronx Borough President, and the

woman near him as a U.S. congressperson. I grabbed a bar napkin and a pen and asked him to continue. He went around the room, pointing out and rattling off the names of two New York state senators, three state assembly members, yet another U.S. congressperson, the Comptroller of New York City, and a city council member. I asked the Queens Pride member how all of these individuals came to be a part of this event, and he said, casually, 'Danny [the founder of the organization] knows them all; it's been like this for the past few years.'

In an interview, I asked a member why they still hold Winter Pride if they no longer needed the money that the annual fundraiser brought in. She answered,

It's to get more exposure for the whole LGBT cause in Queens—to show that we're a powerful group in the borough, a powerful minority group here. ... It just reminds people that you're out there. The politicians all come, and I think it's very important for us to be able to mingle, socially, with the political powers that be. That's *how* we got \$50,000 in funding [from the city] in the first place! Because over the years, it has given the political people exposure to Pride voters that live in Queens County. I mean, they all want to run for city-wide office now, that kind of thing, so it's a tool for the politicians as well—it's a mutually-beneficial relationship.

Another longtime member notes, "We didn't used to have banks and everyone throwing thousands of dollars at us. Or elected officials, either. But it's those elected officials who started seeing the power. The *power* comes from showing them thousands of people [at the Parade] and all the other officials who are present at Winter Pride." Members of Queens Pride view the current funding that they receive from the City of New York as a direct result of the influence and power that they were able to generate from their political and civic social capital that they had fostered over the years.

The organization had its eyes on generating political support from the first year that they staged their parade and festival. States one member who was present at the beginning: "The first year, Claire Schulman, the Queens Borough President, did not attend the event. So we collected 6,000 postcards; 3,000 for her and 3,000 for Peter Malone, Speaker of the City Council and Astoria City Councilmember. We sent them to the both of them; the post cards said, 'Having a wonderful time at Queens Pride—wish you were here!' Claire thought that was

hysterical, and she invited us in to talk with her soon afterwards.” After that, Queens Pride was able to hold its meetings in a room within Queens Borough Hall, which it continued to do for a number of years. In 2001, leaders of the organization successfully petitioned the Queens Borough President’s Office to host an annual Queens Borough Pride Month event to honor local LGBT people and allies in Queens. While in HOP few members of the organization were even in attendance at their Pride Month celebration at City Hall in Manhattan, in Queens it was quite a different story. Many members of Queens Pride showed up, the founder of the organization was on stage the entire time announcing and handing out awards, and the rest of the members helped out behind the scenes with arranging food and beverages.

Members of Queens Pride viewed their organization as only one piece of a larger set of social and political groups within Queens that puts political pressure onto local elected officials to create social change around LGBT issues, and to decreasing the invisibility of LGBT people in Queens. Many of the QP members are also active members or even board members of the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club of Queens. After Queens Pride meetings ended, the conversation typically turned to talking about either local politics or the members’ involvement in other social movement organizations, such as Marriage Equality New York, or Marriage Equality Western Queens (organizations in which the members were actively involved in leadership roles). Clearly, this organization attracted members who were politically interested and active in the political and LGBT movement field in Queens. They understood their efforts in QP as one part of a larger struggle to earn rights and privileges for LGBT people on a city- state- and national-level, and toward increasing the social acceptance of LGBT people in Queens. As noted by one member, “That’s why the parade is so important—so that people understand that it’s not only the same 30 people [from the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club] who care, but that it’s tens of thousands of people behind us in this.” Members of this organization were very

articulate in their view of the parade as a *showing of numbers* of people who support them—to create public visibility—which would catch the attention of politicians. Those politicians, then, would act as the vehicle for producing the political and social change that members wished to see in the borough of Queens.

I should note that there is no direct relationship between the organization and political influence in Queens; one member stated: “We’re not allowed to be political because, of course, we’re a non-profit. We don’t advocate, we don’t lobby. But we have *political impact* by our members and our activities. The powers that be, they know we exist. *That’s* what the impact is.” In the view of QP members, the parade, the festival, and the Winter Pride event all together *create social capital ties between the organization and the politicians*. Members of QP create Pride events that are entertaining, designed to be enjoyed by the LGBT and local non-LGBT Queens community. However, while they embrace the fun and celebratory aspects of their Pride events, members clearly recognize the role of their events as *vehicles* for generating important stocks of social capital within the political and civic community. Local and state politicians are shown that LGBT people are both politically active and knowledgeable about politics. Through the *social capital of direct ties and familiarity with the politicians and city government officials Queens Pride generates the symbolic capital of political and civic support*. While most Pride organizations stop there, at the level of symbolic capital, or legitimacy as a subcultural group that deserves public recognition within the borough, Queens Pride views that symbolic capital as having an additional use. Through other means, by working through their other organizations, QP members channel the symbolic capital produced by the Parade, Festival, and Winter Pride and turn it into *genuine political capital*, by working directly through the political system outside of QP.

Queens Pride has also had important effects in generating social capital within the civic sphere as well, and has had a strong impact on the disruption of heteronormativity in urban public space in Queens. They successfully petitioned the Mayor's Office to name a corner in Jackson Heights after the man that was killed during a gay-bashing, Julio Rivera Corner, in April of 2000. The printing of the Queens Pride postal stamp was a major effort on the part of the organization to push ahead into the civic community, made possible only because a board member worked at the post office and had influence over decision-makers. This allowed them to have the symbolic capital of the U.S. Postal Service behind them, commemorating LGBT culture and the Queens Pride community event. Queens Pride also provided direct assistance putting together an exhibit on the history of gay and lesbian activism held at the Queens Borough Public Library in 1994. Members who were involved with the organization at that time cite the library exhibit as a major coup for the organization. Representation of LGBT culture in a public, mainstream institution within their own borough was a very important symbolic achievement for members at that time.

QP members were very conscious and deliberate in their intentions to develop social capital ties to various political and civic players in the area—from the Queens Borough President to the head of the Queens Public Library. Moreover—far more than I found in the other three organizations—members were able to clearly recognize and articulate how those social capital ties were crucial to generating symbolic capital, which in turn they expected to produce cultural change in Queens around the issue of homosexuality and social acceptance of the LGBT community. They recognized that visibility of the LGBT community in these two major arenas—the political sphere and the civic sphere—was an important weapon in their struggle to turn Queens from the “Archie Bunker borough” into an urban community that is LGBT-friendly. They were highly conscious of the symbolic effects of the social capital ties that they created through

their Pride organizations. While all four of the organizations in this study clearly used Pride organizing to produce social capital ties and turn it them into symbolic capital through their daily, routine, organizing activities, Queens Pride was the most conscious about how this process works to mobilize cultural resources for change around the issue of LGBT community members. For example, during a board meeting, the founder of the organization made a (successful) request to the rest of the executive board: “I’d like to take \$100 and buy an ad in the [more conservative area within eastern Queens] Democratic Club dinner journal. The idea is to say to elected officials—and to the members of that club—‘we’re here, we’re watching you, we’re your constituents, and we want you to acknowledge our presence.’” He also suggested purchasing a table at the dinner function, but members were too busy to attend that evening. This organization’s goal was to ensure that the LGBT community in Queens was present and visible in all areas of Queens cultural, social, and political life, creating a symbolic disruption of heteronormativity through small but powerful visibility measures that they believed would have important cultural effects on LGBT social acceptance in Queens. From local library exhibits to Borough Hall to annual civic calendars and even to postal stamps, they strategically and consciously sought to accumulate symbolic capital through a wide variety of measures that would help them to achieve their social and political goals and produce regular, routine visibility of their minority group in the borough.

However, unlike the other organizations in this study, members in this organization seek to take that capital one step further. While all Pride events generate social and symbolic capital through their routine activities of organizational self-reproduction, the members of this organization thought very clearly about how to channel it into genuine political capital that would alter the political structure in Queens. They did this by engaging in direct political lobbying through other explicitly political organizations, outside of Queens Pride. Moreover, in

2009 the founder and long-time leader of Queens Pride formally separated from the organization and ran a successful election campaign to be the City Councilmember for Jackson Heights, Queens. He left the production of symbolic capital to the rest of the Queens Pride group, and started trying to create direct social change from within city government. It was the *symbolic capital of Queens Pride*, and the *social capital ties* that he developed with the political community and the local residents of Jackson Heights, that he successfully transformed into political capital when he gained a seat in political office in 2010.

Conclusion

As I demonstrate above, Pride organizations produce cultural resources that are mobilized for cultural change as they go about their daily activities of organizational self-reproduction. Sponsorship is not only about producing the “bread and butter” financial support for putting on events; it is also about obtaining visibility, and reaching toward legitimacy and respect for gender and sexual minorities within the public sphere. The Pride organizations work toward this goal by reaching out to various entities that are accessible within their respective urban contexts, a process that I have here described as external institutionalization. I found that Pride organizations reflect three distinct modes of EI, developing ties at first to local commercial and social entities, to the corporate market, and then to the political and civic fields.

Through both routine and strategic organizational activities, Pride organizations disrupt the heteronormativity of public space and generate social and symbolic capital. As members seek out sponsors to pay for the costs of putting on their Pride event, as they search for vendors for their events or even look for a place to hold their meetings, they push farther into their communities in ways that hold great cultural significance. Other theories of resource

mobilization look at resources strictly as money or manpower, but the cultural resource mobilization approach that I present here takes into account how cultural movement organizations both intentionally and unintentionally work on the level of culture. Homophobia and heteronormativity operate not only in the realm of political rights and privileges, but also through cultural norms and representation in public space. Pride organizations work through their community's institutions to find allies and collect capital that will work against the stigmatization of LGBT people. This is a result of both strategic choice, by the leadership, as well as the degree to which their local environment is open to them in various arenas. While other types of LGBT organizations work in the area of producing changes in the legal and political arena, the Pride movement works in the cultural realm, finding and creating openings that they can take advantage of within their own communities. This movement occupies the *cultural niche* of the broader LGBT movement (Levitsky 2007), viewing domination as embodied in more than one institutional arena (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008) and working to make changes in the realm of culture, mobilizing symbolic capital on their behalf. Pride organizations do this strategic work in distinct modes that develop and change over time, in relationship to their local urban setting and the opportunities that are available to them.

We also see here, by comparing two organizations within the same city—Queens Pride and Heritage of Pride, both within the City of New York—that corporate institutionalization is not a foregone conclusion for an organization that is operating in an increasingly-gay-friendly environment. While HOP as a whole has chosen to privilege the corporate form of institutionalization over others—albeit with some contestation from members who are recognizing the limitations of this approach in terms of the quality of their connections to the rest of the local LGBT community—we see in Queens Pride that corporate sponsorship can be incorporated into an organization's cultural mobilization repertoire without becoming its final

mode. An organization's dominant mode of EI depends not only on context but also on agency and strategy, which is determined by the leadership of the organization. The financial demands of putting on an enormous event that can accommodate such a large number of people as that which attends the HOP events may push an organization toward corporate sponsorship (as we can also see happening, in process, in Boise Pride), although this is neither a foregone conclusion nor an irreversible process. Moreover, as we see in Queens Pride, a Pride organization that retains its focus on generating political and civic symbolic capital can—if it also is able to remain financially viable at the same time—be sustainable and also highly effective at working towards local cultural change in its local urban community.

Chapter 6: Internal Institutionalization

The previous chapter focused on the relationship between Pride organizations and their external environments. In this chapter, using the cases of Heritage of Pride and Southern Utah Pride, I turn to examine the internal structure, patterns of decision-making, relationships of power, and methods of dealing with controversy and conflict within cultural movement organizations. I discuss these as dimensions of *internal institutionalization*, exploring how they developed over time and how individuals within the organizations used different tactics to deal with organizational maintenance and growth. In the last section of this chapter, I connect internal institutionalization with external institutionalization, showing the links between the two sociological processes.

Heritage of Pride had a large local membership base with a highly formalized organizational structure; they maintained a well-developed and often-consulted constitution, set of bylaws, and list of policies and procedures. The organization consisted of a complex arrangement of working committees, an executive board, and a general membership body. Some of the committees provided a very informal space for member interaction, but the organization as a whole was run bureaucratically, with a dense and complex assortment of rules and formal procedures that had been built up over many years. Members relied heavily on an ever-growing collection of organizational rules and regulations as their means for solving internal problems such as disputes between individuals. Many day-to-day decisions regarding the organization had to be passed through numerous layers of bureaucracy—including the general membership—before they could be approved. An advertisement design for the fundraiser dance, for example, or the number of days within which a member had to submit reimbursement receipts, or which publishing house to use for the Pride Guide—all of these

decisions were passed through several layers of organization meetings before a final agreement was confirmed, in the form of a motion accepted by the general body.

Some members of HOP were very frustrated by the extensive time and energy that it took to make decisions within this complex democracy. Yet other members were emotionally attached to the participatory democratic legacy of Heritage of Pride as a civil rights organization that aimed to draw widely on its general membership and the wider LGBT community for input on its decisions. These members, despite their own frustration, valued the multi-level bureaucratic structure for its democratic approach and the organization's adherence to rules as regulations as a means for addressing problems that arose within the group.

Southern Utah Pride, on the other hand, was a very young, small, and new organization that was trying to rapidly establish itself as I encountered it in 2008 and 2009. Its constitution and bylaws were adopted from another Pride organization which had put in place a small and powerful executive board as the leadership. However, the formal structure described in SUP's constitution had little to do with the way that SUP was run on a day-to-day basis. The organization's members ran their meetings and made decisions using on a loose, collectivist and consensus-based approach to decision-making. While they originally intended to follow the structure in the constitution, with various committees that had leaders who met separately from the general membership, they remained a small group that did not have enough members to meet in distinct groupings. They combined elected board members and event committee chairs, as well as a few active members, into a core group of people that worked together to produce the Southern Utah Pride events. They employed voting rules that suited their informal approach and consistently retained board members in their positions who were unable to fulfill their responsibilities. They even created positions or modified formal positions to have little responsibility so they could continue to include these members on the board. SUP used the

basic organizational elements of voting and taking meeting minutes, and was interested in increasing their level of formal organization over time. Yet they remained a small group that was close-knit and ran their organization more through the bonds of friendship and camaraderie than through bureaucratic roles.

While the group was very personally rewarding and pleasurable for many of its members, for a period of time, they later found themselves mired in serious conflict related to individual power struggles and difficult personalities within the organization. It was then that they found their lack of formal structure provided little recourse for addressing internal problems without collapsing into personally vicious and emotionally-challenging fights that threatened to dismantle the organization as a whole. Moreover, the absence of a strong formal structure, at times, made it very difficult for the organization to accomplish its routine tasks and to continue to remain viable over time.

I will make two central theoretical claims in this chapter by drawing on empirical evidence from the two Pride organizations. First, I argue that while the problematic that Robert Michels sets out in his classic theory on social movements remains relevant—that a mature movement tends to evolve towards oligarchy and deradicalization—it is *not* an inevitable process and can be resisted by an active membership and leadership *ideologically committed* to retaining a decentralized power structure. Second, I also argue that bureaucracy is *not* the opposite of democracy. My empirical evidence shows that complex, bureaucratic, and rule-based organizations may in fact be *more* democratic than organizations based on a collectivist and unstructured approach to power relationships. This failure to distinguish democracy from bureaucracy is prevalent in the social science literature on social movement organizations, in which the various concepts of oligarchy, bureaucracy, power inequality, and (un)democracy are often mixed together. This is in part a legacy of the Michelsian theory of oligarchy, a tradition

that has become implicitly merged with Weberian theories of bureaucracy over time. In addition, this conceptualization of bureaucracy and oligarchy is also a result of social movement ideology that arose out of the New Left and post-New Left movements in the U.S. in the 1970s, such as the second wave feminist movement.

Some scholars have tended to swallow the Michels-Weber theory in its entirety without parsing out the different incremental steps that it would take to end up, as Michels describes, within the grips of the iron law of oligarchy. As always, it is the process that reveals the story, rather than only the result; the process reveals where alternate roads might have led for a group making choices about its structure. Most importantly, I also argue, a theory about *internal dynamics* has been extended to have implications for the organization's relationship to the *external context*—a leap that has not been shown to be “an iron law” in empirical studies of social movements, but rather one that involves decisions made by the leadership to move in that direction or not. I show that external institutionalization *may* tend to push an organization toward internal institutionalization, but that this process is neither inevitable nor does it have the same dimensions as Michels suggests with respect to the centralization of power within the hands of a minority. I show how HOP struggled fiercely with this tendency toward becoming a more traditional non-profit structure that puts more power in the hands of a few instead of the many, but ultimately resisted moving in that direction, despite strong impulses to do so.

I recognize that the theoretical findings in this chapter are not groundbreaking in originality; other scholars and activists (as I will show below) have challenged the Michels-Weber theory in recent and past years and found similar evidence that demonstrates how the iron law is not as deterministic as previously assumed. It is not shocking that organizations structured differently—with distinctive sets of formal and informal cultures—make decisions in ways that differently reflect their structure and culture. However, I do want to emphasize the

fact that the concept of “institutionalization” has often been used in social science literature to describe internal and external dimensions interchangeably, without specification as to which of the two dimensions is being referenced. Just as I was careful in chapter 6 to elucidate the intricate patterns through which external institutionalization is enacted by cultural movement organizations, my goal here is to ensure that I am equally clear in my specification about what internal institutionalization entails. Moreover, a lot of the literature which *supports* the Michels-Weberian theory of institutionalization merges the two external and internal dimensions, creating slippage between the two processes that should be treated separately. At the conclusion of the chapter, I will use evidence to show how the two processes are related, but not by any means in the way that many theorists have viewed them—as merged and indistinct, or as one inevitably causing the other without investigating the steps by which this occurs.

In the interest of maintaining careful specificity about terms and concepts, I define internal institutionalization here as synonymous with bureaucracy: it is *the proliferation of bureaucratic forms of decision-making, with rules and regulations dominating the patterns of how members accomplish organizational business, and formality in dealing with conflict within the organization*. I do not assume that bureaucracy automatically equals a lack of democracy. Instead, I take democracy—which means that all members have the opportunity to provide input and voice their opinions about decisions and the direction of the organization—as a *variable* to be evaluated through observation within each organization. Bureaucracy does not equal democracy, nor does bureaucracy equal a *lack* of democratic decision-making. Moreover, there is a significant difference between formal bureaucracy—i.e. the rules as stated in an organization’s bylaws—and the *reality* of the organization as it operates as a group of individuals, who may or may not use their bylaws to solve their problems despite whatever their

those bylaws lay out for them. The bylaws may lay out a well-defined process through which to impeach a board member seeking to exercise excessive control over the organization, but if the other board members are not familiar with the rules then the bylaws have little significance.

The issue of member personalities and the desire for power and control over the organization is always a significant part of being in a collectivity, and in my field research I paid close attention to how rules and bureaucratic formalization may, in fact, provide a means of reining in an individual seeking to wield an inordinate amount of power over the organization. Based on my fieldwork with two of the Pride organizations, I challenge the idea that bureaucracy always acts as a tool of control for the powerful. I show that rules and bureaucratic procedure (such as Robert's Rules of Order⁵⁸) can be used in some cases as a weapon wielded by the powerful, but in other cases can be used to protect the less-powerful individuals within an organization. They can be used to squash discussion, but they can also be used for the good of the organization as a deft and clever move that saves the organization from disruptive infighting. Moreover, I show that informality can lead to a *lack* of democratic decision-making, just as much or more than one would find in a highly internally-institutionalized organization in which members held various well-defined positions and used rules and structured procedures to settle conflict. My central claim is that a bureaucratic organization with a heavy reliance on rules and procedures that is *specifically designed to produce democratic decision-making* may, in fact, be more equitable in its distribution of informal power and control than an organization that operates on friendship networks and shies away from excessive rule-making. And lastly, I show that there is a relationship between internal and external institutionalization, in that external institutionalization does create a push toward bureaucratic forms of organization, but

⁵⁸ Robert's Rules of Order is a widely-accepted book containing a set of rules for running a meeting according to parliamentary procedure. The Rules are used in a wide variety of organizational settings, from social movement organizations to high school student body organizations, in varying degrees of formality.

that does not necessarily result in a loss of democracy or in a case of oligarchy within the organization.

Parsing Out Labels

Michels (1949) based his study on European socialist parties, arguing that all organizations have a natural tendency to develop oligarchical leadership and conservative goals, despite formal democratic practices, as the leaders gain power and privilege organizational maintenance over social change. This thesis was supported by Piven and Cloward (1977) who also found that poor people's social movements became less contentious when they became structured into formal organizations. Leaders of the organizations were vulnerable to cooptation, and less likely to encourage the use of disruptive tactics, which Piven and Cloward argue are poor people's only means of achieving their movement's goals. In this widely-accepted view, large bureaucratic organizations, with complex structures, have too much at stake to use disruptive tactics that could threaten the longevity of the organization. Instead, argue Piven and Cloward, small, newly-formed, decentralized, and emergent groups are best-suited to engage in disruptive tactics that will lead to significant social change.

However, while these two studies have been accepted as "classics" of the deradicalization thesis, and point to evidence that *all* bureaucratic organizations are destined for oligarchy and goal displacement, there are a number of other empirical studies that challenge the inevitability of this pattern. First, Lipset et al. (1959) demonstrate that not all bureaucratically-structured organizations become oligarchical over time, pointing to the case of a typographical union, while Zald and Ash (1966) point out that bureaucratic organizations do not necessarily become conservative in goals and tactics over time.

Schwartz et al. (1981), in their examination of the Southern Farmers' Alliance, find that tendencies toward oligarchy and goal displacement are always a potential problem for protest movement organizations (see also Schwartz 1976 for a more complete case study of the Southern Farmer's Alliance). However, they also insist that "neither tendency is inevitable," and show how there is a historically conditional nature to this problem—one that has to do with the role and level of involvement by the rank-and-file members of the organization. Members can—and sometimes do—resist the leadership's tendency toward the oligarchization of power, either by threatening to dismantle the organization or by changing the bureaucratic rules so that they are more responsible to the authority of the membership.

Voss and Sherman (2000) also support this conditional view of the relationship between bureaucracy, formalization, and deradicalization, arguing that organizations can, at times, break out of bureaucratic conservatism, even after they have been conservative for a number of years. They found that in some mature social movements, such as the American labor union movement, we can see recent examples of a resurgence of the use of innovative and disruptive tactics in some unions. Moreover, they argue, "We must reexamine the presumed link between bureaucracy and conservatism. While the locals we studied did make significant organizational shifts [towards more radical organizing tactics], none became less bureaucratic, less professionalized, or less formally organized" (p. 344). Thus, it is not necessary to return to collectivist organizations in order to move toward the use of disruptive tactics to achieve one's goals. Rothschild-Whitt (1976) also questions the inevitability of bureaucratic social movement organizations to move toward "oligarchization, goal displacement, and organizational maintenance" by investigating what conditions may prevent (or foster) such progression. Rather than viewing bureaucracy, as suggested by the Michels-Weberian approach, as a process through which power becomes centralized among elites (i.e. oligarchy), Rothschild-Whitt

suggests that there are many conditions under which this may be resisted and contested. Goal displacement—what I like to call *the deradicalization thesis*—is not necessarily a natural progression from bureaucratic decision-making, with oligarchy as its driving mechanism.

Schwartz et al. (1981) also point out, in passing, a very important distinction that will serve us well for understanding internal *and* external institutionalization of LGBT Pride organizations. They note that there are two distinct “views” from social movement scholars on the direction of influence, or rather the origins from where the tendency toward oligarchy and goal displacement emerges (p. 23). In what they call the “old view,” the tactics and behavior of the protest movement were influenced by the oligarchization and internal power dimensions of organizational life—i.e. that the *internal* dynamics of the organization affected the organization’s behavior and *external* relationships. In the “new view,” they argue, the process of oligarchization may be a consequence of the organization’s *relationship with the environment*—such as when an organization needs to remain in a state of readiness through centralized authority in order to deal with immediate threats. In *this* view, external dynamics affect the internal dimensions of the organization, causing oligarchy to occur. Thus, we may see a “push” factor from *within* the organization to become more internally institutionalized (e.g., leaders centralize power due to member apathy or a desire for increased power), *or* we may notice a “pull” factor from *outside* of the organization to become more internally institutionalized (e.g., an organization is forced to conform to standardized operating procedures in order to adhere to state funding requirements). This second factor, the “pull” factor, is what I see as the effects of external institutionalization. While this is not an exhaustive discussion about push versus pull factors toward internal institutionalization, they do help us to make a crucial distinction between internal and environmental factors that we should be careful to keep separate when discussing the deradicalization thesis.

Lessons from the Second Wave Feminist Movement

In the second wave women's movement, as well as other movement organizations that emerged from the New Left tradition of social movement organizing in the late 1960s, a great deal of tension surrounded the issue of internal structures. Ferree (2000) points to a distinction made by scholars of the early feminist movement between a "bureaucratic strand" and a "collectivist strand" within women's organizations. While both were concerned with rights and liberation, the ideal type of the bureaucratic strand organization—exemplified by such bodies as the National Organization of Women—"is characterized by a formal division of labor, written rules, universal standards of performance, hierarchical offices, impersonal relationships, technical expertise, and individualistic achievement norms." In contrast, the collectivist strand "is a community of like-minded persons, with minimal division of labor, rules, or differential rewards. Interaction among staff is wholistic, personalized, informal, and designed to achieve consensus," as embodied in such entities as consciousness-raising groups, feminist bookstores, or food cooperatives (Ferree 2000, p. 57).

Many of the collectivist feminist organizations believed in a "prefigurative politics" (Breines 1980) in which they deliberately sought to create expressive and grassroots organizations that were conscious alternatives to the anomic, bureaucratic, hierarchical, rational, and "masculinist" institutions found in the mainstream society. Under these rigid distinctions of values and practices, bureaucracy is directly opposed to democratic participation, empowerment is the opposite of power, and outsider politics that challenge the status quo is contrasted with insider state-focused organizing (Reinelt 1995). The practices of running the organization are considered just as, if not more important than, the results of the action (Ferree

2000). These collectivist organizations offered a new way of conceiving of society, and provided important spaces for women to experience psychic changes in consciousness regarding their gendered experiences.

However, the collectivist strand of organizing encountered difficulties in sustainability over time: “Without mechanisms for conflict resolution, CR [consciousness raising] groups wrangled endlessly over goals and tactics, and when informal leaders emerged, they were often accused of being power-hungry and subjected to a form of character assassination known as ‘trashing’” (Ferree 2000, p. 72; Freeman 1972). As pointed out by Freeman (1976) in her widely-reprinted essay, “The Tyranny of Structurelessness,” it is misleading to think that a group of people can interact without developing a structure. She criticizes collectivist groups, arguing that an attempt to sustain a group without a formal structure inevitably leads to the emergence of informal leaders (elites) who have invisible but potentially tyrannical power over others in the group. Reinelt (1995) also points out that collectivist groups often have “no mechanism for ensuring worker accountability,” and that they have “informal power structures that are often more difficult to negotiate than formal ones” (p. 90) Moreover, she says, “intense face-to-face relationships among collective members personalize conflicts that make them emotionally painful” and can lead to dissolution based on personality clashes (p. 90). We see a number of these issues emerge in Southern Utah Pride, which—although formally organized as a standard non-profit organization—ran more on collectivist approaches to decision-making than rational bureaucratic practices.

The history of the feminist movement also reveals important lessons about how organizations contend with issues of internal and external institutionalization as they mature over time. In reviewing the literature on the second wave women’s movement, I identify both *pull* factors as well as *push* factors toward internal institutionalization. It was against these

processes of institutionalization that some feminist organizations (and, as I will show, Pride organizations) struggled fiercely in trying to balance their beliefs and values, realistic expectations, relationships to the state, commitment to service provision, and the desire to create social change outside of their small organization. These issues get to the heart of “institutionalization” as a two-sided reciprocal process that often have various interacting push-pull factors involved.

The “push” factors toward internal institutionalization can be seen as those tendencies, mentioned above, for collectivist organizations to self-destruct after a short period of time. Many collectivist women’s organizations dissolved after the very early 1970s into organizations that existed in themselves, for themselves, spending far more time arguing and trying to achieve consensus than creating social change, and eventually disbanding (lasting only a few years in their widespread and genuinely-collectivist form). While consensus is a laudable goal in theory, many women did not have the time or energy to commit to the hours of time that it takes to produce genuine consensus, nor could they weather the personal conflicts that the organization tended to produce (Arnold 1995). Moreover, as noted by Acker (1995, p. 141), “excessive focus on internal processes to achieve consensus interferes with actions to achieve change in a world that does not wait.” Thus, we can see that feminist organizations which had at least some degree of internal institutionalization—i.e. bureaucratic measures for decision-making—tended to have a far stronger chance for survival and longevity over time—leading to a chance for creating greater social change in important areas of women’s lives.

There are also a number of very important “pull” factors that have affected feminist organizations over the last several decades, turning them to rely increasingly on patterns of internal institutionalization. These are especially important for my analysis in understanding the relationship between Pride organizations and external institutionalization, or their relationships

to entities outside of themselves. First, feminist organizations became increasingly successful in receiving funds from the state or other mainstream institutions to address social problems that affect women—such as funding for battered women’s shelters (Reinelt 1995; Arnold 1995), rape crisis shelters (Matthews 1995) or feminist health clinics (Morgen 1995). While all of the organizations struggled with ideological resistance to the state as its source of funding, they also recognized that they were, in fact, achieving the goals that they had set out to do by providing expanded services for their clients and ensuring that women’s issues were considered to be part of the state’s responsibility as much as any other health issue. By interacting with the state and/or non-profit foundations, in which they received necessary funding to provide their services to women in need, these organizations were expected to meet record-keeping and data-collection rules that satisfied these external institutions (Matthews 1995, p. 296). Thus, these organizations found themselves turning from collectivist into bureaucratic organizations, to satisfy the requirements put on them by their relationships with the state or foundations. However, as pointed out by Gelb (1995, p. 128), while all organizations “must balance their desire for change against the need to accommodate the demands from funding sources and political decision-makers to moderate their tactics... [it is also clear that while] co-optation is a possible outcome for feminist organizations that engage with the state, it is not an inevitable one” (pp. 128-129).

What we see from the empirical cases in the feminist movement is that cultural movement organizations consistently struggle with both push factors—the need for democratic decision-making processes in order to create equitable power-sharing and effective leadership—and pull factors, in which external institutions demand formalization from social movement organizations that wish to grow and be sustainable over time. In this chapter, I will show the challenges and pitfalls of two different organizations that approached organizational decision-

making in very different ways, which reflect patterns of organizational forms that look very similar to those we encountered in the American second wave women's movement. In the case of HOP, their intense reliance on hyper-bureaucracy, with rules and regulations that worked to distribute power equally, posed certain challenges for that organization. They used rules, their bylaws, and Robert's Rules of Order as means and methods for wielding power within the organization to fight with each other, rather than engaging in personal backstabbing. The rules were their weapons—both as tool for offensive attack as well as a means of defense for less-powerful members. Yet board members also struggled with the frustration that came with layers of bureaucracy and what they perceived as general membership apathy, as well as questions of commitment to the backbreaking burden of running a large organization. As I will show, they also struggled to retain their identity as an organization, grappling with how to adapt to a changing cultural environment and inspire organizational commitment. Were they a civil rights organization that valued democracy as a reflection of their ideology, or a bureaucratic entity that was designed to produce Pride events in the most efficient manner possible? These questions will be taken up more fully in the next chapter as well.

In the other case of Southern Utah Pride, we see a close-knit group of friends, organized around amity and sense of commitment and purpose to each other as well the cause of producing Pride in a hostile cultural environment, working together within an organization. Over time, they came to struggle with infighting and personality issues, and were taken by surprise when one member came to wield a great deal of power that they were unprepared to fight against. They realized that they had not protected themselves and their organization from the tyranny of one member, and it threatened to destroy their once-cohesive group. In turn, as I will discuss towards the end of this chapter, SUP in 2009 rotated 180 degrees and tried to rapidly instate a complex and overbearing bureaucratic form, in order to overcompensate for

the structure that was lacking during the previous year. Yet, they also failed at this, due to their lack of experience in running a bureaucratic organization, and their unwillingness to change their attitudes towards people and towards friendships as their primary attachments.

Heritage of Pride

In Heritage of Pride, there were three main types of committees, each of which met once a month: working committees (such as event committees like the Rally committee or the Media committee), an executive board made up of the chairs of the committees and other standard positions such as a secretary and treasurer, and a general membership. There were two co-chairs of the entire organization—one male and one female. All of the meetings in Heritage of Pride were open to the public as stated in their constitution, including executive board meetings. Anyone could attend any meeting, although only official members could formally vote at most meetings, and only board members could vote during executive board meetings. Most meetings were held in the basement office of the organization, and typically had between 5 and 12 people in attendance. General membership meetings, however, were held at the LGBT Center not far from the HOP office, in a much larger room rented on a monthly basis. At these formal meetings, the co-chairs of the organization sat at the front of the room behind a table, while the secretary of the organization took minutes. This is where all of the members of all of the committees were expected to gather together to approve business—business that was largely comprised of decisions made by the various working committees that had met during that previous month, and that had also gone through a round of Executive Board discussion on the issue.

Committee meetings, such as that of the March or the Dance committee, were relatively small and informal. People often brought snacks to share, brought their dogs, tended to be on a far more familiar basis with each other, and typically did not use Robert's Rules of Order since the small size of the group made it unnecessary. Votes were often taken by acclamation, rather than by formal vote, and open discussion of issues was encouraged. These meetings were seen as "fun" and enjoyable, since members came to know each other over time through direct and sustained interaction. A member of the overall general membership was automatically a voting member of any working committee. This is where, according to the formal *and* informal structure of the organization, much of the "brainstorming" or "work" of the organization occurred. These committees would come up with ideas and plans for their event or their responsibility, and make decisions that they felt, as a group, were most appropriate. Most members were personally committed to one or two working committees; an individual might attend the Dance committee regularly, but not a Rally committee meeting. Executive board members, however, were often spotted at several different committee meetings. The various committees also tended to have certain flavors: the Dance committee had an overrepresentation of white, upper-middle-class men, while the Outreach/Volunteer committee was more ethnically and economically diverse.

Executive board meetings were also open to the public, but were slightly more formalized. These meetings were typically run by an abridged version of Robert's Rules; people regularly "made motions" and "seconded" the motions, but the meetings typically allowed for a flow of conversation about each issue because of the small number of people (typically about six to eight) involved. Some general members attended these executive board meetings, but typically were more observers than participants in the discussions, as they could not vote. Often, the chairs of the committees would present their committee's plans and decisions, and

these were subject to a round of discussion as to the feasibility of the plan or idea, and input was provided by other board members that would help to coordinate or modify the plan of the individual committee.

General Membership meetings, however, were very different from these types of committee meetings. First, one had to be formally voted in as a member of a period of two separate general membership meetings. While at any one point in time there may have been 50 to 60 general members formally registered on the organization's records, typically only about 25 people showed up at the general membership meetings—a large majority of whom were either board members or very active members of the committees. Few people attended only general membership meetings without being active members of committees. However, there were some “old-timers”—people who had been board members or co-chairs of the organization in the past (in some cases, many years ago) and wanted to remain involved, but were no longer willing to put in the time to be part of a committee—who attended only these meetings. Some of these old timers tended to act as “shepherds” of the organization, watching out for the organization's progress over time.

General membership meetings were very formal in comparison to all of the other meetings. Minutes from all of the committee meetings from the previous month were printed out and distributed on a center table; the meeting was called to order by the co-chair whose turn it was to run that particular month's meeting. Brief introductions were made around the room, and then the meetings took on a highly routinized form. “Non-HOP business” was always the first order of the agenda—this was where individuals could make announcements that were not directly related to HOP, such as alerting the organization about a major demonstration, rally, or fundraiser related to LGBT or other progressive issue that was coming up, or telling the organization about the passing away of a previous member who had been involved in the group

years prior. The rest of the meeting was run by a strict agenda, which included new business, old business, and committee reports. The committee reports involved each committee chair alerting the rest of the organization about their committee's decisions; a committee whose reports were not "publicly challenged" were presumed to be "accepted by acclamation." During these meetings, cross-talk was strongly discouraged, and all eyes were expected to be on either the co-chair of the organization who was leading the meeting, or the committee chair giving a report on his or her committee's previous month's business.

General membership meetings were run by a very strict adherence to Robert's Rules of Order. Minutes from the last general membership meeting were formally voted in at the start of the meeting, and one had to raise their hand and be recognized by the chair of the meeting in order to speak on an issue. There was a very high level of Robert's Rules used in these meetings—phrases such as "point of order" and "call to question" were used by various members familiar with the intricacies of the Rules in order to conduct business (which tended to confuse and intimidate newer or potential members who misunderstood the meanings of the phrases). Business was only permitted to be presented to the group when it was stated in the form of a "motion," and a motion had to be "seconded" before it could be brought before the group for consideration. If a member wished to add an addendum to the motion, the group needed to vote on whether to allow the addendum to be added before the entire motion could be considered by the group. Overall, while HOP *committee* meetings tended to be informal and relaxed, and the *executive board* meetings were only somewhat formalized in their processes of passing business, general membership meetings were highly structured, routinized, and bureaucratic in form, following strict rules of procedure that were taken very literally from Robert's Rules of Order for running a meeting. As I will show below, most of the board

members were familiar with Robert's Rules, but there were certain "experts" on the rules who were the recognized authority on the intricacies of the Rules.

This structure—in which General Membership is the highest authority of the organization—was put into place when HOP officially formed in 1984, and the structure that I encountered in 2008 was only a slightly modified version of the one in operation during their predecessor organization. The Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee was identical in its tri-level committee structure and level of formality in using Robert's Rules of Order, save for the fact that under the CSLDC structure they allowed representatives of community organizations to be members of the general membership, and to have voting power on the proceedings of their organization.

Overall, since its inception, CSLDC and then later HOP were always highly structured, bureaucratic, and formal organizations that demanded several levels of bureaucracy in order for business to be passed. While I had imagined that the early days of CSLDC and HOP were far less formal and followed a collectivist structure when I began working with the organization—since CSLDC emerged in the era of the Lew Left, anti-bureaucratic era—this turned out to be untrue; both CSLDC and HOP were highly structured and run by formal rules from the beginning. Ideas and decisions made in HOP committees by a small group of people were constantly shuffled through two additional levels of discussion after being conceived of by committee members. Moreover, no business of the committees could be passed unless the general membership of the organization had accepted it. The executive board, which typically heard about the various decisions before presentation to general membership, made *recommendations* as to how they felt about the issue, but ultimately their opinion remained only that—a recommendation—and officially could be overridden by the general membership.

Moreover, if any debate arose over how that business was to be conducted, there was a large, complex, and often-consulted set of constitutional bylaws, as well as a separate set of policies and procedures, that could be taken out and used to settle an issue, as I will discuss in more detail below. These rules had been built up over years of the organization's life; they were highly specific and had many layers of minutiae added to them over time. Policies were often proposed to deal with new issues that cropped up—one minor policy that was up for debate during my time with the organization was with respect to the presence of dogs at meetings—and voted on first by the executive board and then by general membership. Minutes for each meeting were filed in the organization's office, easily accessible to any member, and members could (and sometimes did) consult them if they wished to. If one of two members who were in disagreement over how to handle a minute procedure claimed "past precedent," it was not unheard of for the dissenting individual to spend several hours searching through organizational minutes, policies, and procedures to prove that individual wrong. Some HOP members took pride in their ability to "throw the book" at another member and show how they had, in fact, been correct—or, if they discovered a policy that had been ambiguously written, to pose a motion for accepting a rewritten version of the policy that would more accurately represent the intended letter of the law. I will show below the case of one member who drew heavily on the rules and formal policies of the organization in order to "defend himself" from what he felt was unfair treatment by other board members.

Members of HOP occupied a wide range of socio-economic and professional positions outside of the organization. Some were professionals, and had extensive business backgrounds, or were retired lawyers or financial advisors. The treasurer of HOP for many years had a very strong financial background, and ran the organization under very strict financial rules; he also met with a paid accountant on a regular basis to complete more advanced accounting

procedures. HOP not only had to pay rent for the office and pay for extensive office supplies, but they had paid staff, which required more advanced accounting procedures than an organization without paid staff. Moreover, given the very large budget that they were working with, and the enormous amounts of cash that they brought in during their various fundraisers, it was critical that they have a highly-well-trained financial professional in charge of their finances, and very specific guidelines as to their financial procedures.

Some members of HOP have known each other for many years through the organization; up to 15 or 20 years in some cases. Many people came to know each other more intimately through committee meetings or weekend work sessions, where there was more opportunity for informal conversation. Based on the number of meetings and the hours they spent together, there certainly were friendships built, as well as a combination of friendship-working relationships. Some of the board members would go out for drinks after meetings on occasion, and there were holiday parties and volunteer appreciation parties. However, I did not hear the language of close friendship used to describe relationships in HOP. This was an organization that had very serious business to conduct—putting on events for three quarters of a million people in June of each year. Thus, while there were certainly bonds of affection and appreciation that developed within the group, tropes of family or friendship were not the first to come to mind when describing the ties within the organization. While of course they were, as a group, understanding of different life situations that may come up, infractions of the rules and failure to complete necessary responsibilities associated with one's position were not tolerated out of sympathy for the individual for very long. When I asked one board member about how he felt about the impeachment of another board member (which I will explain in more detail below), he said, "I didn't vote for him to be impeached, but it's not because we're friends. I resent any sort of implication that I would support him only because he's my friend." As we will

see in Southern Utah Pride, this reflects an important difference in the workings of the two organizations, in comparing a rule-based bureaucratic structure with well-defined roles to one built around friendship bonds and collectivist approaches to accomplishing the tasks of Pride organizing.

Southern Utah Pride

Southern Utah Pride operated as an organization under Las Vegas Pride for a few years before it incorporated as an independent non-profit in 2007. When it incorporated, the leaders of the organization essentially copied the bylaws and the organizational structure of Las Vegas Pride, changed the name and a few details, and set their constitution and bylaws into place. When I encountered Southern Utah Pride in 2008, the official structure was that of a traditional non-profit or corporation: their constitution set out the positions of president, vice president, secretary/parliamentarian, sponsorship coordinator, treasurer, and several positions related to event coordination, such as an Entertainment Director, Vendor Director, Volunteer Coordinator, Lodging Coordinator, and, eventually, they informally added a board position called Pride Director—a position that became the subject of extensive debate. They also added a few other informal, ad hoc positions—also not listed in their constitution or bylaws—to accommodate a few individuals who wished to be involved but who were not perceived as being able to take on tasks that required large commitments (they eventually dropped out of the organization).

When I first met with the president of SUP in March of 2008, he proudly displayed a Power Point chart that clearly outlined the lines of authority and different positions that he had created for the organization. They had held a “Town Meeting” several months before—announced through Myspace, e-mail, and the local LGBT listserv—to see who was interested in

being part of this newly-emerging formal organization (as opposed to the loose collection of people who had put on the event the year before). They intended SUP to be a traditional non-profit board, with a president, vice president, secretary, and other formal positions, although they encountered difficulties in filling all of the positions, and most board members eventually took on more than one role (e.g., the Secretary was also the Vendor Director). Although they may have originally intended to hold separate committee meetings, in which the head of each committee (such as the Vendor Committee) would have its own separate group of members to oversee, there were few people associated with the organization who were not on the board, and the group quickly began to hold meetings that were simply an open call for “anyone involved in the organization.” Thus, a typical meeting was almost entirely made up of the board and a few friends who held those “ad hoc” positions that had been created for them.

Voting was supposed to be limited only to board members, but soon the board members began to allow all people who showed up at the meeting to vote, except for the president of the organization who declined to do so because he felt it would give him too much power. The meetings tended to be informal; as they had no office space in which to meet, they typically gathered at the house of the president, later at various homes of committee leaders, or at Mocha Café, the local coffee shop that was a major sponsor of the organization. People were often late to meetings, showed up with food that was to be eaten before they could start the meeting, there were cigarette breaks taken during meetings, and the meetings tended to run several hours in length. The house of the president was “always open”; members of the organization were seen as friends and would come and drop in as they wanted, to discuss issues related to Pride or just to hang out. Creative work sessions, such as when the group got together to make rainbow pins to sell at another Pride event, were held in members’ homes,

with various family members of that board member going about their business as the Pride group gathered in the living room.

Few of the members of SUP had ever been involved in another non-profit organization. The Secretary/Vendor Director had been a member of the previous group that tried to put together an LGBT community center in St. George, and she (as well as others) was familiar with the basics of how organizational meetings are traditionally run. Minutes were taken, minutes were approved and accepted at the following meeting, an agenda was written up for each meeting, someone led the meeting, and votes were counted and recorded in the minutes. However, other than those basic elements, there was little use of formal rules within this small group; motions were not passed, nor were any form of Robert's Rules utilized during any of the meetings. Since they did not have a separate board meeting from committee meetings, the meetings were typically run in a somewhat free-flowing fashion, albeit structured around an agenda. Completion of tasks was the key point to cover. Says one board member: "We usually have quite a structured agenda, where we'll go over last week's minutes, and then we'll do what we call a 'round table task,' and we'll go over what tasks were assigned to you at the last board meeting, and ask if you have completed that task. If you hadn't, you're supposed to say where you are on, and when you expect to complete the task." Nonetheless, integrated into that meeting style was also an informality allowed for an interactional, discussion-based style of problem-solving where board members could brainstorm at these meetings in order to come up with solutions for how to accomplish their tasks. I asked one of the members if people feel comfortable jumping in, when something sparks an idea or interest. She said, "Oh yeah, totally. If somebody says something and I'm like, 'that's a great idea, but maybe *this* would make it better,' I'll raise my hand—I don't like to interrupt people when they're free-flowing—but I'll

raise my hand and then say, ‘well, you know, that’s really cool, but what if we did this *and* this? Or something to that effect.”

In the early days of the 2008 organization, the members described their relationships with each other very vividly through the language of *friendship* and *family*. When I first spoke with a board member right before visiting the organization, she said, “We focus on the joy and the experience of being together; there’s a lot of closeness in the group. We plan on going camping at the end of May together.” When I asked another board member in May 2008 about why she put so much energy into the Pride organization, she stated: “I like to be involved with Pride because of the people—like, I love Graham to death, and he was one of the main people that encouraged me to do it, and who keeps me going. So, I think part of it is the people—they’re like family to me.”

Another member stated, about the early days of 2008 when they first established the board: “We were so gung-ho when [a board member] got on board. So gung-ho! I mean, I was *thrilled* when she did. Things were *great*. I mean, everyone was getting along. Everyone was *excited*—all of us! It was one big, freakin’ family. You know, we were hanging out more, it was freakin’ awesome.” The language of family and close friendships was the dominant trope for a while in SUP. They spent a lot of time together outside of meetings; several of them were friends before they became involved with Pride, and many of them knew of each other—since St. George is a small city—even if they were not direct friends. One of them complained jokingly that when they got together to drink a few beers on the weekend just as friends, they eventually found themselves talking only about Pride, unable to leave their work “at the office.” The framing of the relationships as family and friendship within the group created a strong bond among the group members for a number of months, but later proved to be a difficult hurdle to

overcome when they struggled with task accomplishment, issues of authority and control, and personal attacks among members.

While Southern Utah Pride used a loose structure of an agenda, task completion reports and updates, and voting on various issues, they did not use Robert's Rules of Order during their meetings. Looking over their bylaws during a casual interview with the secretary of the organization in 2009, reflecting over the previous year's events of 2008, I asked her about Robert's Rules. I noticed that the bylaws stated that the meetings were to be "run by Robert's Rules of Order." I asked, "Do you guys use something called 'Robert's Rules'? Are you guys familiar with that?" The secretary—who by 2009 had become the vice president and de facto leader of the organization, said:

Yeah, we looked it up a few months ago [around November of 2008]. 'Cause we didn't know what it was. We saw it in the bylaws, and we were like, 'what the hell is Robert's Rules?' So we looked it up, and it's just a book that talks about meetings and how they're supposed to be run and all that. We didn't purchase the book though...but at least now we know what it is! A year ago, if you had asked me what it was, I'll be honest—I would have been like, 'uh, I don't know.' ... I guess we just left it in the bylaws [that we run our meetings by Robert's Rules] because we didn't want to omit it in case we ever had to report that to someone! There has to be *some* reason it's in there...! [laughing]

In terms of record-keeping, there had been very little bookkeeping in the organization prior to 2008 when I first began to do fieldwork with SUP. The president of the organization at the time had requested "the books" from the previous leaders, and was handed a notebook with some papers and a few penciled-in scribbles. Nobody in Southern Utah Pride had any formal training in financial management, so they had to work together as a group to begin this learning process for managing their newly-incorporated non-profit organization. During my first few days of visiting with the group in March of 2008, I sat through an informal meeting in the kitchen of the president with their newly-appointed treasurer, a young man whose family member was an accountant and who could potentially provide advice if necessary. He had

acquired a copy of the QuickBooks financial program, and he worked with the president and the Pride Director as a small group for a few hours to learn how to use the computer program and start entering their information from the past few months. They consulted a few bank statements and drew on their collective recollection of their financial expenses and revenue. They were essentially “self-taught” in terms of how to put together a set of financial records, trying to put together what they expected a non-profit to look like. This decision to start using QuickBooks and formally create records for the organization was part of their efforts to begin to be more structured and formalized over time, and they labored to try and put those structures into place during 2008.

Authority in the Organizations: Where Does it Lie?

As we see in the literature review of what is important for the internal dimensions of cultural movement organizations, a crucial element is where the decision-making authority lies within the organization. Is the general membership endowed with that authority, or is it centralized within a few select board members? How and where are new ideas and plans conceived for the organization, and who has veto power over those ideas? How do people interpret their bureaucratic roles, and how they see their “authority” over others within the organization as endowed to them by virtue of that role? Are there clear leaders within the organization, as specified within the constitution, or have those leaders emerged organically from within the ranks? Also, formal structure is not the same as the informal structure that exists within the organization; as we saw in SUP, the bylaws had little to do with the daily operation of the organization. My goal was to understand where the *informal* power lay, within the organization, rather than what the bylaws outlined.

Moreover, given the underlying tension over the history of HOP as a community-based, civil rights organization, I was careful to pay attention to how they saw their practices of decision-making in relationship to ideologically-based, New Left-associated community organizing practices. At SUP, my interest was soon piqued when I realized that they regularly talked about their vision of becoming a “real organization,” and sought to understand what that meant to them in terms of becoming more internally structured. And, most importantly, to understand how their way of running the organization affected, was affected, or was changed as a result of the group’s interaction with outside structures, meaning the process of external institutionalization.

Heritage of Pride

In *Heritage of Pride*, I asked the board members about decision-making in their organization: where does the authority of the organization lie? All HOP members clearly and emphatically agreed that authority was located within the general membership; they all confirmed that general membership, by virtue of having to pass any motion that any committee presented to it, was the ultimate ruling authority of the organization. All of these board members consistently followed the structure of the organization, which prevented them from making decisions without first going through the general membership. These “decisions” ranged from what color themes to use at the fundraising Dance, whether they were going to raise the fees for registration at the March,

I did not encounter a pattern in which members frequently tried to use an informal, underground approach to “get around” the organization’s structural hierarchies as set out in the bylaws of the organization. The most extreme version of that approach that I saw was someone

saying something along the lines of “Well, put it in your report to general membership at the meeting, and if they have a problem with it, someone will say something,” rather than deliberately trying to “slip it by them” without reporting it. However, despite consistent practices of deferring to the general membership committee for final authority, I found that there were three loose “camps” within the organization that describes their *sentiments* toward the existing bureaucratic-democratic structure and what the role of general membership *should be* within the organization: a “reluctant pragmatist” group; a “pro-centralization” group, and a “we need to fix it” group. In each of these camps, there are revealing points about what these members think about the identity and the level of commitment of the general member, but also about the social milieu that they perceive about the gay community in New York in the current day.

The “reluctant pragmatist” group was made up of people who were lamented the decline of general membership; they conceded that general membership had become something of a “rubber stamp” on most decisions that came through the committees and the executive board. They were saddened by this change, but were not sure how to fix it, and were grudgingly receptive to the idea of changing the structure to solve what may be a losing battle over trying to get a more active general membership.

A board member who fit into the fit into this group states: “I think that’s one of our main problems right now. Technically the authority lies with General Membership; they’re the ultimate ruling body. But, over the last few years especially, General Membership generally follows Exec Board’s lead, for most things. And it’s not anything that’s really been planned; it’s just the way things have happened—particularly when we changed the rule so that if we don’t have quorum, Exec Board is empowered to call an emergency meeting and make a decision on things that have to be decided on—we have to get business done or we’ll get behind in our

tasks. We just formalized that rule last month.” Another member echoed this sentiment, saying: “As per the constitution, the authority of the organization is with General Membership. ... But General Membership is not...although it’s the *authority*, it’s not the *leadership* of the organization. That comes from the executive board.”

I press him on this issue, asking why he thinks decisions are being made primarily by the executive board and not by the general membership body. He answers:

I think a lot of it has to do with the rapid turnover that we’ve been having. We used to have members who came and would stay for *years*. Now we seem to have more members who come around for two or three years and then move on. And then the long-term members, they slowly leave. So I think part of the problem is that General Membership *doesn’t realize how much power they have*, so when Exec[utive] Board comes and they make a recommendation, because according to the constitution *all* motions have to come through Exec Board first, where Exec Board gives a recommendation of yea or nay first. So, Gen[eral] Mem[bership] has just been following that recommendation. Occasionally there is something that they’ve been following, and they’ll come up and say, ‘no, that’s not right!’ But for the most part, General Membership has become more of a *rubber stamp*, in a way.

The second group, the “pro-centralization” camp, compared the organization to what they saw in other standard non-profit organizations that were highly functional, and argued that they should let go of the backbreaking and frustrating levels of bureaucracy that HOP engaged with. They felt that general membership had been given a lot of power, but that they weren’t living up to the *responsibility* that came with that power. A strong proponent of this camp states, with respect to why HOP has a democratic power-sharing approach:

It comes from a grassroots mentality of the ‘60s where everybody has a voice, which is...it’s left over from that era where everybody should be part of the decision-making process. And at that time, everybody was taking responsibility as well. Now, we’ve got a membership that doesn’t want to take responsibility. ... If you’re a member of that body, there are responsibilities that come with it. You have to show up for meetings, you have to put work into the organization. There are members who show up when and where they feel like it, and in my opinion they disrupt the organization. Because, a decision has been made one month, two months, six months ago, they haven’t been around, and then they show up and say, ‘oh, well, this is wrong!’ and then membership has a 20 or 30 minute discussion because one member didn’t bother to take their

responsibility as a member seriously and be at the meetings up until that point. They see a decision, they don't know what led to the decision, they were not *around* to help make the decision or *not* make the decision, but yet they still have the power to try and change the decision. And that can become disruptive.

He goes on to describe what he sees as a high level of apathy in the membership, and is frustrated by general members who have no right to vote on issues that they aren't fully informed about. Rather than spend the time in the general membership meeting going over the same debate, this individual would rather remove general membership from having to make that decision. No matter what one might do, he thinks, the apathy in the membership is too great to fight against, and thus it would be most effective to "change with the times"—the "times" being a reference to his imagined general apathy in the gay community around activism, which is a contestable claim. He wants to become a standard non-profit organization that pays staff to do the work, and has a policy board and an executive board, which simply oversee the operation of the organization on a far less involved basis. In this view, one is either an active member of the organization and has been involved in the committee that came up with the decision that is being put in front of general membership for a vote, or one is simply "apathetic" and not willing to put in the work necessary for full participation. He is frustrated by the number of hours that he spends working on the organization (which, I might add, is very high for all of the board members), and that he then has to pass any of his motions through a body that is "not taking full responsibility" for their role. His answer is to de-authorize that body, and move the organization to a traditional non-profit structure, which would not include democratic bureaucracy spread over a number of committee bodies.

Another member blames the "apathy" on "the times." He repeats an explanation that I heard several times from long-time members, which he heard himself since he was not old enough to have been involved in the organization at that time: "In the early '80s and '90s, when people were still getting fired for being gay or having HIV, there were a lot more gay people

unemployed who were looking for something to do, so they would help out.” Now, he argues, LGBT people are able to have full-time jobs, and not available to put in the hours necessary for the organization to function without hiring more staff members or centralizing the authority of the organization. People who use this explanation for why HOP should become a more traditional, centralized non-profit see that there are *external* reasons for why HOP should be “progressive” rather than “conservative” (their words, not mine—referring to whether someone is resistant or agreeable to changing the organization) and be willing to “change with the times.”

Compare this argument against someone who comes from the opposite camp. A member of the “we need to fix it” camp sees that there may be apathy in the membership, but points out that that is the fault of the organization’s leadership, *not* the membership’s fault. I ask a member of this camp: “Do you think that the organization should move to a traditional non-profit organizational structure?”

No, I don’t think that’s appropriate at all! We were founded as a community organization—the trick is to get *more* people involved, *not* exclude people! To get rid of general membership because it’s not working is not fixing the problem! ... If people [general members] don’t seem to care, we should be asking ourselves: How do we make people *care*, not ‘let’s get rid of the meetings’!

He continues, his voice getting louder as he becomes increasingly animated, “People always want to get out [of general membership meetings] *fast*. It’s become a philosophy of ‘how can we get out of here as fast as possible?’ Instead of general membership being where we get together to do the work.” I ask, “What makes for a good meeting?” He answers, banging his hand on the table for emphasis: “Any decisions that need to be made get made with everyone’s voice being heard. Unfortunately, decisions are just made in committee and presented, and nobody wants to talk about anything.” I continue to probe as to why general membership is important to retain. He says, “For me, it’s a bigger issue. You want *more people involved*. Are we going to run our organization on back-room politics, or is it democracy? We

run on back-room politics, and people [in the NYC LGBT community] resent us for it. Because gen mem [general membership] is not being treated the way that it should be. Decisions are being made, and we just expect gen mem to put its stamp on it. We should be encouraging discussion, not trying to squash it!” This group feels that general membership has been disempowered; that they are expected to be a “rubber stamp” on business that has already been hashed out. They believe that this can be changed, but that it would take a re-envisioning and re-imagining of what the role of general membership is within the minds of the board members. While general membership might have *formal power*, and there were no attempts to circumvent it, the fault of the antipathy for general membership, and for the apathy that was perceived in general membership, was a problem for the organization’s *leaders* to fix, not just to try and get around it. Moreover, some members of this camp tended to have been involved in social movement organizations for several decades, and were ideologically committed to the notion of HOP as a civil rights organization that belongs to the LGBT community as a whole, and is beholden to the general community’s input.

Based on my observations of the general membership meetings, I strongly agree with this individual’s perception of the *feeling of disempowerment* of general membership, leading to apathy on the part of the participants. (I should note here that when I say disempowerment, I do not mean to imply that general membership did not retain formal authority to pass or veto any decision, but rather that this was reflected in a *sentiment* and attitude toward the overall body of the organization). I felt that there was little for a general member *to do* at the general member meetings, other than vote on relatively inane issues that had already been hashed out in the committees. In my opinion, I felt that the atmosphere of the meeting discouraged discussion or input from members—which, ultimately, defeats the purpose of having a general membership body in the first place. I often sensed that general membership meetings were

something that board members and active committee members had to “survive” and that some of them tried to get out as quickly as possible. Some went so far as to roll their eyes when walking into the meeting. Even more than that, I felt that there was an underlying *fear* of general membership, a sense that a general membership meeting could somehow “spiral out of control” if it wasn’t carefully reined in as much as possible.

I often found myself excited by some of the more interesting questions that people occasionally asked during the meetings, on issues that would spark a discussion about who the organization was and how they felt about different contemporary subjects related to gay identity, to the Pride movement, or local politics. However, these open-ended discussions were often treated by some board members as “disruptive” to accomplishing the business of the day, which was typically a relatively inane decision that had to be made in order for the organization to go ahead with its bureaucratic processes for the upcoming month. Clearly business had to be conducted so that the planning of the events could take place, and decisions had to be bureaucratically decided upon, but the effect of being so heavily focused on accomplishing business tended to squash discussion on subjects that were more ponderous or conceptual, as related to larger issues facing the LGBT community.

Some co-chairs were better than others at leading meetings that did not stifle discussion. However, there was one co-chair who clearly loathed general membership meetings, and that individual made every effort to squash any discussion that would lengthen the time of the meeting. For example, on one occasion, the co-chair mentioned the fact that there were several open positions on the executive board. An active member of the organization spoke up and asked, “Why haven’t there been people coddled and mentored along the way to fill these positions?” This question went to the heart of the difficulties that the organization was experiencing with bringing in new members and inspiring them to become the

leadership of the organization. It could have led to a very interesting discussion about where to look for new members, how to attract them, what HOP represented to the mainstream community at large, what might be important to younger members of the LGBT community, how increased rights for and social acceptance of LGBT people in New York City may have affected the relevance of HOP, and perhaps how to rethink the organization's place in the rapidly-changing LGBT movement community in New York City. The question was one that had never been addressed in the public forum of the general membership meeting. However, the co-chair quickly and angrily declared, "That question is out of order!" In this case, a long-time board member (who felt empowered to speak out of turn due to his informal authority in the group) spoke up to defend this individual's line of questioning, suggesting that perhaps it was a good idea to discuss it. The co-chair backed down and stated brusquely, "We can put that on the agenda for New Business for next month and discuss it then." It was not discussed at the next meeting, and the issue was never again addressed in a general membership meeting during my time with the organization. While this may seem to be an innocuous example, I found that there were many brief occasions when the general membership's input was not sought on bigger questions that could have been interesting. The resentment of general membership meetings as "boring" and "stale," in my opinion, were self-fulfilling prophecies that were borne out of fear that individuals within the group would become unruly and argumentative if not kept on a short leash.

While not all co-chairs had quite the same level of negative attitude about squashing discussion that could be seen as "disruptive" to business—another co-chair who ran meetings was more flexible in his willingness to let people speak their minds when they had an opinion—I was regularly surprised by the failure of the organization's leadership to allow general discussions about issues of importance—either of importance to the life of the organization, or

issues related to LGBT politics, identity and organizing. Older and more established members were often allowed to take a little more liberty in bringing up broader issues, and on occasion there were certain moments of openness when the co-chair would allow discussion. For example, the organization was contacted by a Pride organization in Russia that was enduring severe repression, and they were asking for “help.” One very pragmatic long-time member quickly assumed that this meant that they wanted financial support, and stated that they were not in a financial position to be handing out money. This was challenged by another member, who said that they didn’t need just money; that one of HOP’s strengths is that they have access to various media outlets who would listen to them, and that they could help to put together a media campaign that would alert the public to the problems that the Moscow Pride organization was experiencing. I was excited by this discussion, and it continued for a few minutes, but ultimately the more pessimistic members of the group decided that they were too overwhelmed trying to manage their own responsibilities with an under-filled executive board, and that they were not in a position to be starting a full-fledged campaign on behalf of Moscow Pride. The subject was “tabled” for a later meeting, and was not publicly discussed again in a general membership meeting.

Overall, however, this reluctance to engage in discussions in general membership meetings remained puzzling to me throughout my time at HOP, since so many members—both general members and board members—complained that the general membership meetings were “boring” and “uninspiring.” It seemed natural to me that they should be revitalized with discussions about broader questions such as what LGBT identity means in NYC at that time, or presentations about the organization’s history as a civil rights march. Several members lamented the fact that they spent so long arguing about “stupid stuff, like whether we should order five boxes of paperclips instead of six. Damn, I’ll *pay* for the extra box myself, it’s only a

buck-fifty; just let me get out of here! Or t-shirt colors for the volunteers—seriously? [laughing] We have to spend half an hour talking about that?” Another member said, “I *like* when there’s a heated discussion [in general membership meetings] about something! I think that’s *good* for the organization! I think it’s good for general membership; that the *more* we bring to the meetings that’s not *rote*—‘what about this? What about that?’—that sort of thing, where everybody gets to participate, the better!” Yet, despite these sentiments expressed to me in interviews, the meetings were not altered during my time with the organization, and these members did not report having made any serious efforts to change the style of the organization to better suit their interests in expanding discussion.

One of the main problems that the board members had with this highly democratic structure was with *efficiency*. They felt that their structure made it difficult for them to accomplish the routine business of the organization, and that they constantly had to go to general membership to approve insignificant details such as what color t-shirt they would use for volunteers. If they started to go off-track with long-winded discussions about conceptual issues related to LGBT organizing, the fear was that they would not be able to accomplish the business that they needed—by virtue of following their highly democratic, diffuse bureaucratic structure—during their general membership meetings. In fact, the words “threat” and “fear” were ones that kept coming to mind as I participated in this group—fear of outbreak of discussion, which would be interpreted as arguing and slowing down the efficiency of the organization. Thus, while HOP was very democratic in decision-making, it did not take the same approach to discussions about issues unrelated to the routine business of the organization. This is a classic pitfall of highly bureaucratized structures: they privilege efficiency over meaning. While they retained the letter of the law of organizational democracy, they often stifled larger discussions that could have emerged over the meanings of their actions.

Southern Utah Pride

While HOP struggled with an exhausting democratic power-sharing and bureaucratic structure, in which individuals were somewhat disempowered to make a final decision and put their stamp on the organization, Southern Utah Pride battled with the opposite problem during 2008. Their board was small and collectivist in style, even though they were trying to make it more structured and formalized in various ways. While they did have formal positions, the person who was considered the informal leader of the organization was the president; he was the “old head” of the organization, but specifically was not taking a clear leadership role that year. The authority of the organization was supposed to lie “with the board, as a whole,” according to one member. The problems arose when they voted in a position called Pride Director, which was not included in their constitution as a formal position. I heard a few different descriptions of what that role was supposed to be; there was a good deal of confusion over what the expectations were, and how much authority and power that role was intended to hold.

The most common explanation of the authority and responsibility of the Pride Director role that various board members gave me was that the Pride Director was supposed to oversee all of the event directors—the Entertainment Director, the Vendor Director, and the Volunteer Director—and coordinate to make sure that their tasks were being completed on time. Another description I heard was that the president was seeking to play a more background role that year, focusing on marketing and sponsorship, rather than the day-to-day activities of the organization and playing task-master to the various event directors. Thus, in this view, the Pride Director was expected to act as the executive director of the organization in lieu of the president, keeping

track of the direction of the organization as a whole. While at HOP there were a few occasions when people felt that work was not being completed in the manner expected, with Southern Utah Pride the issue of accountability and failure to complete agreed-upon tasks was a big problem. Thus, the Pride Director was expected to make sure that everyone was completing their responsibilities, and to pick up the slack when problems arose. While everyone was getting along in the beginning of the year, this was not a major problem. However, as time went on, the murkiness of the formal position of Pride Director and its expected role in the organization became an enormous problem. The lack of bureaucratic specificity and formalized systems of power-sharing, which worked for a while as people were getting along, started to unravel as time passed and roles still remained formally undefined.

I ask one board member if the role of Pride Director meant that she had “authority” over the other members. She stated “I wouldn’t say *authority*—I would say more *manage*. And when I say ‘manage,’ that’s when you see a milestone [an indicator of an uncompleted task] and something that needs to be done, you check up on it. Managing, delegating, stuff like that. *Not* having authority over somebody like *that*.” This distinction between managing and authority, or between managing and power, came to be a crucial issue in the organization over time, as the Pride Director did not see her position in the same way. When I asked the Pride Director how the board is set up, she answered, “Okay, this is how it works. It’s kind of like I’m the executive director; I’m over all—everything. I’m responsible for everything, and I have the president as my advisor.”

She saw her authority as being endowed to her by the formal structure of the organization—the formal rules were laid out in the constitution (which, incidentally, did not actually mention her position). She stated that the Pride Director was on par with the various *board* positions such as the president, vice president, and the secretary, and higher in authority

over all of the *event producer* positions. However, since the distinctions between “board members” and “event producers” as having unequal authority was a policy that they had informally abandoned when they became more of a collectivist organization by allowing everyone at the meeting to vote, this approach was not well-received by the rest of the organization. The Pride Director said:

It was never spoken about, but when I came in I thought that the *board*—the people that I had to answer to—were the president, the vice president, the pride director, and the treasurer. That was the initial game plan. But then when I’d say to the directors, ‘We need to go before the board,’ they considered *themselves as the board*. ... And nobody was ever picked up and put back in their place—like, ‘no, you’re a *director*, you need to go *here*.’

Her solution to this difference of perspective on her authority was to put together a list of her responsibilities as Pride Director and distribute it to the rest of the group. After calling the meeting to begin, she proceeded to “read off of it [the paper], ‘cause I got headbutted on a few things, and I’d have to revert back to that paper, which had a description of my director position and the list of tasks I was responsible for.” As I will show later, this approach was not perceived as a legitimate means of solving the problem; the rest of the group did not accept this formal presentation of her role and responsibilities as legitimate. While the rest of the group complained about it to each other in private, grumbling that she had largely appropriated the president’s role in her description of her own role, there was no formal discussion or challenge of this issue in a meeting.

This confusion over her role as a director was also illustrated in an interaction that one member (who had been involved in the organization several years prior when it was in a different form, and who likely took this as an especially offensive affront) had with the Pride Director:

One thing really struck me, early on—this is before we really became confrontational in our meetings. I had been working for a company that went under, and I was looking for a job. I was talking to her about it, because it was a stressful time for me. This is the comment she made to me: ‘Well, you can put

me down as a reference, because I'm your boss.' And I was like, 'whaaaaat? You're not my boss; what are you talking about?' And she goes, 'no, I'm your boss; I'm the Pride Director.' And right then and there, it started to click. I was thinking, 'um, nooooo....you don't pay me, chick, and I don't work for *you*.' And that has stuck in my mind, because that was the attitude that she had. Right from the get-go, that she was like the boss of all of us! That's the best way to sum it all up.

Board members in Southern Utah Pride also reported a number of occasions during which the Pride Director would become agitated when another board member would make decisions on his or her own that she had not approved, or change a small detail of a plan that they had arranged together. This would typically erupt in personal conflict between the two individuals, in which the Pride Director would be angry that she was not allowed to have final say over an issue, and the board member would not want to relinquish control over something they felt was their decision to make. Given that there was no complex set of operating rules that they could consult, or a history of "past practice" that would specify what goes under whose jurisdiction, or a pattern of parliamentary deliberation about how to handle issues of this nature, board members felt that the conflicts often were set within a highly personal arena, and it was the responsibility of the individuals to battle for control over their various decisions.

Moreover, this individual was perceived by others to be intensely critical, and to be emotionally unstable. People felt that they were personally attacked by her during meetings, with little provocation. That was especially likely to happen when the Pride Director felt that her authority was being challenged; she felt that the other board members were not respecting her position and interpreted it as a highly personal affront. She was especially angered when individuals would approach the president, rather than her, for advice on an issue that they were dealing with. This battle became so intense that by the last few months of the organization, the conflict between this member and others had caused multiple scenes in which people walked out of meetings, and where people openly cried as a result of arguments between them and the

Pride Director. While the rest of the organization members remained highly informal in their interactions among themselves, they felt that they were forced to “walk on eggshells around her ego.” This became increasingly intolerable as the date for the Pride weekend neared, and erupted into major public conflict during that weekend.

Thus, we see that SUP was struggling to put together a working organization, with an operational structure, but their tendency to privilege people and personalities over rules and formality made this conflictual. In this case, we see an attempt to create *democracy* among members by talking openly and collectively with each other, without *bureaucracy*; the board members had assumed that there would be an understood sense of what was right, but ultimately it was personalities and individual identities that caused problems to erupt, without a means of squashing the debates.

They tried another tactic to make the organization run smoothly. The president saw that their organization was struggling because people were often remiss in completing their expected tasks, and felt that they could use help in getting organized. So, in order to streamline the work of the organization that was newly established and quickly growing, he introduced the use a computer program called Pride Board. The software was voted in by the members of the organization; it was an online task management program that created “milestones” (essentially tasks) that were publicly visible on a collectively-accessible calendar and posting board, and sent e-mail reminders to people when they were due. One could also send public messages to the entire board, and post comments; it was also easy to see who was “working hard” at the organization by posting documents and comments frequently, or those who had not logged into the program for a long time. An overdue “milestone” turned bright red on the public calendar, which acted as a visual indicator to the group that that person had not fulfilled their responsibility. Members of the organization embraced the use of the program, and believed

that it was helpful for communication. Whether it helped to solve the problem of accountability and responsibility by adding formalized bureaucratic structure to the organization is difficult to evaluate; those members who were failing to complete their tasks simply ignored the e-mail reminders and did not log into the program. Thus, he tried to increase the bureaucracy of the organization by turning to a program that would help to show people what their responsibilities were, and to try and increase the efficiency of the organization as a whole.

Handling Conflict within the Organization: Using Robert's Rules and the Bylaws

In this section, I will show how two very different organizations used their rules and the formal structure in daily life, and how those were seen as tools to handle organizational conflict, or how they failed to use those rules and structure as tools to handle conflict.

Heritage of Pride

In HOP, the constitution and the bylaws were a living, breathing document. There was continual mention of these documents, with a committee formed in order to revise it to make them become more in line with current practice, or to review it and make sure that it was clear, or that new amendments did not contradict older amendments.

I saw one member who was frequently criticized in the organization, as he had an unorthodox and slightly messy way of approaching his tasks, as well as a difficult time clearly expressing himself verbally. Whenever he felt attacked during an executive board meeting, he would pull out a copy of the bylaws and point to a passage that he felt supported his claim

against the person with whom he was arguing. While he was not always effective at winning his case—the rule he pointed to did not always support his argument directly—he saw the bylaws as means of *defense*. He felt that certain board members had personal vendettas against him and that the rules were unfairly applied, so he made sure that he had a copy of the rules on hand to defend his position to the rest of the executive board.

Robert’s Rules of Order were followed quite religiously during General Membership meetings. Overall, business tended to flow very quickly during the meetings; if one were not familiar with the Rules then it would be difficult to follow the flow of business at times. While often the Rules were used to simply conduct routine business by proposing and voting on motions on various innocuous decisions that needed to be made, I also found that the Rules were sometimes used to *stifle discussion* in these meetings. When I asked a member about this; he responded:

Some people will ask questions, but then other people will feel that they’re asking *too many questions*, so they try to put a stop to that line of questioning, so they’ll shout out “call to question!” which means there’s someone who wants to stop talking about it and put the issue to a vote. But then there’s somebody who *objects*, and then we have to vote on whether or not we’re going to call to question! Yeah, it turns into a downward spiral! [laughs]”

This member highlights the fact that one can use Robert’s Rules to essentially squash a discussion; he later jokes that it takes the organization ten times as long to vote on the various layers of motions on whether or not the discussion should be permitted to continue than it would to have simply allowed the individual to ask their question in the first place.

Another long-time member of the organization was a serious fan of Robert’s Rules; during an interview that touched on the subject, he pulled out from his backpack a well-worn paperback copy with many small Post-its demarcating pages that he saw as especially important. He says that the intention of Robert’s Rules is to ensure that the organization has a “well- run meeting”; in his view, Robert’s Rules is a key element that *promotes democratic*

decision-making. Another board member echoes this sentiment: “The point of Robert’s Rules is that you treat each person *equally*, so that each person has the right to speak, each person has the right to say what they want without prejudice, so that they don’t have to worry that someone else’s opinion is being squelched. ... If it’s used correctly, it can lead to a smooth and very controlled meeting, where’s there’s no cross-talk and things don’t get out of hand.” However, when I questioned him on whether he thinks it is effective at producing that effect, he conceded that a lot of times the newer members aren’t familiar with it, and it “scares them! They are confused, it’s too *term-y*, and they don’t know what’s going on.”

This long-time board member continues, and points out that “some people know how to use Robert’s Rules as a *weapon*. I know it pretty well, so I can use it as a weapon when I need to!” He continues, saying, “Sometimes people can use it as a weapon for getting their way—they figure out how to squash what someone else is saying, by firing off some Robert’s at them.” Another member said, “It’s kind of like fencing—you have to know how to jab and parry!” Another board member says: “The problem with Robert’s Rules is that people who are good at using them get to dominate a meeting. And...there are even some people who discipline members for not using Robert’s correctly, which I think is wrong. It’s the equivalent of saying, ‘shut up.’”

During my fieldwork, I encountered a case in which someone used Robert’s Rules as a *weapon for peace*, rather than as a weapon for harm. One board member was brought up to the general membership on an impeachment charge; the complaints brought against him were ones that were not of grave seriousness such as financial impropriety but enough to frustrate the board members and spark impeachment. He had failed to be in contact for a few weeks; his phone had been disconnected, he had not responding to emails, and he had cancelled his monthly committee meeting two months in a row. However, he was a very dedicated and hard-

working—if unreliable, forgetful, and unconventional—board member, and was an important tie to the LGBT community of color, since he had tight connections with them from many years working within that community. The executive committee board met to discuss his impeachment, but he was characteristically unable to verbally defend himself, and the executive board sent down a recommendation to the general membership that he be removed from his position.

When this issue was brought up before the general membership, it sparked a very intense and emotional debate. It was the only time I ever saw general members allowed to speak quite so freely, and many of his friends in the organization showed up to speak on his behalf. After about 45 minutes of going back and forth, with him apologizing, and with criticism from the board and other members, it was clear that this was not going to be an easy vote. At least half of the organization was going to be unhappy with the result. When the discussion reached a pinnacle of intensity, with heartfelt statements still being made on both sides of the argument and several members still waiting for the opportunity to be heard, the secretary of the organization—an avid fan of Robert's Rules—impulsively shouted out, "Motion to table indefinitely!" Immediately, someone else from the other side of the room shouted, "Seconded!" One of the co-chairs declared "Call to vote!" and many people raised their hands, enough for the motion to pass. The entire motion from start to finish took about six seconds; within a quick moment the issue of impeachment was dropped entirely, and what had been a potentially brutal and devastating blow to the internal cohesion of the organization was abandoned in favor of a peaceful resolution. In this case, a member who held an extremely high level of familiarity with Robert's Rules—someone who held "knowledge power"—to defend a member with less power than he, and saved both the impeached member and the organization from humiliation and strife. Clearly, Robert's Rules—the highest form of internal structure in an organization—

can be used as a weapon by the powerful, but it can also be used as a weapon in defense of the weak. We can compare this with the very personal and very intimate arguments that went on in SUP, where people's lives had become highly emotionally intertwined, and they had no means of resolving the conflicts except between individuals on a personal level by talking it out and passive-aggressive challenges to each other's authority.

HOP considered revamping the entire organization in 2007, in the direction of adopting a traditional non-profit structure. HOP paid a non-profit management consulting company to do an extensive evaluation of the organization and to create a "strategic plan" for the organization. One of the key decisions that the board and other key members came to in those early meetings was that they wanted to change the organization to match a more traditional non-profit structure, which essentially meant reducing the number of decisions that had to be passed through General Membership. The idea was to hire an Executive Director, to have an Executive Board which would set policies and deal with staff and procedural issues, and then have a separate set of Event Directors, who would handle only the management of their events. This would reduce the number of different responsibilities that an executive board member had, which was quite extensive. General membership would only be consulted about issues "that affected the community as a whole," such as deciding on the theme for the year, on who the grand marshals would be for the March. The membership was divided on the issue; there was some support for the change, but there was also vocal opposition.

However, in the end, the attendance for the meetings on how to institute this new change signaled what would be the end of the discussion for the time being—the co-chair in 2008 humorously noted that at the last few meetings there was only three HOP members present at the meeting, then two, and at the last one it was only him and the paid professional consultant in attendance. Effectively, the organization expressed a vote of "no confidence" on

the major change, if only by showing a lack of interest and apathy towards the issue, which would have required great effort to instate. Instead, the organization continued to run as it had for decades, with the democratically-dispersed power shared across the three levels of the structure. Thus, while there was no dramatic and ideologically-fueled show-down between members committed to democratic power-sharing and those who wanted to turn HOP into a standard operating non-profit, the ultimate ruling was one that retained HOP's collective approach to decision-making.

Southern Utah Pride

At Southern Utah Pride, there was no use of parliamentary rules during the meetings. A board member reflects on the use of parliamentary rules in 2008 when I interviewed her in 2009 on what had taken place the year before:

We didn't even have anyone in the position of Parliamentarian, which we were supposed to have, according to our bylaws. As far as we knew at the time, the Parliamentarian was some silly thing that had no point. We had no idea what it was supposed to do! [laughing and shaking her head].
She continues, pointing to how they came to see what the parliamentary rules were

intended to be used for:

That's the difference between last year and this year: last year the bylaws were just something we read at the beginning of the year, and then kinda just...*forgot* about, to be completely honest with you. And this year, after we *realized*, after the *abuse* that had happened in the system, basically from [the Pride Director], that we *had* to take this legal document *seriously*, and *follow it*. Because it wasn't until *way* later on in the year, I would say maybe one month before Pride, that we actually started *reading* the bylaws and saying, 'This is just *ludicrous*, what she thinks she can get away with!' [waving her hands for emphasis]. But by that point we were just sort of scared of her, to be honest, so we kept on going with the way things were!

Here she reveals that it was a lack of knowledge that the bylaws and the parliamentary rules were actually *tools* that they had at their disposal to rein in the board member. This member

continues, talking about what the experience was like of going through the bylaws when they restructured the organization for 2009: “It was such an eye opener to go over them, because there was so much stuff in there that we could have used to deal with her—like, there are rules in there for dealing with a situation that arises with a board member. There’s guidelines about how to go about terminating them, if that’s what the board wants! It was all in there, we just didn’t know it!” Another member, in describing how they thought about the bylaws in 2009 after experiencing the difficulties in 2008: “That’s why we’re *so* structured now; if something like that happens again, we need to make sure *the organization* is protected. And *people*—especially the *people*—volunteers, board members, everyone—are protected.” Thus, they come to see in 2009 that they were “unprotected” from what they saw as the tyranny of an individual member, because they didn’t use their own bylaws.

In 2009, after the organization experienced financial failure on account of the Pride event costing the organization more than they had brought in, the organization decided to stop working on a Pride event as a fundraiser, and to focus exclusively on working toward an LGBT community center. In response to the previous year which was very unstructured, they created a very complex organizational structure with several levels of accountability, a formal executive board, event directors, and assistant directors for the events. This started out very strong, with a number of different committees meeting made up of very enthusiastic people, which each met regularly to work on the center. For a period of time, they held regular fundraisers, and pursued sponsorship and marketing to the local urban community of St. George. However, their emphasis on building a large and heavily bureaucratic structure suffered from a number of flaws that are too complex to describe in detail here. However, as might be expected from an organization that is trying to rapidly change its culture from collectivist and built on friendship

ties to a bureaucratically, hyper-structured organization, they encountered both new challenges and some of the same old challenges that had followed them.

In 2009, the organization began to suffer from an excess of bureaucratic structure, with endless numbers of small committee meetings and constant “checking in.” At this point, the language of Pride Board had eerily begun to seep into their everyday language. They talked obsessively about “milestones”—tasks that the leadership of the organization had set out for each team to complete. In fact, discussions about milestones began to dominate the meetings—setting milestones, completing milestones, finding out if others had completed their milestones, in lieu of discussion of their bigger ideas and goals of what they were trying to accomplish. The “milestones,” it appeared, had become the “task master” of the organization, rather than an individual leader who was oppressively hounding and criticizing them for failing to fulfill their responsibilities. Ultimately, the purpose of participation began to be more about the milestone completion than about thinking creatively and collectively about the direction of the organization, which led to severe member burnout within a short period of time. However, even during this time of formalization, use of Robert’s Rules was not instated as a way of running the organization or dealing with decision-making in any context. The Parliamentarian was introduced as a role, but it was treated more as a timekeeper during meetings, or as a scribe to take minutes if the Secretary was not present.

In addition, the organization in 2009 was still dealing with members who were very committed to the organization in heart, but who were struggling with addiction and personal problems, and were unable to complete any of their tasks for weeks on end. Again, however, despite how much the “new executive board” had decided that their organization would be rigidly focused and directed toward their goals, they privileged friendship and affinity over the

anonymous roles of bureaucratic governance. In describing the leeway that they provided one of the long-time members of the organization, who was the vice president in 2008:

Some people had started talking about kicking her off the board. We even considered it for a quick second. But, right away, me and Lily thought, ‘wait, this is our *friend*. What are we *doing*? And that’s when we stood up for her, and the Pride Director dropped after that. Are we really going to try and make things *worse* for her by kicking her to the curb when she’s been so passionate, so involved in this, for the last two years? No way. We’re all about the grassroots, about the small community—what do we say for ourselves if we can’t even help our own community and stand by them?

They went through the exact same dilemma when the same problems occurred with this member in 2009, even after the organization had decided to become far more structured in form. Again, they made a commitment to this person that they would not kick her off of the board, despite her clear inability to act effectively in her role in the organization. Moreover, they even made “temporary” changes to their bylaws which moved responsibilities over to other members, so that this individual would not be responsible for those tasks. Thus, we see here that friendship and personal ties were more important to the organization than a person’s ability to function in their bureaucratic role. Even if it put more strain on others in the organization, those board members were unwilling to sacrifice their collectivist principles by pushing out a highly committed member. The difference is that in 2009, they went and made formal changes to the bylaws, so that it would be “official” that she was not responsible for those tasks, which reflected their new (in 2009) desire to have the organization be more formal and structured, albeit in a modified manner.

External and Internal Institutionalization

I have provided detailed descriptions of the inner workings of two organizations, one which has been around for 40 years and has a long history of internal institutionalization, and another

which was struggling to find the method through which it would be able to effectively run its organization in a way that was satisfying to its members. I have touched in passing on several ways that the organizations became more internally institutionalized in the above discussions, but here I will articulate in detail exactly how it worked. I want to make two points here. First, I argue that there are important “pull” processes that led the organizations toward internal institutionalization over time, as a result of either desiring external institutionalization or finding that they were in that stage and needed staff support in order to do it better. Second, I argue that it is necessary to have some degree of internal institutionalization in order to achieve external institutionalization. However, I also conclude that while external institutionalization may push an organization to become more internally institutionalized—essentially, to become more bureaucratized, or regular and routine in their decision-making processes—this does *not* necessarily mean that they are less democratic or more oligarchical in those decision-making patterns.

I do find that it is necessary to have a certain level of internal organization and regular, routine decision-making processes in order to be able to create contacts with sponsors, politicians, and civic entities. A group that is dysfunctional cannot create ties to their local urban environment if they are unable to organize people enough to go out and find sponsorships, or to be in contact with politicians that are interested in attending their events. Whether this is done by just a few key people who are extremely effective at their jobs, or whether it is part of a much larger organization that is well-structured and has bureaucracy that divides up the labor, is not as important as the ability to perform these tasks. Clearly, an organization that is experiencing significant turmoil and cannot return phone calls or get back to people, who have ineffective leadership, will not be able to externally institutionalize. This became a problem for SUP in 2009, when the leadership of the organization became overwhelmed, the new president

was not able to fulfill her duties as president, and the internal structure dissolved. An organization must have some internal structure that is effective, or at least appear so to sponsors in order to inspire confidence in your organization, but that does not necessarily have to be done in a way that is bureaucratic or democratic.

In 2001, Heritage of Pride decided to hire a full-time Development Director. They had found that their earlier practices of having the chair of the development committee was not effective enough for bringing in the kinds of sponsors they thought they could have. Since it was likely that the development chair had a full-time job, they were often not reachable during business hours, or they could only make phone calls “on their lunch break,” as reported by a member who was active at that time. They hired someone who had a lot of experience doing fundraising for LGBT organizations, and he brought “his Rolodex” with him of people to contact in order to get sponsors. The amount of money that the organization brought in through sponsorship increased dramatically after he was hired.

This decision to hire a sponsorship person was not fully supported by everyone in the organization; there were some who thought it violated the principle of an “all-volunteer-run organization,” which had special meaning to them. It also made some people resentful that someone was being paid to do the work that they were doing for free, sometimes work that added up to dozens of hours of volunteer work per week during the busiest times. Despite misgivings, the decision was made to hire someone to do that work, and the organization formally transitioned to a partially-staffed organization, with one full-time staffperson as well as several part-time staff people who were hired in the late spring when they needed extra hands to deal with the routine office work that they had to complete. The staffperson reported that the organization was not very well set up for having staff; while he enjoyed his job, he

sometimes felt that he had eight different bosses, or that he was working in an organization that had no clear “boss” who was in charge of handling his employment.

In this case, this required formalization of the organization in terms of needing to create a payroll system and other financial expectations. The staffperson did become exceptionally knowledgeable about the organization, and was a steady source of information while there was turnover in the board members over his seven-year tenure. However, he was not allowed to vote at any of the meetings, which limited his power over the organization at least on paper. He was also expected to walk a fine line between being “in charge” of sponsorship but also deferring to the general membership on any other issue, which showed that the organization expected a limited amount of power to be bestowed upon his position.

Hiring a staffperson created an increase in internal institutionalization since it adds to the formality and turns the organization into more of a traditional non-profit structure. However, it is not clear that it had any significant effect on the level of democratic decision-making that existed within the organization, which is the more significant dimension of internal institutionalization that matters for how social movement organizations operate. However, what *is* evident is that it significantly increased the *external institutionalization* of the organization dramatically in the mode of corporate sponsorship.

In 2008, the president of Southern Utah Pride made it his goal to create a systemized, organized means of bookkeeping for the group. The reasons for this were not only so that they could track the financial health of the organization; the president had very specific reasons for wanting to have binders that showed all of the financial records:

I was saying to the treasurer—if I write up a proposal to an investor or a philanthropist who wants to donate money to us, the reason why it’s so important that *alllll* of these little fundraising events get recorded properly [in terms of the financial records], and that we tight down the whole structure. Like, at tomorrow’s car wash—I want to know the *number of cars* that came through. I want it to be recorded if [the customers] give us a few dollars in

donation. I want to bring it all down into the specific details so that when I sit down with [name of a gay philanthropist], for example, I can have a portfolio, in a professional binder, that you can open up, with our pride logo on the top, and go through page by page, and see what happened at each event. If we have that, he'll be *much* more apt to write us a check, if he's seeing that we track *every penny* that goes through our organization.

Similarly to the way that HOP hired a sponsorship person and they brought in a lot more funding, the same happened with SUP in 2008 with its president. The president at the time was very dedicated; he worked from home and was able to spend hours and hours on Pride trying to get sponsors during the daytime business hours. He was the reason that SUP was able to grow so dramatically in that first year. He recognized the need for standardization and formal presentation of the organization's books, and pushed the organization to get that ready for a potential external funder. While SUP was limited by their environment in the type of sponsors they could get (almost exclusively local commercial, social, and cultural sponsors), he also worked with advertising sponsors and with entertainers that were popular on the Pride circuit, to push the Pride event to have bigger entertainment acts and to be more like a "real Pride," as some of them would say.

Clearly, the desire to appeal to a potential external funder—whether that is a private donor, or a corporation that wants to be a sponsor—was his main reason for establishing a formal system of accounting for the organization. The more that they want to expand outward, into the mainstream urban community, the more transparent and standardized they have to be about their bookkeeping. This is a perfect example of how external institutionalization draws organizations toward internal institutionalization. However, it says little about dimensions of democratic decision-making; oligarchy is not necessarily a result of that external institutionalization.

Conclusion

Overall, it is clear that an organization needs to be functional in order to achieve a level of external institutionalization. A corporate or civic sponsor will not give money to an organization that does not have the internal capacity to respond to e-mails or phone calls in a timely manner. In the case of HOP, the desire for greater external institutionalization in the mode of corporate sponsorship was a driver of internal institutionalization, as they hired a development director. In SUP, their desire for greater external institutionalization—particularly in the arena of corporate sponsorship, but also in terms of communicating with local commercial, social and cultural entities (such as vendors interested in signing up to be at the event)—required a level of internal organization. Board members in SUP believed that different “indicators” of internal institutionalization such as binders with their logo on it, financial records, and sets of standard operating procedures would lead to greater external institutionalization, since they would be “taken seriously” as a real organization if they had these markers of legitimacy. The first year that I observed the organization, they had a leader who was very effective at this, and he was able to create extensive external institutional ties along with the hard work of his board members, which included a highly ambitious and organized vendor director. The second year, the new leader of the organization was unable to keep up with the complex organizational structure that they had created, members became overwhelmed by the sheer amount of internal bureaucracy and felt overwhelmed by it, and little external institutionalization was accomplished before the organization crumbled.

Thus, we can see that an organization is pulled in the direction of internal institutionalization when it seeks out external institutional ties. External institutionalization requires some form of internal task-fulfilling structure, which is most easily accomplished through bureaucratic structure, but can also be pushed ahead by one individual who is dedicated to

building external ties within the community. While we do see a relationship between the two dimensions of institutionalization, it is clear that external institutionalization neither *automatically causes* nor is only possible under the *conditions of* internal institutionalization. However, internal institutionalization does make an organization more likely to be effective at external institutionalization *if and when* that internal bureaucratic structure is *functional* and *effective*. It is unlikely that an organization will be successful and thrive if there is not some degree of effective internal decision-making processes and stability, although it is not clear that this needs to be done in either an oligarchical or in a democratic way. The link between the two dimensions of external and internal institutionalization is not causal or automatic, but they should certainly be examined and considered simultaneously when looking at how a particular social movement organization functions. Push factors (from within) and pull factors (as organizations imagine that sponsors expect certain standard elements) towards internal institutionalization are both important, and need to be recognized as independent but related influences on how an organization grows over A larger study of a greater number of large and small organizations—at different times in their lifespan—might reveal more systematic patterns between the two dimensions of organizational development, in which various organizations grow both internally and externally into their host community.

However, it is also important to note that an organization that has a very high level of internal institutionalization does *not* automatically mean that they will abandon their process of democratic decision-making. Oligarchy is not an inevitable result of internal institutionalization; all organizations struggle with this issue and it is not particular to bureaucratic organizations. “Goal displacement,” as it has been referred to in other social science literature, or what I like to call the deradicalization thesis, is also not necessarily connected to bureaucracy, and, like oligarchy, is an issue for any organization that persists for a certain amount of time. And finally,

as I will discuss more in detail in the next chapter, it is crucially important that one consider what the “goals” of the organization are in the first place. Deradicalization may occur, but it is not necessarily connected in any way to the structure of the organization, as we saw that HOP has had the same structure since its inception as an organization in 1970. In fact, the bureaucratic form was established especially to prevent oligarchy and spread democratic decision-making, which demonstrates that deradicalization and internal institutionalization are not, in fact, causally linked.

CHAPTER 7: THE MEANINGS OF GAY PRIDE AND ACTIVISM IN GAY PRIDE ORGANIZATIONS

In this chapter, I discuss the various meanings of “gay pride” as I encountered them in the field, as well as the meaning of activism and the identity of being an activist within LGBT Pride organizations. One of the most striking features that I observed about the meaning of gay pride was that it was highly flexible, open, and fluid. I believe that these characteristics explain the proliferation of gay pride celebrations across the globe. Gay pride is both a set of meanings that describe self-identity and community, as well as a movement that stages annual celebrations and/or civil rights events of LGBT identity that can be found in cities and towns around the world.

This chapter begins with some general reflections on the concept of gay pride, and a discussion of how it has been treated in social science literature. I then move on to a very detailed discussion of the four key meanings of gay pride that I encountered in my fieldwork, providing ethnographic examples of how these meanings were similar and different within the different organizational settings. The second section of this chapter focuses on the meaning of activism within gay Pride organizations, and on activist identities. This includes an examination of how different groups and different individuals viewed the process of creating social change in their communities—particularly the concept of “doing *a*politics” through resistance to using political language. Finally, the last section is a look at two examples from my fieldwork that engage the issues discussed above. First, I discuss how HOP reacted to the cancellation of one of their events. This brings us to the central question that undergirded the organization’s self-definition, forcing them to think: “Who are we? Are we activists or are we event planners?” Second, I show how SUP reacted to being rejected from “diversity fair” on the basis of the fact that they were a gay organization. In this case, I look at what it is like to think about activism in

a highly repressive cultural environment, and the limitations of the pride model for direct challenges such as blatant discrimination.

Background on the Meanings of Gay Pride

I found that there were four main meanings of “gay pride” in my fieldwork that were present in some form in all of the organizations, and for the Pride members I encountered. Gay pride is: a) *a process of producing cultural resources by working through the community*; b) *a set of emotions or feelings, which includes positive self-affirmation as an individual and as part of a collectivity with other LGBT people*; c) *a method for creating visibility of LGBT people and allies and the disruption of heteronormativity of public and private space, on a highly public level during the day of the event as well as in everyday life through routine activities*; d) *the establishment of an alternative “gay culture,” which has its own symbols, traditions, and history, and deserves to be celebrated and enjoyed.*

I should note that these meanings are not mutually exclusive; an organization or an individual can incorporate all or only one of them into their activities, or an individual can feel that all of them are equally as important, or privilege one meaning over another at one time and another at a later moment. By individuals, I mean both the organizers *and* the participants who only show up during the day of the event. During interviews with organization members, when I asked what pride meant to one of my interview subjects, I was given one answer—and then minutes later that same individual would express another meaning of pride, without seeing any contradiction between the two (or even three). This is not an illustration of confusion or lack of understanding about what they are trying to convey, but rather a reflection of the polysemic nature of gay pride.

The meanings of pride that I discuss here are simultaneously individual meanings and collective meanings. They are about what pride means to a person as an individual; what an individual does to show, to generate, or to express pride. This applies to both members of the organization *and* to people who only participate the day of the event. By collective meanings, I point to the significance that pride for someone as a member of a Pride organization, or meanings that the organization creates in them, or meanings that the organization displays to their host community, or meanings that emerge during the day of the event. Also, the meanings of Pride that I discuss below are simultaneously *feelings* as well as *actions*—they can be felt or experienced, but they can also be acted on, or created through action, either individually or collectively. They are enacted on an individual level, in one’s private life—an example would be something that a member does in her private life as a result of having been involved in the group—or a feeling that a person might have during a pride event or routine organizational activity, as a result of being part of a collectivity of like-minded people. Gay pride is also a way of creating social change—it is an approach to changing culture through organizing in cultural movement organizations, as well as an approach to changing culture through individual behavior, through the embodiment of gay pride as an individual person.

My purpose in saying that these are all simultaneous is not to simply cover all times and places, but it is a reflection of how pride was revealed to me as I was in the field. During my fieldwork, I kept looking for one place, one moment, one line in a pamphlet, in which the true, singular meaning of gay pride would be revealed to me, in its “true, ideal form.” Not surprisingly, that never happened. Moreover, that was not an accident, nor was I looking in the wrong places or failing to see something that was there all along. I believe that the reason the gay pride movement has been so successful, in that there are gay pride events all over the United States, and increasingly all over the world—is that it is a vessel into which all sorts of

meanings can be poured, depending on the time, place, political context, urban context, the individual, the group, or any sort of variable one could imagine. Gay pride is neither exclusively activist, nor exclusively passive against political challenge. It is neither exclusively about celebrating nor partying, nor is it about protest and radical queer challenges to sexuality, nor is it about homonormativity and pro-gay-family values.

This was confirmed by my conversations in New York with a few members of Heritage of Pride that were also on the board of an organization called InterPride, which acts as an umbrella organization for all the Pride organizations internationally. They conveyed to me a strong conviction that to label pride, to give the meaning of pride a specificity, to state for an organization or for an individual what pride should mean to them, is to limit pride—and thus to prevent it both from evolving and from being organic to the organizers of that pride event. In fact, it was a member of HOP who was the then-president of InterPride who expressed to me that he experienced an initial reaction of *anger* when someone asked him to define exactly what pride meant to him. He felt that it was too personal of a question to ask someone—ironic for someone who is a representative of an international Pride umbrella organization. He also became very frustrated when one of the other members of Interpride tried to label gay pride as a human rights issue by decree from the Interpride organization—they would use the language of human rights to discuss and describe the trials of gay rights across the globe from that point forward. At the time, I viewed his resistance to the concept of pride being associated with a human rights issue as a statement of non-activism; I later came to understand that he resisted any and all specifications as to what gay pride means.

Pride, as he saw it, is intended to be polysemic; to be open, to be emergent from the local culture from which it grows, and not subject to a top-down dictation from an organization

that is “in charge of denoting what ‘pride.’ means” A woman who was a very active member of HOP for many years notes:

I think that everybody who comes to the March—every individual in the groups—comes with their own agenda. Whether that’s to prove that gay people can have children, or to prove that gay people can have filthy public sex. So, there are certainly people who are there for a political *reason*. And there are people who are there because they really like being a go-go boy. All of those things are legitimate. All of those things are self-expression, and all of those things are part of our liberation as a people.

Within the four different organizations that I visited, in four different communities, each one had their own twist on what the purpose of their Pride organization was to be. The reason for that was two-fold: first, they were relating to their local environment, reacting to it; and second (as I showed in chapter 5 on external institutionalization), the leadership of the organization had different strategic impulses that they were following. The expression of Pride in these four different locations was a combination between strategy and context. However, as I will show below, there were still four main threads that made up what gay pride means, which were present through all of the different contexts.

As reflected in Gould (2001, 2002), the meaning of gay pride has changed over time. In the era of 1980s HIV/AIDS activism, gay pride had a far more activist, militant meaning that we find today. It was a way of channeling anger over the invisibility of the AIDS epidemic and the mistreatment by the government in ignoring it as a social problem. However, “[s]ince Stonewall, pride has been the normative emotion for lesbians and gay men who are open about their sexuality; lesbians and gay institutions and leaders promote, produce, even require a dominant narrative of pride” (2001: 137). She continues, stating that “[r]egardless of their intent, the political effect of these expressions of pride was to submerge anger and to encourage an inward orientation that trumped volunteerism and community self-help rather than a more externally oriented activist response. [G]ay pride now [has come to] encourage

volunteerism, remembrance of the dead [from HIV/AIDS], relative quietude despite the government's glaring failures, and a stoic nobility in the face of a deadly epidemic, rather than confrontational or oppositional politics" (2001:144). She argues that this covers up an intense emotional ambivalence that LGBT people still experience about their identities as gay, and that being raised in a heteronormative world produces a deep-seated shame that still resonates within LGBT people even today as we tout gay pride as the dominant trope to be embraced. The meaning of gay pride moved from militant activism toward host community support and volunteerism that now is present in the gay Pride movement.

Armstrong (2002) noted that the gay and lesbian movement (pointing to the gay Pride movement specifically) has been effective because it is able to reflect the "unity in diversity" approach that the LGBT movement has tried to foster over the last few decades. Here, we see that the openness of the meaning of gay pride is designed to accommodate this unity in diversity. In this case, it is exemplified during the actual day of the Pride events, in which all elements of the LGBT and allied community that are organized around sub-categories of identity (groups like South Asian Transgendered HIV-Positive Men; Dykes on Bikes, Lesbian Moms, the Gay Officers' Action League, groups of straight allies who want to support their gay friends, etc.) come together around one common identity under the umbrella of gay pride.

The meaning of pride is, clearly, related to the emotion of gay shame that was a formative experience of being homosexual for so many years, as Deborah Gould has aptly shown (2001, 2002). However, even the content and significance of "gay shame" has changed over the years. Some queer theorists have argued that perhaps we should *reclaim* gay shame as a part of a radical queer vocabulary—that the mainstream gay community has moved so far away from gay shame that it has pushed *it* into a closet (Halperin and Traub 2010). In this perspective, gay shame represents those parts of the queer community that are non-

mainstream, that are perhaps shameful to those gay people who wish to embrace a life that is just like heterosexuals except for what they do in the bedroom. In this view, gay shame is intentionally subversive, and represents an important conceptual challenge to the homonormativity that has been pointed to by queer critics. “Gay Shame” events were staged in New York and San Francisco in the mid-2000s by a queer radical group to protest what the organizers saw as the commercialization and mainstreaming of Pride events (Halperin and Traub 2010). While many queer radical groups do march in the HOP Pride March in New York City, there is also an ambivalence expressed by members of these groups (as I heard in formal and informal interviews with members of these groups). They tend to see the March as nothing more than a parade that has little political impact, but enjoy the sense of effervescent celebration and fun that they have during the event. Others—such as radical queer women’s groups—refuse to march in the HOP March because they see it as highly commercialized and disconnected from important lesbian women’s issues, and only participate in the Dyke March that occurs the day prior to HOP’s event.

One note that I would like to make before delving into the meanings of gay pride as I encountered them from within the organizations was that I was surprised about how little of it was about sex. The gay pride movement was far more about identity and sexual orientation than about sexual desire, or sexual impulse, or embracing deviant practices of sex (even though this was clearly evident in the HOP March, during which there were dramatic displays of “deviant” sexual expressions). I believe this reflects the contemporary LGBT movement overall; while sex was a major issue in the AIDS era (for too many reasons to elucidate here) today the discussion in the mainstream LGBT movement is far more about LGBT identity and about community-building (or even family—both gay families and relationships between LGBT individuals and their own families) than about sex. This is not surprising given that the topic of

the day is gay marriage, rather than whether or not to allow gay bathhouses to continue to exist as a public health concern.

Whether the decision to move away from sexuality as an arena of contestation is one that can be debated; clearly the United States has not reached a place where sexuality is no longer “an issue.” Our culture is highly uncomfortable with talking about sex and sexuality, and clearly there is a lot more work to be done in the public sphere to disconnect shame from sexuality as a whole. Arlene Stein, in *Shameless* (2006) argues that the feminist and the LGBT movement, beginning several decades ago, urged us to cast off shame, proclaiming that sexuality is a positive form of self-expression rather than something to be shunned and hidden from sight. They tried to sever the link between sexuality and shame, while conservative movements (particularly religious movements) labored to use shame as a weapon against generalized liberalization, defending the notions of “morality” and decency in the public sphere (Stein 2008:2-3).

I found that two of the organizations—Boise Pride and Southern Utah Pride--aimed to limit the sexual content of the events without explicitly stating that they wanted to limit sexual expression, out of cognizance about the sexually conservative tones of their communities. However, Queens Pride had an explicit policy that stated: “if you wouldn’t want your grandmother to see you doing it, then don’t do it at the parade!” Their focus was very clearly about creating connections to their local urban community and to the political field. They were happy to allow a leather group to march, but asked that the group’s members cover all the necessary body parts to make the event “family-friendly” (which the leather group did, and QP proudly discussed their ongoing friendly relationship with the leather group). HOP’s March has always been notorious for having highly sexualized displays, and they followed a strict policy of non-censorship for all of their events, which allowed for quite dramatic sexually-explicit scenes

in the March. Women were often seen with their tops off, buff young men danced on floats in their underwear, and men in leather chaps with their buttocks exposed pushed the legal limits of the New York City's public decency codes. However, overall the focus of all four organizations were similar, in that while they saw their events as a place for the gay community to express itself, the emphasis of *the organization* was not on sex or sexual liberation per se. Rather, their concerns were more about gay identity and gay community, rather than about pushing the boundaries of sexual tolerance. This is an important change from earlier years when Pride events and the Pride organizations were seen as highly sexualized and reflected the goals of the radical gay liberation movement. However, it is important to note that the gay liberation movement lasted only a couple of years (dying down in the early 1970s) before it transformed itself into the gay pride movement and the gay rights movement which were far more about identity, self-acceptance, and political and social rights (see Armstrong 2005 for a discussion of this transformation). Thus, we must take care to restrain from comparing today's relatively desexualized Pride events to a dominant theme that lasted only several years at the beginning of the gay rights movement.

The Four Key Meanings of Gay Pride

The four key dimension of gay pride that I encountered in my fieldwork were: a) *a process of producing cultural resources by working through the community*; b) *a set of emotions or feelings, which includes positive self-affirmation as an individual and as part of a collectivity with other LGBT people*; c) *a method for generating visibility of LGBT people and allies and the disruption of heteronormativity of public and private space, during the day of the event as well as in everyday life*; d) *and the establishment of an alternative "gay culture," which has its own symbols,*

traditions, and history, and deserves to be celebrated and enjoyed. How did I see these expressed by my subjects? I draw on fieldwork and interview examples below to show what the four main meanings of gay pride were, while reminding the reader that there are many other meanings that can emerge and retreat in importance as culture and society changes its relationship to the LGBT community over time and place.

Producing Cultural Resources by Working through the Local Urban Community

This first dimension of gay pride that I encountered reflects the process that I discussed at length in chapter 5, which is achieved through external institutionalization. Pride organizations seek to connect with their local communities, and to make friends and allies by working alongside those local urban community members that are willing to create those social ties. Rather than review what I have already clearly explicated in chapter 5, I will note only a few quotes and a few more specific details about their activities that demonstrate the mindset that Pride members used to express how they thought about this approach to creating cultural change.

At SUP, they were very proud of what they called their Community Partnership Program, through which they intended to donate 15% of their profits to various non-profit community organizations. Some of the board members also volunteered at these other organizations, such as a domestic violence shelter for women, or an animal shelter.

Oh man, the biggest thing for me is community partnership. Unifying our nonprofit organizations, regardless of their affiliation, getting it to where we work together to help out with our community. And so getting it to where we are a *unified group*. ... And that, to me, of course goes across all gay and straight lines. If we continue to build and grow, I want us to build and grow *with* all of our nonprofit organizations that are in this area, and kind of share the money, share the volunteers, share the efforts among *all* of us. *That's* what I

see the pride event as for; providing opportunity for the nonprofit organizations to get exposure to their groups, providing resources to the public as far as health and counseling are concerned; just getting us all together! To me, the pride festival pulls us all together. If we get a strong pride festival going on, and that kind of interaction going on with our nonprofits, it's only going to benefit the community. So it's not just a matter of, 'oh yeah, we're *gay*, let's do what we can for ourselves.'

She continues, saying: "The main focus of my speech when I first ran for this position on the executive board was *"embrace, embrace, embrace!"* What can *we do* to embrace the community, even if they *do* discriminate against us? We want to *embrace them*, and we want to let those other organizations know that we are here and *we want to help.*" For her, *even if* the host community is discriminatory against them, their approach is one "killing them with kindness," allying with the social service and cultural organizations that may be more open-minded, and bringing them to appreciate how the LGBT population is not outside but rather *inside* their community as a whole. This woman's goal is to make "the community" inclusive of the gay community, rather than a distinctive and challenging segment of their local environment.

I saw this same language used when I spoke with a long-time member of the gay pride community, Richard, in Boise. He noted why they had decided to use the name "Your Family, Friends and Neighbors" for their organization:

I went to this conference once, and they told us we needed to start using the word "queer" more, but I don't agree. ... Because the point is, *we really do want* people to associate homosexuality with your *"family, friends, and neighbors."* If people don't know us [as an LGBT organization], then that's our fault for not getting it out there enough. But people who are our major religious enemies don't call us by our names, they say "the gay people." *They know* our name, *they know* "Your Family, Friends, and Neighbors." They *never say it* because they know it has power. If we change our name to Idaho Queers, believe me, they'd have it in all of their bulletins, flashed up, and saying, "oh, you know, that *queer* group..." Because people *know* queer is different. The idea is to teach people that *gay people are your family, friends and neighbors.*

Ben in Boise expressed a similar approach to creating cultural change through connecting to the mainstream community. Despite the level of rejection that he often feels as a gay person in Idaho from the more conservative segments, he also takes sees community activism—as LGBT people, but *for “the community”*—as a way of changing attitudes toward gay people:

This is something that I’ve always wanted to do—get a whole bunch of my friends together; get a whole group of gay people together, and go out and paint the town, paint some old lady’s house, mow her lawn if she can’t do it, so that people know that we’re just *people*. And we’re a contributing part of their—*our*—community.

The notion that the Pride organization could one day become simply “just another group” within the host community was one that lay under the surface, particularly in Utah and in Idaho. The approach of “embrace, embrace, embrace”—when faced with the reality that they have very little political and legal support from the government to stand on was one that the Pride organizations chose to emphasize at times, along with the other meanings of Pride and approaches to creating cultural change in their communities.

However, we can also note here how Queens Pride saw their activities as a cultural organization as part of a larger set of actions that worked to turn cultural resources into political power. Social and symbolic capital were a stepping stone to political capital. Thus, again, the multiple meanings of gay pride, when taken into consideration with the other sets of activist work that members of a Pride organization might be involved in, need to be recognized as also legitimate and well within the boundaries of the significance and import of the gay pride movement.

Pride as an Emotion: Positive Self-Worth and Identity

Gay pride was also expressed as an emotional state, one of being at peace with one's same-sex attraction. Here, it is clearly a counterpoint to the historical association of homosexuality with shame and stigma, as well as shame surrounding sexuality in general (Gould 2008; Stein 2006). Most often, this was expressed as coming from a feeling of being "the only one in the world who feels this way" to one where the person recognizes that there are innumerable others just like them. The transition from isolation to becoming a part of an LGBT community was very important and was expressed by many of the Pride members I encountered. The struggles were very much centered around relationships to family in many of the cases, in which they have to separate their own identity—as a positive, self-affirming gay identity—from the expectations of family that reject their emerging identity.

A woman from HOP who grew up in New Jersey in the late 1980s uses dry humor to express how she felt about discovering the Heritage of Pride March, and realizing that she was not unique in her struggles with sexual orientation: "When I grew up in New Jersey I thought I was *the only lesbian* in New Jersey. You might have read about me in a magazine or something! [smirking] I was *totally* isolated. So the idea that you would have a Pride celebration, with hundreds of thousands of people, was incredibly appealing to me."

Another member of HOP notes:

Pride is all about promoting self-worth. Which is one of the hardest things that...and sort of the top battle in the community—is that there are great self-esteem problems in our community. This is why you know, there's such a high rate of alcoholism, drug abuse, *all* the other sort of addictive tendencies. And you look at that—a lot of it comes back to, through society how we're treated, or they see us, we don't feel we have self-worth. So getting, ideally, *all* of our community out there, everybody, from the drag queens to the leather folks, to people who want to march in a suit and tie—as crazy as that might be in June!—but so people know that there are other people out there who are like them. Yeah, there's a lot of people in the march who they're *not* going to be like. But there are other people who they are going to be like. So they can kind of identify with somebody, and they can realize that they're not alone. And I think that's one of the other missions of HOP. That we sort of don't really talk about, I think, enough.

Many of the long-time members of HOP were very comfortable with their own sexual orientation; they described a process of coming to terms with it as a youth, particularly as one where they first attended the Heritage of Pride March and saw that there were so many others like them. They now view their contributions to HOP as a way to make sure that other youth have that opportunity as well.

In St. George, a 20-year-old young woman who is head of the Gay-Straight Alliance at the local college and an active participant in SUP, states: "We're doing a lot better here than we have been in the past. I mean, when I was in high school, I was afraid to come out. People are still afraid to come out in my high school; it's really homophobic. I mean, seminary is right across the parking lot, for the Mormon kids. I was afraid, coming out in high school, I really was." I ask if there was a fear of violence, or just social rejection. She answers, "It was a fear of prejudice. And no one talking to me anymore. Because that school is really...that class I grew up with since I was a kid, I never felt like I was accepted. Because I was different. This class had maybe two goth people and maybe a couple emo kids, but the majority of everybody else was jocks and cheerleaders, or preppy Mormon kids. And you can't come out in a school like that, and expect to be accepted except by the goth and the emo kids. There was only a small handful of those people."

She goes on to describe how she eventually became comfortable with her own sexual orientation, but the Mormon Church's rejection of homosexuality and her parents' intense religiosity was what caused a major rift between her and her mom. Her parents tried to convince her to "turn back" from being gay. I quote her at length here, since her experiences are representative of a lot of the people I encountered in St. George, in terms of their contact with "conversion therapies."

I was 15 or 16 when I first came out to my parents. Well, I didn't really come out to them; I was outed by my best friend. I was actually glad she did, because I

was really depressed about being gay, That happened, and my mom took me to a psychiatrist—an LDS psychiatrist. You know the American Psychiatric Association took it off the list of being a disease? Well, the LDS church still sees it as being one, so they have their own psychiatrists. That tell you it's not okay to be, and that you can change. I only went to one or two meetings, and I told my mom I didn't want to go anymore, and she respected that, but then she would shove, like, teachings of the Prophets about gay people, and little pamphlets about God's teachings on gay people, and books about how you can change, and people that have changed; successful life stories, which are probably shit now! He took me to this guy who had a PhD in something, but he was *crazy*. My mom had read his book, and he was a Mormon but I guess he prophesized that he could take the spirit out you—if you were a girl, then you had a *guy* spirit in you, and that's why you had these feelings of wanting to be with women. So he would hold my arm out, and he would push it down if it was 'yes or no,' and your body's subconscious would know whether you were telling the truth or not. He did this to me four or five times in one session, he did the arm thing, and found out that I had 4 male spirits in me and that's why I was gay. And then he banished them from me. Just after that, I was *totally* like, I'm going to go back into the closet until I'm 18, because I can't *deal with this anymore!* My mom was crying all the time, and just, I just wanted to wait until I was 18. If she kicked me out when I was 18, then, you know, I would at least have a job and a car by then. So...after that, I just told my mom that I wasn't gay anymore, that I was "cured!" [laughs] She was *so happy*. And on the way home she took me to Subway, and I was noticing this girl in the Subway line, and I was like, 'oh man, I'm so gay!' But I went into the closet for my junior and senior year in high school, and I came out as a senior again. This time, I sat her down and said, hey, *I'm gay*. And I'm not changing. And if you don't like that, I'll leave.

She describes the pleasure of becoming involved in Southern Utah Pride, and meeting the other gay people in the community who she wasn't even aware of: "Yeah, there were a *lot* of people from the community that I hadn't met before I went to the first volunteer training meeting.

When I was in high school, I was *so alone*, 'cause I felt like I was the only gay person here. It just takes a minute to find that gay community, and then you have a whole bunch of love because you find out there are *so many gay people here!* It takes a minute to find us, but we're here! We're all over the place!"

Clearly, individuals who are involved in the gay pride movement have reached a certain point of acceptance of their sexual orientation, although some struggled more than others.

Most of their problems were that of dealing with family. I also found that a number of people

convinced their somewhat reluctant parents to attend a Pride event with them, so that they could see what “their community” was like, and this was usually an important experience for the parents—they were able to meet and connect with other parents who were also there in support of their children. Gay pride is a way to find others who will affirm one’s sense of self-worth, and who have experienced the same self-doubt and often depression, and turn it into something that should be celebrated and seen as positive communal identity that they can all share in together.

Gay Pride as Promoting Visibility and Disrupting Heteronormative Space

This is also a dimension of gay pride that I have discussed earlier in this dissertation. However, here I would like to feature the voice of one individual, Serena, who perfectly expresses the personal and emotional dimensions of how heteronormativity affects individual LGBT-identified people. Moreover, in this interview, note the way that she imagines “the perfect community” that can be somehow polluted—i.e., *disrupted*—by the presence of her (shameful) identity. While this individual was not struggling with feelings of self-hatred or shame on an individual, psychological level (such as with depression, as the above interviewee expressed), in this case the shame came from the *outside*, from the local mainstream community, and the two conflicting evaluations of what it meant to be lesbian—to be *her*—created a great deal of dissonance for her in her life. Moreover, it challenges the distinctions between “good family values” and “the gay lifestyle” which is something that anti-gay rhetoric has placed in such strong opposition. I quote her interview here at length because it is so striking in its emotional resonance, allowing her words to speak for themselves.

Well, we were the only gay people we knew! Like, we knew a couple people who maybe, possibly were gay—none of them, like, we knew maybe two other lesbians, who never in our lives would we have had personal relationships with otherwise in our lives [if we didn't have this in common]. And none of them had children. We are just a different kind of gay people here. ... To have so much of our lives concentrated on our kids also means to be in the closet for that much of our lives. So this [being involved in SUP] gave us an outlet to be able to be free in who we were—'cause we were never ashamed of who we were, we just didn't want it to affect people. Our families have known, that kind of thing; we just don't want it to affect our kids and their socializing process. But...this gave us an outlet to be both individuals and a couple. I mean, we never kissed in public before Pride! It's just one of those things—everybody knew, but we were so worried about "imposing" on the "straight community's rights" [slightly humorously]; we didn't want to "offend" anybody, that we couldn't be ourselves whenever... Like, so many people in our casual life—I work for my kids' preschool now. All of my kids went to this preschool; for six years we've been a part. They found out last year I was gay!

Since becoming involved with Pride, now we're more affectionate in public. And we're quicker to come out about our sexuality. And--because we know people! Because, it got us out, and we're not the only lesbians in St. George anymore! It just sort of socialized us to a point where, this person over there that we were worried about before, because we had the same labels, because we assumed that they were just "Molly Mormon," we don't have to try to impress them anymore because, well, their sister might be gay! 'Cause I know a lot of gay people now. We kind of give other people credit now, because we know that there are more of us around. 'Cause we have such a sheltered community, and we're so small, comparatively, but when we got together and realized how big we are, it kind of made us feel free to not worry about imposing ourselves on this small, little "cherished" community, or whatever. Know what I mean? And plus, we just have friends that are [gay], now, you know? We also have a much bigger chance of seeing straight people who are okay with gay people, which I didn't—like, my family was always that way, but [my girlfriend], you know, her family is still not okay with gay people. So, having the Pride organization made it so that we could feel more comfortable in our own skin because we weren't singled out anymore. ... Now, if we were to go to a restaurant, there's no nibbling on each other's ear. Even when we were on a date, just the two of us. We weren't holding hands, anything. And I don't know if this is the real reason, but what we said was, "we don't want to make other people uncomfortable. It's better for us to be uncomfortable than for the rest of the world to be uncomfortable with us." But now, it's not so much of, "well, shit, we don't care"; it's more about: we've realized that nobody else cares! [laughs] I think what has happened is not that the community has changed, but that our eyes have opened up—I think it's only our own experiences that can do that—but rather our eyes opened up to the rest of the world.

I: So you sort of discovered that there was this underground community in St. George that--

M: [interrupts me, excitedly] Yeah, absolutely! Because before we viewed our community as this sanctuary as all these Mormon people, like, look how great they are—we knew we wanted to raise our kids here. So, it was just this pure community and we didn't want to be—it was so small that we wanted to *protect it from us*. But then we realized, when we got into Pride, how we were already all over this community, *everywhere*! Like, if you have this small community, and you think you're the only gay person, then of course you have to protect this whole community from you. But when you realize that there are fifty gay people in this community, a hundred gay people, a *hundred and fifty* gay people...! You don't have to protect the community from yourself anymore; you've learned about the community and realized, you fit into it just perfectly fine. I mean, there's still in every community—I don't care if you're in New York City—there's still people in any community that think being gay is wrong. It's just that we had this view that thought everybody thought gay was wrong. And we actually got the opportunity to see how many people there were; we've met family members of gay and straight. We ourselves have had encounters—the new nail girl that you have, or the cashier at the supermarket, whatever it is; you realize that the whole time you were trying to protect the community all we were doing was just huddling ourselves under. That they don't need protection; that we gotta open up our minds *to them*, rather than thinking that they wouldn't open their minds to us. Their minds were already open—some of them, most of the community could give a rat's ass if I kissed my girlfriend! So we got a chance to grow as humans; to realize that this community we lived in, and that we loved so much, and even when we were in fear of having retribution, having people come and be angry with us for our sexuality, we just didn't give them the benefit of the doubt. We just had the wrong impression of the community. And so now that we realize that the gay community is so big, and such a huge part of the Southern Utah/St. George community, we don't have to protect it anymore. It's not solely on our shoulders. And it's a huge relief, for us, because now we can be who we are.

[Talking about her desire to establish an LGBT center in St. George] Right now you can drive down Bluff Street and see the sign for Planned Parenthood; you know it exists. And I just thought, when we started working on the center: "*This will be the sign on Bluff Street, for my kids to know—or for any kid to know, being gay exists*. It doesn't mean you're going to hell." Having sex before you're married doesn't mean you're going to hell; there's a Planned Parenthood, and they can help you out.

In this way, involvement in the Pride organization made her realize that her attempts to keep the "pure, sheltered community" from her impure influence were futile, since in reality there were many gay people who were in St. George. This realization points clearly to issues of *visibility*—it is impossible to know of other LGBT and allied people if one is not able to *see them*

or know that they are there. And it also makes one's *own visibility*, in terms of challenging the presumed heterosexual space, less threatening, because one realizes that it is not as exclusively *heteronormative* as one presumed in the first place. For her, establishing an LGBT center in St. George—one of the main long-term goals of SUP—are about the public visibility of gay life *on the street*, in plain view of the average St. George resident.

This interview resonated very strongly with the evidence from Mary Gray's (2009) book, *Out in the Country*, in which she researched what it means to be LGBT in a small town. The main idea is that you no longer have to go off to a big city in order to be gay; that people—especially youth—are starting to come out in small towns and find their own ways of being public about their identities, in locales where there is limited public life. However, what she emphasizes is that many of the people she encounters don't *want* to have to leave their town in search of big city gay life; they want to be able to integrate their appreciation and attachment to their own local rural community with their desire to be open about their same-sex sexual orientation. She also challenges what it means to "come out" in a rural town that has little public space for "being out," and questions what the definition *is* of visibility under those conditions. Not mentioned in the above quote by Serena was the way she acts when she is in WalMart with her girlfriend, and that person is the parent of one of their children (she struggles with whether to move away from her partner or to introduce her partner as her girlfriend, for fear of causing problems for her kids at school). In this same way as Mary Gray finds, visibility is not necessarily taking place on the streets, in mass numbers that disrupt traffic as gay pride marches take over the avenues. Instead, visibility can take place within WalMart; it can be an issue of being open about one's lesbian relationship in front of a cashier who might recognize you and who may report that to someone in your circle. In these ways, the issue of visibility in a place like St. George is much like it is in a small town, and takes on very different dimensions than we

previously understood when we only used New York City as the prism through which to examine the daily existence of LGBT people. The desire to not have to leave one's small town in order to "be gay," but rather to gain acceptance within one's small town or city, has begun to spread to towns across the United States, and individuals and small groups are disrupting the heteronormativity of combination public/private spaces such as WalMart all over the country.

Celebration of Gay Culture

Gay pride is also a time for celebration of a culture that has evolved to become part of the gay community experience. It is, of course, impossible to pin down exactly what "gay culture" is, and my intention here is not to specify the dimensions of gay culture. Moreover, there are many important critiques of what gay culture represents—in terms of privileging white, male, upper-middle-class "homonormative" bodies, and the commercialization of that culture—that denigrates those who do not fit in. While avoiding that very complex discussion, I wish to point out here that the annual experience of gay Pride events, as well as the various fundraising and party events that take place throughout the year, reflect certain symbols and cultural forms that can be recognized as gay culture. For example, the rainbow flag has been adopted by the LGBT community as a symbol of their culture. The performance of drag is also one that has been adopted; no gay Pride event is complete without some drag show in one form or another, usually either as an emcee and/or as a series of performances that involve lip synching. These are symbols and representations of culture that a young (or older) LGBT person associates with gay culture and may come to identify with as they come out of the closet and join the LGBT community (while others, of course, may reject these symbols and the culture entirely). In this sense, many Pride members discuss the gay community through the language of an ethnic

group. Interestingly, it is not a group that a person is automatically born into; they have to seek out membership in that “ethnic group” as a part of their coming out process.

In Boise, Ben draws a strong parallel between Pride and the celebration of a particular ethnic and religious groups’ special days: “I guess one way to put it is, think about how there are all sorts of different *holidays*, that different religious groups celebrate—like, Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kipur, and Christians celebrate Christmas. They’re just special days throughout the year. And the gays, we have Pride. Pride, for the gays, culturally it’s like the same. We just do a better job of it! [laughs]”

He continues, relating it to why he feels that it’s especially important for LGBT people to experience that one day:

I think that any minority that’s kind of like culturally on the fringe, or not included in the mainstream, tends to be—like, when you’re discriminated against, when we get together, we *have to have fun*, because there’s no use getting down in the dumps. I think that we feel that *a lot*, that our lives are kind of...that there’s a lot of stress that comes from being marginalized; it’s really just the marginalization of gay men and women. And a lot of people don’t understand the kind of stress that that can bring into your life. There’s a lot of uncertainty, a lot of strife that come from never feeling like you can never really just be yourself, and that you can only be yourself when you’re behind closed doors. So I think that it’s natural, that after all of that, when you do finally get in a place where everyone’s together and they all kind of feel the same way, it’s like, “wow, let’s just let off steam.” So, I guess Pride is like the ultimate culmination of all of that; you know, it’s an entire year’s worth of *bullshit* that just *comes out*.

In this sense, the celebration aspects of it are inversely related to the stress and strain of battling homophobia and the experience of social difference in their everyday lives. The celebratory aspects are related to oppression, even while they remain squarely in the arena of pleasure and fun.

On the other hand, in New York City, there was also a very strong celebratory aspect to being a part of Pride. One member related the Pride March to the annual Puerto Rican Day

parade that takes place with hundreds of thousands of people. And another newer member, who was in charge of the Dance, explains the meaning of the gay Pride events for him:

I mean, basically, overall, it's the celebration of who we are. And the fact that we're proud of ourselves, we're not going to hide who we are, despite the fact that the community at large may not like it. ... If you've ever been to a pride event in New York City, the way people interact with it, and get involved with it, it's so positive. Everybody is smiling and laughing, and having such a good time. And when you create that kind of energy in the world, it is very special. Because, everybody struggles. Not only in the LGBT community, but everybody struggles, and every day is hard, a struggle and a challenge to go on. And when you have these moments, when you can create something that just celebrating, laughing, and you know, getting free shit, and going dancing, and just hanging out and having a good time with all these different people, in one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world...it's absolutely fantastic. ... Women's equality, transgender rights, intersexed, bisexual, polyamorous, the leather community—all these different aspects and facets of our community. We celebrate them; we give them an opportunity to celebrate themselves.

Thus, he sees gay pride as an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of the community, allowing for different segments of the LGBT and allied population to come together and have a moment of pleasure during the year. This does not preclude other messages that those groups may have—the transgender rights movement, for example, is very active, and may be conveying strong messages to an enormous audience that they see as positive for the outcome of their movement. Thus, we see the “celebratory” aspects of gay pride as being important not only in New York City, where there is a certain level of tolerance for the LGBT community, but also in Boise—where they also express a need for a day to let loose and to experience “unity in diversity” (Armstrong 2002) that is a key part of being involved in a wider LGBT coalition.

ACTIVISM AND POLITICAL TALK

In this section, I examine opposing trends that existed simultaneously within the Pride movement. On the one hand, there was one organization in my sample, Queens Pride, which was very involved in the political sphere; they saw a direct tie between the work that they did and electoral political change. In the middle was Heritage of Pride, which was embroiled in a subdued identity battle over whether they were a civil rights organization or an events planning company. On the other end of the spectrum were Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride; these organizations engaged in what I call “doing *apolitics*.” Southern Utah Pride had certain members who were politically oriented and involved in their local Democratic club, but the majority of the group members did not get involved in political organizing whatsoever. In fact, they displayed what I considered to be almost an *allergy* to “political talk,” which is anything that referred to politics on the state or national level. In the city of St. George, there was not much political organizing around gay rights to speak of, but these members were not interested in pursuing political activism whatsoever.

Boise Pride, on the other hand—a group that also fell into the category of “doing *apolitics*”—was in Boise which had been the site of a great deal of political organizing for many years. There was a very active activist community that was involved in direct political lobbying, and since the state capitol was so close and the LGBT population had more contact with the goings-on of the state with respect to LGBT issues, the members of Boise Pride were more educated about politics. The state had been the center of several major political battles over the anti-gay-marriage amendment. However, Boise Pride as an organization had an explicitly anti-political stance; their website advertising their events clearly stated: “Tired of the militant gay march? Come be a part of Boise Pride on Sunday, June 7th!”

This was puzzling to me. The deradicalization thesis—that organizations which had been in operation for a long time and no longer experienced high resistance would tend to become

deradicalized, while those that were newer and more embroiled in heavy battle over their issues would be more radical. Yet Queens Pride was clearly very political, and both Boise Pride and Southern Utah Pride were not. How could an organization that spent all of its time working on Pride in such a highly conservative area be so anti-political? What did this mean, and how did they make sense of their actions in this context?

The sense in Boise within the Pride group was that it was futile to try and change the current political sphere. While they did believe that a few of the elected officials in office were not anti-gay per se, they believed (and rightly so) that the politicians knew that they would be voted out of office if they were to support gay rights because of their constituents. Thus, the members of Boise Pride tended to use a “hearts and minds” approach to creating political change:

It comes down to the idea of trying to *force things through*, rather than saying, “let’s step away and analyze the root of what’s going on here.” Which, again, to me, the root in Idaho is that we can’t make change in the State House until there are different people *in* the State House. And the only time that’s going to happen is, you have to change that sixty year old woman, or man, who’s sitting out on their porch, Ma and Pa Kettle sitting on their farm, and they know everyone in their small town of a hundred, and their mis-belief is that there’s no one gay in their community. Those are the people that need—or, *that* to me is the portion of our society that has to be educated and understand the reality—that we’re out there, that we’re part of their town too.

Ben in Boise emphasizes the *power of storytelling*, rather than direct political rallying. He mentions an example of a woman who got up at the Pride Rally two years prior, when the anti-gay-marriage amendment was on the ballot, and rather than shouting about how they need to take over their rights, she talked about the love that existed between her brother and his gay partner.

I think the *story* [of her brother and his partner] will translate to all these little old Mormon ladies that are sitting in their living rooms watching Bonanza on television, and what they can do is that they can relate to that woman and her children, and her family, much more than they can relate to someone we gets up there and starts talking about how we need to “storm the state house, and

we've got to lobby against this bill." Because the average person *doesn't care about that*. I don't care about it. And I know that, say, my *parents* don't care about it. ... And I think that you have to, in a state like Idaho—going into the State House, which is primarily full of men, who are all in their seventies and eighties; maybe there are some neocons who are in their fifties, but they're all straight conservatives, and they're all—in Idaho, at least—conservative *Christians*. Family values-espousing, you know. And how are you going to—how are you going to change those minds, of someone that's already entrenched in their ideology? You're not. What we have to do to effectively make change in a state like Idaho is to get the people who continue to elect that kind of representative to change *their* minds. And the way you do that is by telling stories. By allowing them to relate—until they *know* that 'there's this gay couple that lives down the street from me, and they are the *nicest people*, that came over and mowed my lawn for me when I broke my hip.' It's not about lobbying, it's about changing people's minds about us. *That's* how you make change here in Idaho.

In Southern Utah Pride, I heard even more of a strong sentiment—from certain members—against doing anything that sounded political. In this case, it was less of an expression of futility in trying to make political change before changing cultural attitudes toward homosexuality (although I'm sure that they recognized the immense difficulty of trying to gain LGBT rights in such a conservative state) and more of an expression of simply being “bored” by political talk, or “confused” or feeling like they were simply not prepared or educated enough about how to go about “doing politics.” Moreover, this was a city in which there was almost no activism occurring, with little history of radical or even moderate activism in the public arena, since the public arena was dominated by the Mormon Church. In this case, we see that in many ways activism and activist talk, or activist language, has to be learned—and there was simply no history of activism with which they could even connect to in their host community.

One fascinating example that I encountered with the Southern Utah Pride organization was that when I asked one of the key leaders of the organization in 2009 what Stonewall was, she said that didn't know what it referred to. Since she had heard the name associated with the Stonewall Democrats, a political group that had been formed a few months prior, she thought it might be something that had to do with an organization from up in Salt Lake City. Despite

leading a gay organization that was making dramatic inroads into the highly socially conservative population of St. George, a move that was both gutsy and took enormous effort and conviction, she was unaware of the history of the gay movement that had come before her. She became ashamed when she realized that she didn't know what it was—she jokingly asked if she had “failed a test” when she did not come up with a conclusive answer for my question. I do not want to imply that no one in St. George, Utah was aware of the history of the gay movement, since many people in the LGBT community were more tied in to the wider gay and lesbian movement and could have answered that question. Moreover, I do not wish to embarrass this one individual who was a fearless, dedicated, and tireless leader of the organization or challenge her ability to create cultural change in St. George. However, I do find it sociologically significant that a group in southern Utah can be breaking down barriers of homophobia and heteronormativity in one of the most conservative parts of the United States, without a sense of the history of activism that came before them.

Tests of Political Activism: The Cases of SUP and HOP Under Fire

The Diversity Fair and Southern Utah Pride

In 2008, SUP was made aware of a diversity fair that was to be held by the Downtown Business Association in the downtown area of St. George. The fair was intended to promote the downtown area, and the idea was to invite representatives of different organizations made up of different ethnic groups, as well as different community organizations such as the animal welfare groups, to participate in a daytime festival. A lesbian woman, Sharon, who owned a bookstore downtown and was a member of the Association alerted the president of SUP, and he

submitted an application. After not hearing back about the application, he began to inquire about the status of his submission. He was told by the organizers of the event several different stories as to why his application would have to be denied, one of which was because a white supremacist group was going to be present and they were fearful for the SUP group's safety (which was later revealed to be untrue). Simultaneously, the lesbian woman, Sharon, on the committee was asked to contact SUP and politely request that they withdraw their application. The Downtown Business Association realizes that perhaps the name of their festival should be altered, and began to call it a "cultural fair," since clearly the term "diversity" was too inclusive for the intentions that they had for who they wanted to be represented there. They reported to Sharon that they were fearful that if they had a gay group at the festival, their application would be denied by the city the following year (there had been an issue with the city several years prior on account of a fortune teller present at one of the festivals, which violates Mormon doctrine).

As the president of SUP realized that he was going to be denied participation in the festival, he immediately contacted both GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Association against Defamation) as well as the Lambda Legal attorneys (a gay legal organization), and asked what he should do. These organizations essentially informed them that a protest in that area of the state would be a terrible idea. The environment in southern Utah was so conservative that SUP realistically had little ground to stand on in terms of garnering public support for the discriminatory practices of the Business Association. Moreover, since there are no legal protections for LGBT people from discrimination in Utah, the actions of the Downtown Business Association were entirely legally permissible and non-prosecutable.

While the recommendation from GLAAD and Lambda Legal was not to protest, what was more interesting was the reaction of the SUP organization. It was their language that

showed how they thought about activism, protest, and their tactics about how to create cultural change in southern Utah. While there were a few people who talked about wanting to protest—and I should note that these were people who were raised outside of the state primarily—the organization as a whole was not committed to the idea whatsoever. They were concerned that a protest would *alienate* them from the rest of the host community, *not* bring them closer and draw on those ties to local urban community institutions that they had created through external institutionalization. In the words of one board member, once rumors starting going around that they were going to protest the event: “I just clarified [to the Business Association] that we had no intention of doing anything to hurt that event. We’re not *dumb*. We know the greater cause is for Dixie Care and Share; that’s the charity that they chose to donate the proceeds to, and I love that organization.” When I asked if anyone wanted to protest, she said, “I said, you’re welcome to do what you choose to do, but as far as we’re concerned, we really don’t want to hurt the businesses [that will benefit from the festival]; we don’t want to interfere with the charity work that they’re doing.”

Thus, we see here that they were more concerned with burning the very fragile bridges that they had established with their local community businesses through external institutionalization than they were with fighting for their rights against discriminatory practices. Interestingly, the woman who ran an animal welfare organization that had been a longtime participant and friend of SUP found out that the Business Alliance had denied SUP a permit, and called up and informed them that she would not be participating in an event that was discriminatory towards the LGBT community and SUP specifically. Thus, we do see how the external ties that they create generate not only symbolic capital but also other types of influence, in that they are building up a set of allies.

We see here the limitations of the Pride model of activism. If an organization wants to work through the system, in terms of building up social and symbolic capital, it cannot risk that capital when faced with discrimination under conditions of severely conservative local environments. Risky activism is not possible under the model of Pride that SUP chose to engage in, given their social conditions as a highly stigmatized and marginalized group in southern Utah. However, we do see that by creating social capital by making friends in the host community with other organizations, if properly mobilized on their behalf, could potentially have an impact on the group that is discriminating against them, if that influence is strong enough. Clearly, in this case, Pride is not a model for direct action against a discriminatory entity within their host community. The model is of working through the community, not against it. Their approach to creating social change is to do it gradually and slowly through creating cultural ties and building social and symbolic capital. While theories of institutionalization would anticipate that an organization in a highly socially-conservative environment—in that they do not have other options for achieving their goals, given the extent to which their voices are not heard by mainstream political representatives—might turn to direct contentious action, in this case it was not considered to be an option, given the strategies that SUP uses to build capital within the local urban environment.

HOP and Pride Fest: Who are We?

At Heritage of Pride, the history of the organization as the first civil rights march around gay rights was present within the daily life within the organization. However, it competed with another trope: that they were simply an events planning organization. I found that, for some

members, there was a sort of guilt or lamentation over the fact that there were not more politically involved in the NYC activist community. The history of HOP and its predecessor CSLDC as a civil rights organization made them feel responsible for being activists, but their understanding of the differences between being gay *today* versus being gay in 1969 or the 1970s made most of them very aware that *their* version of activism was minimal as compared to what others had to go through. Moreover, with respect to the context of Manhattan as having other groups in the area who were “better suited” to activism, some members felt that it was perhaps best left to those groups. As I will discuss below in detail, there was a tension within the organization as to whether they were a civil rights organization or an event planning organization. They insisted on calling their main event a “march” rather than a “parade,” despite the common use of the word parade within the media and locals who attended. This issue of civil rights versus event planning lay at the heart of what I saw as a subdued identity crisis as an organization. However, they were also endowed, simply by virtue of being either the largest or one of the largest gay Pride events in the country (and in the world), and their role in what is touted as the birth of the gay rights movement, with a certain amount of political and activist identity, regardless of whether or not they fostered or embraced it. Moreover, simply the familiarity of New Yorkers with political and activist language allowed them to speak using political talk in a way that was not available to the members of Pride in southern Utah.

I quote at length here from an interview I conducted with a member of HOP, which illustrates the contradictions and the difficulties in pinpointing their identity as an organization.

I ask what HOP does, and Patrick answers:

P: We produce events. We produce gay and lesbian Pride events. That’s to me what Heritage of Pride does. We don’t go outside our realm, we don’t get involved in political aspects, we don’t get involved with AIDS; we produce an event. An event that that was sparked by Stonewall, and that’s what we do. And I think people kind of lose focus on what type of organization is Heritage of

Pride. Well, we produce events. We're a production company. But what we do is for the LGBT community and it just happens to be Pride that we put our focus in.

L: You think it's really that separate that you're a production company and it is sort of by accident that it happens to be for the LGBT community?

P: Um, I call it like I see it. If you notice, there's always something coming out of something. It's like Stonewall, something happened so let's create an organization to keep doing this each year. And that's where it came from. But when you think about it, nowadays, just going a little deeper, if you ask anyone between a certain age what does NYC Pride mean to them, they wouldn't be able to tell you anything about Stonewall. So Stonewall has a big history which Heritage of Pride commemorates and we do this whole big march and we are there to let people... We provide safe spaces for our community to celebrate, to acknowledge our struggle that we had back in...back in 1969.

But he quickly contradicts himself, going on to say:

P: I've always... this is a place where I feel comfortable working. I can speak from that angle. A lot of people come up and go: Oh, what you're doing is a great job! You're giving to the community... I'm like well, okay, I don't see myself as that type of person. I don't see myself as a Mother Theresa. I look at myself as I have a responsibility that I have to do and that's to put on an event. And then afterwards, I can look at the fact that 'oh, alright, the event was for gay people, the event went this way.' Did we do our job? Were people happy? Are they going to come back next year? Did we give the message that we wanted to give? And that message is: letting the world know that we're not done fighting for our rights. We want equal rights.

L: But before you said that the events don't really have a message. Do you feel like these events are a statement that you want equal rights or do you feel like they're just a big fun event?

P: We are an organization that puts on an event to celebrate and demand equal rights.

In another portion of the interview, I ask:

L: Do you think the community wants something more celebratory or something more political? Or you don't know?

P: It's a mixed feeling. I could only speak for myself. I'm all ready to celebrate. Because I can see it happening. We haven't got all our rights, but they're coming little by little. Eventually one state...you can get married over here and here. Eventually within the next 5-10 years, everyone's going to be allowed to get married. So I look at it as it's coming along. I look at the younger generation, the 15- and 20-year-olds, even early 30's, they're used to holding hands in public,

they're used to kissing in public and they don't understand the repercussions of it. They don't see the problem. So if you ask someone in that age group, they would go: I don't understand why we have Pride. I thought it was just so we could dance and celebrate that we're gay. And if you asked someone older, they would give you a totally different perspective on it that I grew up in a time where you would go to jail because you said you were gay. You couldn't dance with another man. Two women couldn't hold hands, stuff like that and this is why the riots happened and so we don't have our rights yet and until we get our rights, we're going to keep on marching. And that's why we have a march every last Sunday of June. Like I said, for me I've been through all those battles, I've worked with AIDS organizations and at some point, you kind of lose your Pride. You just want a time to celebrate and have fun and be normal. So for me, I'm at that point where I just want to celebrate.

I press Patrick again on the contradictions in his statements over what HOP does, and again he goes back to the "rights" discourse:

P: I'm here because I feel that we need to continue to march for our rights and I want to be a part of it....Because we all share one common thing and that is we are all fighting for our rights. That is the one common thing that we all have in common.

P: So when the question was asked in a strategic planning meeting that tried to put together our plan for the next five years, "If we got our rights tomorrow, what would we do, as an organization? What happens if tomorrow we are treated like everyone else? One person said we would close our doors. Which made me think, okay, we're only here for one reason: for our rights and that's it. And it was a big impact and I was quite shocked because it was from someone who's been here for a number of years. And no one's actually thought about what we would become after we get all our rights.

Patrick goes on to describe how when he went to the events ten years ago for the first time, it was "the best time of [his] life!" But after a few years, he says he was "over it." Interestingly, his experience with the situation that occurred around Pride Fest—a festival that HOP has been putting on for many years at the end of the March route, with performers and booths—brought to the surface a number of issues that were very revealing about HOP's identity as an activist organization or an events planning organization. HOP decided to move Pride Fest to a new location (from the West Village to Chelsea, in Manhattan), and were all set with the various formal signatures in place, until the Mayor's Office decided to label it a "new event" that was

not permitted under the moratorium on new events that had been in place for several years. Pride Fest was cancelled, and there was a big discussion in HOP as to what to do. One of the members organized a protest outside of the Mayor's mansion, but he had few connections with the types of activists in NYC that would show up to a protest, and there were only perhaps eight or ten people present at the protest. So, while the organization did engage in a protest, it was not particularly successful, and they ultimately failed at getting their way through challenging the government in an impactful manner.

However, Patrick describes the impact of the PrideFest cancellation on him personally in a way that I found to be very revealing of the contradictions involved in being gay in the middle of New York City. He notes that "I was one of those people [who had lost the reasoning of what Pride is about] until last year... I didn't quite understand why I was pissed off, but it was because one of our events was cancelled and we were LGBT... Why are we being put in this unsafe zone? Why are we being treated like this? Because it never happened in the past, so it took that spark to get me mad and then I noticed, I told myself: This is why we have Pride. But that was a whole 10 year time span before I realized once again, this is why we have Pride. It was because I didn't understand what it was like for people to say, 'No, you as a gay person, can't have something.'"

This contradiction over whether HOP is an activist organization, one that is about civil rights, or simply an event planning organization, is one that continues until today. And it will not be resolved any time soon. It is part of the multiple, polysemic nature of gay pride that allows for the model of pride to proliferate around the world, and to be incorporated differently in different places. There can be people in the same organization who interpret their participation and their experience in entirely different ways, without feeling that they have to adhere to one or the other. I found that in HOP there was a lot left *unsaid*, unexpressed, in moments where I imagined that debates would emerge about who they were and why they were there. But

perhaps it is their ability to avoid those intense debates, to simply reproduce the contradictions and keep going, which explains why the organization has survived for 40 years and is still thriving.

Conclusion

I described the four different ways that gay pride is understood and expressed in contemporary American cities across the country. The meaning of gay pride is open and fluid; the various significances are both personal and collectively-produced for Pride members. I also demonstrate here how activism is differently understood within contexts that are dramatically different from the others; in SUP the precariousness of their situation makes it difficult for them to engage in contentious action. In HOP, they feel compelled to engage in contentious action, but are also slightly apathetic and do not feel that they are equipped or motivated to do so, despite the fact that it challenged their sense of security as a fully-accepted group member of the NYC community when they were denied a permit. The experience of resistance and challenge from external forces can affect an organization's identity as a social movement group versus one that simply puts on an event (in the case of HOP), or it can challenge the identity of an organization that was imagining that it was starting to make important inroads into a socially conservative community but ultimately was rejected (in the case of SUP).

Overall, gay pride as a set of meanings and language, and its relationship or propensity to drive the organization toward activism is highly contextual and dependent. The extent to which it has been spread across the globe—in some settings, such as Moscow, gay pride events are highly dangerous and participants are subjected to violent reactions from counter-

protesters, while police stand by and watch—shows the malleability of the form. More research on how gay pride as a form has been exported to other countries is perhaps the next level of analysis that could add to our understanding of the meanings of gay pride that have been presented here.

CHAPTER 8: REFLECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Pride events are typically assumed to be about *visibility*, as a gathering of the masses who support pride in identity as a sexual or gender minority or as a straight ally. As I have demonstrated in this dissertation, Pride events are about far more than that. Moreover, the organizations that put on the events play a multitude of roles within their local communities, and the work that they do extends far beyond the one day of the event—whether that day is interpreted by the public as political protest, as celebration, as a community-building opportunity, or a showing of numbers of supporters that can be translated into political power.

In this dissertation, I have argued that the Pride movement itself has a variety of different expressions that are organic to the local communities in which the organizations emerge, as well as a product of strategic decision-making from within the organizations. Social movement theorists have traditionally treated the institutionalization of social movements as the kiss of death, but I have shown that institutionalization is not an outcome but rather a process—and a process that can have positive benefits for the organizations that seek out institutionalization. I also emphasized that the Pride movement is only one segment of a much larger LGBT movement that is flourishing today, the cultural niche that contributes to the widespread changes occurring with respect to attitudes toward and privileges granted to sexual and gender minorities.

Some important research on the field of LGBT organizations, such as Armstrong's (2002) book *Forging Gay Identities*, have shown that this field is very diverse, and that the "unity in diversity" is what has provided for the ongoing (albeit difficult) success of the movement. However, Armstrong's theorization saw resource mobilization theory as limited and outdated, and argued that we can combine institutional organizational theory with cultural approaches to

movements as an alternative to political process theory. My approach to understanding argues that cultural movement organizations made up of marginalized and stigmatized people (such as the LGBT population) use resource mobilization strategies in an important and significant way. I found that LGBT Pride organizations spend their time finding resources within their local communities, and use the social and symbolic capital that they gain from those ties in order to generate legitimacy for their group. Rather than working outside the system, as many social movement organizations do, they work through the established cultural system to produce ties to their communities.

On Institutionalization

In this dissertation, I have argued that the word “institutionalization” has been imprecisely defined in previous research, and that it is important that social movement scholars are careful to articulate exactly how and what they mean by institutionalization. In this dissertation, I emphasize that there are two distinct processes of institutionalization that scholars have failed to adequately separate. By understanding external institutionalization—a process in which social movement organization create ties to various community entities—as distinct from internal institutionalization—in which organizations create internal systems of decision-making and task accomplishment—we can gain greater purchase on explaining institutionalization as a whole. My main theoretical contribution in the area of institutionalization is clearly that of external institutionalization, in which I see organizations as generating important ties to community entities that build social and symbolic capital. Resource mobilization theory, which has recently been pushed aside for theories that focus more on the relationship between organizations or movements and their political and social contexts, can be revitalized as a piece

of the puzzle that explains how cultural movement organizations create change in their communities. Rather than throwing resource mobilization theory out, we can combine it with a cultural approach that sees resource accumulation as a process that forces organizations to interact with their communities, and creates cultural change in the process, either as a deliberate strategy of movement activism or as a byproduct of routine organizational activity.

On Institutionalization and Deradicalization: Reconsidering the Fate of Heritage of Pride

In the interest of coming full circle in understanding what happens to highly institutionalized organizations, I would like to respond to some of the more troubling tendencies that I saw with respect to the fate of Heritage of Pride. On first glance, one might argue that they seem to be losing their connection to their local LGBT and allied non-profit community, and that they are selling out to corporate sponsorship—essentially, that they are doomed to fulfill the prophecy of the deradicalization thesis. However, there are several very important points that I wish to make that will show why this is not the case, and why HOP does not have to become “irrelevant” in the field of LGBT movements in NYC and around the country. First, the inevitability or the “iron law” of deradicalization of the Michels-Weber theory is flawed. As I (and many other theorists) have demonstrated, strategy and leadership are just as important as cultural context; Queens Pride was under the same conditions of high institutionalization within the arena of New York City, and did not display any of the same patterns of deradicalization as HOP showed in its identity struggles as an organization. We also see from Schwartz et al. that deradicalization is not an inevitable process, but rather a function of leadership and rank-and-file decisions as well as historical conditions. The gay-friendly conditions of New York City—or any other major city—itsself will not lead a Pride organization to deradicalization on its own.

Deradicalization is a matter of strategic choices, of decisions to pursue one form of operation over another. It is also a matter of interpretation; as I shown in this dissertation, external institutionalization does not mean deradicalization and goal displacement, nor does external institutionalization automatically denote internal institutionalization or the centralization of power around a small cadre of leaders using the organization to further their own interests.

Second, I would like to make several points about Heritage of Pride that I believe would be useful for any highly institutionalized cultural movement organization to consider. One issue is how HOP can reconnect to its host community. First, the decision to rename and reorient what was originally the Outreach committee—which was established to collect and organize lists of names of volunteers for the organization—as Community Relations was a major step in the right direction for this organization. This was an issue that was of great debate during my time of intense observation in 2008, and when I returned to observe the organization briefly in 2009 I saw that they had changed it. The individual in the organization who had been almost impeached was the one who was pushing for the renaming and reimagining of the committee. He felt that HOP was out of touch with the local urban LGBT and allied community, and that they needed to be more involved with what other organizations were doing. I also heard an executive board member mention in an interview an idea that he had, which would have also been an excellent way of improving ties to local LGBT and straight allied non-profit community organizations. He suggested that they establish “Community Ambassadors” from HOP to certain parts of the local New York City non-profit and movement community, who would attend meetings in that area of the LGBT and related movement field, and report back to the organization. For example, there would be an ambassador from HOP to various women’s groups, or to organizations that focused on LGBT people of color. This would increase the involvement of HOP to various sub-communities in NYC, as well as create more involvement of

the general members of the organization. It would also provide for a more dynamic and engaging general membership meeting, as these “ambassadors” would give reports as to what other areas of the social movement community in NYC was doing. Creative approaches such as these can easily turn around the fate of an organization that has been experiencing a crisis of identity in recent years, and create the integration into the local community that is the lifeblood of an organization such as HOP.

More importantly, all movement organizations need a *frontier*—an arena in which they can forge ahead, encounter resistance, and work to overcome it. This creates cohesion and sense of purpose within the membership of the organization. For Heritage of Pride, the most highly criticized aspect about the organization was its ties to the corporate market. However, what I saw happening in the corporate sponsor market was something that has not been widely recognized in the social movement field, and that is the massive proliferation of LGBT and diversity employee groups within corporations. These employee groups, in most cases, are driving the development of ties to the Pride organizations. I also found that there were several occasions during my fieldwork that HOP either drew on the corporate employee groups for assistance—such as with Google, or the “Gayglers” as they affectionately called themselves, who provided technological assistance, as I mentioned in a previous chapter. The Gayglers helped HOP to put a Google donation and payment service application on their website during the time that I observed the organization, and offered to help with more when the opportunity arose in the future. I also observed, during a general membership meeting, that one member suggested they create deeper ties to the corporate employee groups, that they might be a good source of volunteers and even be interested in becoming members. If HOP could establish deeper connections with these corporate employee groups, and be part of what I believe is an important new frontier in the LGBT movement, that would pull new and exciting energy into the

organization. While Pride events may not become less commercialized on the surface, in terms of the presence of corporations and their logos, if HOP can reframe the meanings of its relationship to corporations, and convey that to critics, that may be a very positive improvement for the organization.

In the traditional social movement perspective, corporations are perceived as part of the conservative, capitalist establishment and often as the enemy. In many cases, movements rightly take on corporations for their highly egregious actions; the human rights violations of Coca Cola, Nike, Nestle, or other major companies in many Third World countries, to name only a tiny few, has been (and should be) the object of protest and challenge, in court and in the consumer market through boycotts and other forms of contentious politics. However, we can reconsider the nature of corporations and think about how to simultaneously create change from the inside-out; these corporate employee groups have been able to gain privileges for LGBT people, such as domestic partnership coverage and policies preventing discrimination based not only on sexual orientation but also on gender identity, that we are not even *close* to seeing in the public sphere. These groups may also be able to influence their corporations' policies in other arenas such as human rights, if they were to become increasingly empowered within those corporations (perhaps even as the new alternative or "second cousin" to unions). Moreover, the definition of corporations in this case does not have to be limited to major companies such as Coca Cola or Nike; any company of any reasonable size that has enough employees to form an employee diversity group—or even companies that are pseudo-public such as public utility companies, or even entirely public companies—can start to create cultural change from the inside out.

Thus, rather than trying to fight Goliath—Goliath being the proliferation of ties between corporations and Pride organizations—we should reconsider how those ties can be used to

create cultural change within the corporate sphere for gaining privileges for LGBT people and other minority groups. Moreover, a tie can be created between the energy that is building within the corporate employee diversity movement (“Out and Equal” is one example of a national corporate employee organization that has been rapidly building momentum, working toward equal rights for employees in the workplace). Pride organizations in major cities, or in small cities where they have extensive corporate sponsorship, may rethink their capacity and potential to work with employee groups towards social change, from within the corporations. It could become the next cultural frontier for highly established Pride organizations that are experiencing the same problems as HOP.

Cultural Resource Mobilization as a New Model for Social Movement Analysis

In this dissertation, I have maintained that using a multi-institutional approach to understanding how social movements wage their battles in multiple spheres at the same time—for example, in the legal and political arena with respect to gay marriage, or gay adoption, as well as in the cultural sphere through Pride organizing—will take us farther than simply analyzing one dimension at a time. I am not suggesting that the activities of Pride organizations on their own would be enough to eliminate homophobia or provide rights and benefits that can only be granted through the courts and the political system. However, as I have shown, it is not appropriate to sweep cultural tactics under the rug as a form of organizing that does not fit the social movement models that were generated out of previous movements, such as the civil rights movement and the American labor movement.

In fact, it might do us well to re-examine a number of earlier social movements using the approach of cultural resource mobilization that I have laid out here, since those movements may have had cultural aspects that were ignored by using only those earlier models of analysis. It may even be time to stop calling New Social Movements “new,” and instead start seeing all social movements as engaging in processes of cultural resource mobilization. Just as we have come to see that all social movement organizations engage in framing and other common cultural strategies, I hope to have provided the field of social movement theory with a *new language*—that of external institutionalization and cultural resource mobilization—that can be used for understanding how various types of social movement organizations operate. As movements create ties to local community entities through their everyday and strategic actions, they generate social and symbolic capital that should be recognized as important and legitimate means for creating social change.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

Table 4: HERITAGE OF PRIDE MEMBER INTERVIEW SUBJECTS					
<u>GENDER</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 1 (2008)</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 2 (2009)</u>	<u>LENGTH OF INVOLVEMENT, IN YEARS</u>	<u>ESTIMATED AGE RANGE OF SUBJECT</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TIMES INTERVIEWED</u>
Female	Committee Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	30-35	1
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	15 +	50-60	2
Male	Executive Board Member	None	15 +	50-60	2
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	10 +	40-50	2
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	5 +	30-35	1
Female	Committee Member	Executive Board Member	2 +	40-50	1
Female	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	5 +	35-45	1
Male	Committee Member	Committee Member	2 +	40-50	1
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	10 +	40-50	2
Male	General Member	General Member	3 +	40-50	1
Male	Committee Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	30-35	1
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	10 +	40-50	2
Male	Staffperson	None	5 +	30-35	1
Male	General Member, Ex-Board Member	Staffperson	5 +	30-35	2
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	15 +	40-50	2
Female	General Member, Ex-Board Member	General Member	10 +	40-50	1
Male	General Member, Staff	None	1 +	25-30	2
Male	General Member, Ex-Board Member	Executive Board Member	10 +	40-45	1

**Table 5:
QUEENS LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE COMMITTEE MEMBER INTERVIEW
SUBJECTS**

<u>GENDER</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 1 (2008)</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 2 (2009)</u>	<u>LENGTH OF INVOLVEMENT, IN YEARS</u>	<u>ESTIMATED AGE RANGE OF SUBJECT</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TIMES INTERVIEWED</u>
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	30-35	2
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	15 +	50-60	2
Male	Executive Board Member	None	15 +	45-55	1
Male	General Member	Executive Board Member	2 +	30-35	1
Female	General Member	General Member	10 +	40-50	1
Female	General Member	General Member	10 +	40-50	1
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	30-35	2
Male	Executive Board Member	None	15 +	60-70	1
Female	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	40-45	1

Table 6: INTERVIEWS WITH NON-PRIDE-ORGANIZATION MEMBERS IN NEW YORK CITY (MANHATTAN & QUEENS)**

<u>GENDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY POSITION</u>
Female (Cathy Renna)	Head of Marketing Firm for Non-Profit Organizations
Male (Chris Heywood)	Employee of NYC Tourism Agency
Male (Chris Heywood)	NY Police Dept. Liaison to LGBT Community
Group (4-6 Males)	Focus Group with Men of Color Organization Members
Female (Becca)	Employee at Major LGBT Activist Organization
Female (Chanelle)	Member of Dyke March Organization
Female (Maxine)	Member of Dyke March Organization
Male	Head of Gay Veterans' Association
Male	Member of LGBT Youth Group in Queens
Female	Local LGBT Person of Color
Female	Employee at Queens LGBT Community Center
Female	Employee at Queens LGBT Youth Center
Male	Head of Other NYC Borough Pride Organization
Female	Executive Board Member, Other NYC Borough Pride Organization
Female	Executive Board Member, Other NYC Borough Pride Organization
Female	Executive Board Member, Other NYC Borough Pride Organization
Female	Executive Board Member, Other NYC Borough Pride Organization

Table 7: SOUTHERN UTAH PRIDE MEMBER INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

<u>GENDER</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 1 (2008)</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 2 (2009)</u>	<u>LENGTH OF INVOLVEMENT, IN YEARS</u>	<u>ESTIMATED AGE RANGE OF SUBJECT</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TIMES INTERVIEWED</u>
Female	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	30-35	2
Male	General Member	General Member	2 +	35-40	2
Male	Executive Board Member	None	3 +	45-50	4
Male	General Member, Ex-Board Member	None	5 +	50-60	1
Male	General Member, Ex-Board Member	None	5 +	50-60	1
Female	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	3 +	25-30	2
Female	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	5 +	35-40	4
Female	Executive Board Member	None	2 +	35-40	2
Female	General Member/Volunteer	General Member/Volunteer	2 +	20-25	1
Female	General Member/Volunteer	Executive Board Member	2 +	25-30	2
Male	General Member/Volunteer	None	2 +	35-40	1
Female	General Member/Volunteer	Assistant Board Member	2 +	20-25	1
Female	Executive Board Member	None	1 +	35-40	1
2 Females	General Members/Volunteers (Joint Interview)	Executive Board Member	2 +	20-25	1
Group Interview w (3 ppl)	Executive Board Members, on Finance	Executive Board Members	1-2 +	30-40	1
Female	General Member/Volunteer	Executive Board Member	2 +	25-30	1
Female	General Member/Volunteer	Executive Board Member	2 +	25-30	1

Table 8: INTERVIEWS WITH NON-PRIDE-ORGANIZATION-MEMBERS IN ST. GEORGE, UT**					
<u>GENDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY POSITION</u>				
Male	Gubernatorial Candidate				
Female	Member, Local Business Association				
Female	Head of Other Local LGBT Organization	(interviewed twice)			
Female	Head of Other Local Organization				
Male	Member of Other Local Organization				
Female & Male	Members of Other LGBT Organization (Joint Interview)				

Table 9: BOISE PRIDE MEMBER INTERVIEW SUBJECTS*					
<u>GENDER</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 1 (2008)</u>	<u>ROLE IN ORGANIZATION, YEAR 2 (2009)</u>	<u>LENGTH OF INVOLVEMENT, IN YEARS*</u>	<u>ESTIMATED AGE RANGE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TIMES INTERVIEWED</u>
Male	General Member	Executive Board Member	2 +	30-35	1
Male	Executive Board Member	None	2 +	30-35	3
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	2 +	35-40	1
Male	Executive Board Member	Executive Board Member	2 +	25-30	2
Male	Volunteer	Executive Board Member	2 +	40-45	1
Female	Volunteer	Executive Board Member	2 +	40-45	1
Male	Volunteer	Executive Board Member	1 +	60-65	1

Table 10: INTERVIEWS WITH NON-PRIDE-ORGANIZATION-MEMBERS IN BOISE, ID**		
<u>GENDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY POSITION</u>	
Male	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
Female	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
Female	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
Group	Mix of LGBT and Heterosexual Individuals	
Female	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
Female	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
2 Females	Board Members, Other LGBT Organization	
Male	Ex-Board Member, Boise Pride's Predecessor Organization	
Female	Board Member, Boise Pride's Predecessor Org.	
Female	Board Member, Other LGBT Organization	
Female	Board Member, Other Non-Profit Organization	

*Length of time involved in Southern Utah Pride and Boise Pride includes time that the Pride events were run under a different organization or previous manifestation of the current Pride organization (i.e. under previous leadership).

**All interviews with non-members of the Pride organization occurred only once, unless otherwise noted.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

How did you get started in this organization? How long have you been involved with it?

Have you done any other work in the LGBT field?

What direction would you like to see this organization go in the (near or far) future?

What's the "point" of this organization, to you?

For whom does this organization put on the event, and for whom should they be putting it on?

Does your "audience" want politics or party?

Do you think this has changed over time?

What has been your relationship to the police in recent years?

How do you think about the police—as friendly, "there to help," or problematic?

Tell me about your relationship to the city...how would you characterize it?

In what dimensions are you connected to the city? (i.e. funding, permit issues...)

How do you see the role of the media in publicizing the event? Do they represent it the way you'd like them to?

Have there been any tensions between longstanding members and newer members within the organization?

Can you give me an example of how this played out?

How do you see the place of your organization in "the LGBT movement"?

Is it part of "the movement"?

Is ALL of it in "the movement," if at all? Or just parts (like some events but not others)?

What is "the movement" to you? Does it exist?

Is your organization part of it?

How has "the movement" changed over time? How would you characterize it—now and in the past?

Has your organization's place in "the movement" changed over time?

Does your organization call its event a "march" or a "parade"? Is that distinction in terms important to you?

What about the type of people involved in the organization over time?

Are they the same, or are they different from before?

Do you consider yourself an activist?

Do you consider this an activist organization?

What does “pride” mean [to you]?

What do you think the organization’s definition of “pride” is?
Are those the same thing?

Do you think this organization has a political message?

In your opinion, does this organization work to create political change?
Where is the political front that this organization is working on?

Is it the same political front that the “movement” (broadly defined, however you want) is working on?

What have been the major issues, major debates, major fissures in the organization?
[What about the debate around adding “bisexuals” to the name of the march, or transgendered people?]

When did you start taking [corporate] sponsors?
How do you think it has helped you? Hindered you? Are there any negatives associated with that, in your opinion?

Who tends to march in the parade—i.e., which officials?

Why is it important to have officials in the parade, at the event? How do you see the connection between having them there and social progress?

Do you still consider it an activist event, even if lots of city officials are marching in it?
Do you think the support of the political officials is “genuine”?