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From Struggle to Settlement

THE CRYSTALLIZATION OF
A FIELD OF LESBIAN/GAY
ORGANIZATIONS IN SAN
FRANCISCO, 1969–1973

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In 1969 gay liberation was new and exciting. The collision between existing homosexual organizing and the New Left had transformed activists' understandings of what could and should be accomplished by organizing on behalf of homosexuals. In this moment of intense energy the ideologies of the movement were contradictory. Gay liberationists wanted both to solidify gay identity and to demolish sexual identity categories altogether. They wanted both revolution and civil rights. By 1972 the revolutionary and anti-identity currents of the movement were on the wane. Many scholars have remarked upon the transformation of gay liberation from a radical movement into one focused on identity building and gay rights (Altman 1982; Bernstein 1997; Epstein 1987; Escoffier 1985; Gamson 1998; Seidman 1993; Vaid 1995). Affirming gay identity and celebrating diversity replaced societal transformation as goals. This turn toward identity building was accompanied by rapid political consolidation and the explosive growth of a commercial subculture oriented around sex. For the first time, gay organizations agreed upon a national gay rights agenda and moved aggressively to pursue common goals in the political arena.

This sudden transformation of the movement is puzzling. How did the movement come to settle in this way at this moment? How, in general, does settlement occur? This question, in both its general and specific forms, can best be addressed by drawing on both social movement and organizational theory, as "weaknesses in one field . . . might be redressed by insights from the other" (McAdam and Scott this volume). Institutionalists have studied institutional reproduction, social movement scholars have studied

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challenges, but few have examined the role of conflict in producing new orders.¹ Scholars of revolutions and social movements have focused on the sources of revolutions and social movements, while treating the return of order after a cycle of social protest as a natural consequence of the decline of factors facilitating movements.² Along with other scholars, many of whom are represented in this volume, I attempt to integrate organizational and social movement scholarship in order to advance our understanding of institutional change.

McAdam and Scott, and Campbell, argue in this volume that integrating organizational and social movement theory is eased by overlap and commonality between the fields. Campbell (this volume, p. 000) points out that organizational and social movement literatures theorize the "mechanisms by which organizations develop and change" in similar terms. Thus, both literatures would expect political opportunities, framing, and strategic leadership to be factors in field crystallization (Campbell this volume, see also McAdam and Scott this volume). And they are, as I will show. However, both social movement and organizational sociologists often implicitly assume a stable political opportunity structure. I argue that framing and strategic leadership operate differently in unstable institutional environments, and that understanding how they do so is central to understanding processes of field crystallization. Stable political environments encourage, discourage, and channel action more predictably than unstable environments. Framing is a more difficult task when it is unclear with what actors should resonate. Unstable situations often bring multiple cultural strands into contact and generate feelings of possibility that allow for more creative cultural recombination, or bricolage. And, as Fligstein argues, strategic leadership is both more important and more difficult under conditions of uncertainty (Fligstein 1997a, 1997b, 2001b; Swidler 1986, 2001).

In addition, neither social movement nor organizational sociology pays sufficient attention to temporal processes. While Campbell (this volume) does not claim that the mechanisms he discusses are exhaustive, his neglect of temporality might lead others to neglect it as well. The unfolding of process over time plays an important role in both of the cases that McAdam

¹ Institutionalists have noted the weakness of their theories in accounting for change. See Brint and Karabel (1991), DiMaggio (1988, 1991), Fligstein (1997a: 29), McAdam and Scott (this volume), and Powell (1991: 197). In recent years, scholars have begun explaining institutional change. For examples, see Clemens (1999), Clemens and Cook (1997), Fligstein (1990, 2001a), Schmidt (forthcoming), and Rao (1998).

² Stinchcombe (1999) criticizes this tendency in research on revolutions.

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and Scott (this volume) discuss, but the theoretical importance of time is not highlighted in their analyses. Elsewhere McAdam reveals that he is highly cognizant of the importance of temporality in social movement processes. In a coauthored piece, McAdam and Sewell argue that “the precise sequencing of actions over the course of a few hours or days and the particular contingencies faced by actors at particular times may have structuring effects over a very long run” (2001: 102). Historians and historical institutionalists have also emphasized the importance of temporality (Buthe 2002; Pierson 2000a; Sewell 1996; Thelen 2000). Events unfold and occur in time, in particular sequences and over long or short durations.

In the pages that follow I demonstrate the power of environmental, framing, strategic leadership and temporal mechanisms by employing them to explain how and why the field of lesbian/gay organizations crystallized as an identity and rights movement instead of a revolutionary one.

Explaining Field Settlement

Studying institutional crisis is central to the study of social change. Durable social arrangements often consolidate as periods of upheaval come to a close. In 1991 Walter W. Powell hypothesized that, “when change does occur . . . it is likely to be episodic, highlighted by a brief period of crisis or critical intervention, and followed by longer periods of stability or path-dependent development” (1991: 197; Stinchcombe 1965). Similarly, William H. Sewell, Jr. (1996) has observed that major changes tend to occur around dramatic crises and monumental historical events. This section discusses existing theories of field crystallization, contrasting structural approaches with more process-oriented approaches. Before describing these competing theories of field crystallization, I first discuss the concept of the “field” and the identification of stable and unstable fields.

Identifying Crisis and Stability

Stable fields are “organized around local rules of action and conceptions of membership” (Fligstein and McAdam 1995: 2–3).³ These local rules are

³ For definitions and discussions of fields see Bourdieu (1977), DiMaggio (1983), DiMaggio and Powell (1983), Fligstein (1990, 1996, 2001b), Fligstein and McAdam (1995), McAdam and Scott (this volume), Meyer and Rowan (1977), Mohr (1992), Schmidt (forthcoming), and Scott (1994, 1995).

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institutionalized; they are “stable and self-reproducing,” and provide shared understandings about the goals of an enterprise, who can participate in it, and how the enterprise is to be pursued (Jepperson 1991: 145; Swidler 2001: 202). Actors’ identities and interests are produced by and stabilized by fields. These “rules of the game” benefit some actors more than others, providing some with more resources and power than others. Differences in power are created by and depend upon fields. Fligstein argues that “preexisting rules of interaction and resource distributions operate as sources of power” (2001b: 5).

A field is in crisis, is “unsettled” (Swidler 1986, 2001), or experiencing a “structural dislocation,” “rupture,” (Sewell 1996: 845) or “critical juncture” (Campbell, this volume) if “major groups are having difficulty reproducing their privilege, as the rules that have governed interaction are no longer working” (Fligstein 2001b: 26). Sewell sees such moments as characterized by uncertainty about how to proceed, because “no one [can] be entirely sure what actions [are] safe or dangerous, moral or wicked, advantageous or foolish, rational or irrational” (1996: 848). Actors often experience these crises as emotionally unsettling (Sewell 1996: 865).

The process of moving an arena from a state of disorganization to a state of organization has been referred to variously as field structuration, consolidation, institutionalization, or crystallization (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Zysman (1994) refers to the process of arriving at new institutional settlements. Campbell (this volume) refers to “lock in.” Unsettled moments are usually, but not always, brief and quickly resolved. Established rules enable actors to pursue orderly lines of action with a reasonable degree of certainty about the consequences of action (Swidler 1986, 2001).

Because fields do not exist independently of actors’ collective conceptions of them, the stability of a field is always at risk. Small ruptures are usually “repressed, pointedly ignored, or explained away” (Sewell 1996: 843), but there always exists the possibility that ruptures might escalate and become threatening. DiMaggio explains that “large-scale cultural changes may be caused by large-scale, more-or-less simultaneous frame switches by many interdependent actors” (1997: 15). The wholesale abandonment of the rules of the game is relatively rare because those who benefit usually continue to engage “in actions that have always worked to their advantage” until (and often beyond) the point when it is clear that their old strategies no longer work (Fligstein 2001b: 37). This devotion to the rules of the game sometimes operates as a self-fulfilling prophecy. By acting as if the rules of

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the game still apply, dominant actors are sometimes able to restabilize the field.

“The distinction between continuity and change [in fields] is one of degree, not of kind” (McAdam and Sewell 2001: 121), which makes the task of distinguishing between stable and unstable fields difficult. Fields also evolve through “the accumulation of small revisions” in the course of institutional reproduction (Sewell 1996: 843; see also Clemens and Cook 1999). Stable fields are dynamic; they must be able to “neutralize” and “reabsorb” challenges presented by changing environments (Schmidt forthcoming; Sewell 1996: 843).

Processes Producing Field Settlement

Most research on how political opportunities, framing, and strategic leadership shape movements and organizations assumes relatively stable arenas. However, understanding field crystallization requires theorizing action under conditions of uncertainty. How does order reemerge when it is no longer possible for actors to determine what the consequences of action are likely to be? This section discusses how framing and strategic leadership operate differently in unstable institutional environments, and how both are dependent upon temporal processes.

Arguments about political opportunity structures' effects on organizations and movements rest on the premise that environmental rigidities enable some possibilities and block others. While the influence of political opportunity structures on action is viewed as indirect (as actors must first define opportunities in order to act), scholars generally assume that the strategy and structure of movements will reflect environmental constraints and opportunities.

Political process models are intended to analyze how actors respond to political environments in flux. Authors such as Doug McAdam (1982) have demonstrated that it is often when environments shift, opening up new opportunities, that movements emerge. But even models attentive to the dynamism of political opportunities often assume that the evolving environment continues to be predictable and transparent. In short, political opportunity structure models assume institutionalized environments.

Existing explanations of field crystallization tend to refer to a background institutionalized order to account for the shape of the new field (Brint and Karabel 1991: 346; Carruthers and Babb 1996: 1578–9; Rao 1998: 918; Starr 1982: 8). As Rao explains, “when multiple frames and forms vie with

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each other, why one form is chosen and why other roads are not pursued hinge on larger constellations of power and social structure" (1998; 912). Brint and Karabel found that the field of American community colleges developed in relationship to four-year colleges and business organizations (1991).

But in times of severe upheaval it is often not clear what is possible and what it is not. These are situations in which the rules of the game are called into question. The more thoroughly the rules have broken down, the more challenging it is for actors to reach agreement, because the more uncertainty there is about how to disagree, and the less binding the results of contestation (Morrill 1991; Stinchcombe 1999).

Just as actors organize their action in response to environmental rigidity, they also respond to environmental uncertainty. Action is less predictable when it is not clear which strategies are likely to be effective and which are not. Actors tend to experience these moments of environmental uncertainty as "crisis." Crises tend to generate extreme emotion, both positive and negative (Sewell 1996). Sometimes cognitive restraints on imagining alternative ways of doing things lift, opening up a moment of collective creativity (Armstrong 2002a; Sewell 1996). The high emotion and collective creativity of the moment can generate action that appears irrational once order is reestablished. These moments are sometimes characterized by the intersection of cultural currents usually kept distinct (Armstrong 2002a). The combination of a sense of possibility and the presence of multiple cultural options generates particularly creative forms of bricolage. Bricolage refers to the "innovative recombination of elements that constitute a new way of configuring organizations, movements, institutions, and other forms of social activity" (Campbell this volume; see also Clemens and Cook 1999). However, the lack of clear environmental signals about the consequences of action may generate conflict about how to proceed. Thus, crisis may be highly creative but also paralyzing. In general, the desire for action to have predictable results leads most actors to have an investment in the reestablishment of order.

Research on framing typically has assumed the existence of stable cultural repertoires which strategic actors attempt to resonate with in order to accomplish their goals (Benford and Snow 2000; Snow and Benford 1988, 1992; Snow et al. 1986). Framing is based on the notion that "successful activists must frame issues in ways that resonate with . . . supporters. . . . Frames mediate between opportunity structures and action because they provide the means with which people can interpret the political

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opportunities before them and, thus, decide how to best pursue their objectives" (Campbell this volume, pp. 000–00). This suggests that a stable political opportunity structure exists to be interpreted. Framing is more difficult when the environment is uncertain. Actors may find it useful to build a variety of ambiguous frames, investing little in any of them, in situations where it is not yet clear which coalition or set of rules will organize the arena. In these circumstances, successful framing activity may not be so much about resonating with a stable aspect of culture, but about being able to "realign" and shift allegiances rapidly. The activity of framing under conditions of uncertainty may involve guesswork, intuition, and rapid adjustment.

Consequently, strategic leadership is more difficult under conditions of uncertainty (Fligstein 1997a, 1997b, 2001b; Swidler 1986, 2001). Social skill is "the ability to induce cooperation among others. Skilled social actors empathetically relate to the situations of other people and in doing so, are able to provide those people with reasons to cooperate" (Fligstein 2001b: 112). "Some social actors are more capable at inducing cooperation than others" (Fligstein 2001b: 112). Fligstein points out that "in fields where there is little internal turbulence or external threat, it is possible that social skill matters less for the reproduction of groups" (2001b: 117). When fields are in crisis, actors struggle to clarify differences, forge agreements, and mobilize consensus. They circulate a variety of different possible solutions. Coalitions try to convince others to get behind the frame they have proposed. The ability of new groups to consolidate fields depends "on their being able to convince a large number of actors that changing the rules is in their interest" (Fligstein 1997b: 403).

Temporality matters by shaping the ways in which actors and frames intersect with shifting political opportunities. Whether or not a field "locks in" may depend on whether actors and frames manage to come together before a particular window of opportunity closes. If actors with the right cultural tools happen to be in place when an opportunity emerges, a field may form. Political opportunities are not static but active, flowing, changing processes. Opportunities have to be grabbed when and where they present themselves. Thus, it matters precisely where and when opportunities occur in time and space. They are moments of possibility that may or may not present themselves to actors again in precisely the same form.

Sewell's work on revolutionary France vividly demonstrates how temporality matters. He found that without a unique confluence of circumstances, the taking of the Bastille would not have been a "world-shaping" event. This

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outcome depended on what Sewell refers to as “conditions peculiar to the circumstance.” Sewell builds his understanding of the importance of particular conditions on the work of Marshall Sahlins, who used “the term ‘structure of the conjuncture’ to refer to the particular meanings, accidents, and causal forces that shape events – the small but locally determining conditions whose interaction in a particular place and time may seal the fates of whole societies” (Sewell 1996: 862; see also Sahlins 1981 and Jacobs 1996). While Sewell does not refer to “fields” or “field settlement” in his work, his theory can be seen as illustrating the role of contingent sequences of historical events in field crystallization.

The Study

One question motivating the collection of the data analyzed here was why lesbian/gay organizations in San Francisco seemed to be diversifying over time instead of homogenizing, as predicted by DiMaggio and Powell (1983). I created a database of all lesbian/gay organizations existing in San Francisco from the years 1950 to 1994 by coding listings of organizations in periodicals, resource guides, and directories.⁴ This data set provided an exhaustive record of the forms of organization extant at each point in time.

After constructing the data set, I attempted to measure the diversification of the field. It gradually became clear that the organizations were not similar enough to each other even to identify dimensions along which it was meaningful to measure diversity and homogeneity. Comparing homosexual organizations founded in the 1960s with those founded in the 1970s was like comparing apples and oranges. However, if I looked only at organizations formed after 1972 it was possible to measure their homogenization and diversification. This indicated a relatively sudden increase in the coherence of this collective project in the early 1970s.

Once I realized this, I turned to describing and explaining the crystallization of this field. Stinchcombe noted in 1965 that “organizational types generally originate rapidly in a relatively short historical period, to grow and change slowly after that period” (1965: 168). The forging of new fields tends to be associated with the development of new organizational forms and the rapid proliferation of these organizations. The sudden proliferation of organizations in this case provided a vivid picture of field founding: the

⁴ See Armstrong (1998, 2002b) for more details on the construction of the data set.

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emergence of guides to lesbian/gay nonprofit organizations provided another indicator of field crystallization.⁵

To those familiar with the history of the lesbian/gay movement in the United States, the notion that there was a rupture in the late 1960s and early 1970s is hardly surprising. All accounts of the development of the gay movement confirm the existence and importance of this rupture. I analyzed both archival and secondary sources to provide a detailed description of the shift. Once I described the crystallization of the field, I turned to primary and secondary sources to analyze why it crystallized when and how it did.

Successful institutionalization tends to produce the view that the resulting settlement was natural or inevitable – that the outcome could not have been otherwise (Clemens 1997; Schmidt forthcoming). Sometimes the fact that a particular arena was ever organized differently is forgotten. I attempt to dislodge the assumption of inevitability in this case by developing counterfactuals – by pointing out the various paths the gay movement might have taken if events had unfolded differently. To reconstruct the feel of open-endedness that characterizes social life on the ground and in the moment – when actors do not know how things are going to turn out, and when, in fact, outcomes are not yet determined – it is important to rely on evidentiary materials created in the heat of the moment, and to be skeptical of accounts constructed after the fact.

The Crystallization of the Lesbian/Gay Movement

Homophile organizations that were formed in the 1950s mark the beginning of a continuous thread of organizing on behalf of homosexuals in the United States (D'Emilio 1983; Licata 1981; Marotta 1981; Martin and Lyon 1991).⁶ They hoped to improve life for homosexuals by educating the mainstream public (Bernstein 1997, 2002; D'Emilio 1983; Epstein 1999). After brief experimentation with secretive structures borrowed from

⁵ Organizational researchers see resource guides as an indicator of the existence of a field (DiMaggio and Powell 1991; Mohr 1992: 42). Guides provide evidence that participants are aware of being involved in a common enterprise, and evidence of the ways that participants conceive of their enterprise. Guides to nonprofit lesbian/gay organizations did not exist before the early 1970s.

⁶ Homosexual organizations formed in the 1950s were not the very first such organizations in the United States. Adam discusses a homosexual rights organization which existed briefly in the 1920s (1987: 42). See also FitzGerald (1986 [1981]), Blasius and Phelan (1997), and Stein (2000).

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Communist Party organizations, homophile organizations modeled themselves on public nonprofit organizations (D'Emilio 1983). They adopted names that conveyed little explicit information about sexual identity, such as the Society for Individual Rights, the Daughters of Bilitis, and the Mattachine Society. By adopting conventional organizational forms, particularly winning legal incorporation, they endeavored to enhance the legitimacy of their cause (D'Emilio 1983). Homophile activist Marvin Cutler boasted in 1956 that Mattachine was "incorporated under the strict requirements of California law, to insure impeccable propriety and civic non-partisanship at all times."

Although usually dated from the Stonewall riots that took place in New York in late June 1969, the gay liberation movement had been under way in San Francisco since at least April of that year (Armstrong 2002b; Murray 1996; Stryker and Van Buskirk 1996). Often treated as merely another outgrowth of the New Left, gay liberation was deeply influenced by and embattled with the preexisting homophile movement (D'Emilio 1983; Duberman 1993; Marotta 1981; Stein 2000). Contemporary accounts focus on gay liberation as the source of a politics of gay pride centered on "coming out," but at the peak of the movement gay liberation also saw itself as part of a broader New Left coalition bringing about a revolutionary transformation of society (D'Emilio 1983; Jay and Young 1992 [1972]; Kissack 1995).

At its peak, gay liberation was composed of three analytically distinct currents.⁷ Gay power sought the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of a liberated society in which sexual identity categories would no longer be necessary. Gay power activists, who saw themselves as gay revolutionaries, fought for sexual liberation for all, not just for rights for gay-identified people. This strain of gay liberation, organized around a redistributive political logic, was deeply indebted to the socialist ideas of the New Left. Gay power activists saw themselves as a vanguard, as part of a movement that would improve society for everyone, not just for a particular group. While gay power activists endorsed coming out, they did not see the affirmation of gay identity as the end goal of sexual politics. They saw the creation of gay identity as merely a step toward the goal of getting rid of sexual identity categories altogether (Altman 1993: 239). Gay power activists believed that

⁷ Marotta (1981) developed a more complex categorization of the strains of gay liberation ideology. I borrow the distinction between gay power and gay pride from Teal (1995: 68).

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“everyone is gay, everyone is straight,” and that gay liberation should lead to “a far greater acceptance of human sexuality and with that . . . a decrease in the stigma attached to unorthodox sex and a corresponding increase in overt bisexuality” (Altman 1993: 246). Consequently, in their view, “Gay, in its most far-reaching sense, means not homosexual, but sexually free” (Young 1992 [1972]: 28).

In contrast, a second strain of gay liberation, which I refer to as gay pride, saw the solidification of gay identity as the primary goal of gay politics. Gay pride endeavored to build gay culture and community through forming support groups and other kinds of gay organizations. Dennis Altman (1993: 242) described the difference between gay pride and gay power as follows: “The liberal sees homosexuals as a minority to be assisted into a full place in society. The radical sees homosexuality as a component of all people including her- or himself.” Gay power activists thought all revolutionaries should come out as gay, thus contributing to the blurring of sexual identity categories. Gay pride activists felt that only those individuals sincerely interested in same-gender sexual relations should come out.

The third current, inherited from the homophile movement, believed that the situation of gays could be improved through single-issue interest group politics seeking rights. Gay rights activists identified themselves primarily as gay and worked to improve life for gay people. Gay rights activists were never convinced that revolution was the answer. Indeed, they were often skeptical about how homosexuals would fare under socialism.⁸ They believed in the reform of the current system, and advocated working within mainstream institutions. Gay rights activists criticized gay power’s attention to issues other than those of concern for homosexuals. They questioned whether other radicals would reciprocate and take up homosexual issues. Gay rights activists rejected violent means in favor of working within the political system and engaging in clever cultural “zaps.” Gay rights activists tended to see the building of identity as a necessary precursor to institutional politics, while gay pride activists saw engaging in gay rights politics as a way to build gay identity.

Radical gay liberation fell into disarray in 1970 (D’Emilio 1992a; Humphreys 1972). As it disintegrated, a more moderate gay movement

⁸ This concern manifested itself in a debate within gay liberation about the quality of gay life in Cuba. See Jay and Young (1992 [1972], section 6) and Teal (1995: 77).

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crystallized. In the early 1970s, observers noted that it seemed like something new was forming. Sociologist Laud Humphreys noted that in 1970, "the old-line, civil-libertarian thesis and the gay liberationist antithesis began to produce a synthesis" (Humphreys 1972: 123). *The Advocate*, a prominent Los Angeles gay newspaper, proclaimed in September 1971 that

Between the hard conservatives and the intolerant radicals, young Gays are finding the middle ground productive. From coast to coast, they are building new organizations modeled after New York's highly successful and active Gay Activists Alliance. The formula: just enough structure and planning to have a sound foundation but not so much that action is impossible. Also, most new groups are limiting their activity to gay-oriented issues, rather than tackling all the world's ills at once. It seems to be a formula that can win the widespread support that the GLF's (Gay Liberation Front) were never able to get.

This new coherence in the gay political project manifested itself in a variety of ways. It sparked the rapid proliferation of a diversity of new gay organizations. These new organizations had more specialized names reflecting a continuously unfolding variety of new identities and subidentities, such as Affirmation Gay/Lesbian Mormons, Gay Asian Pacific Alliance, Straights for Gay Rights, Gay American Indians, Digital Queers, and the Bay Area Bisexual Network (1995). Organization names included elaborate identity information and represented specialized subidentities. These organizations included gay religious organizations (e.g., the Metropolitan Community Church, founded 1970), gay self-help organizations (e.g., Gay Alcoholics Anonymous, founded 1971), gay hobby organizations (e.g., San Francisco Front Runners, founded 1974), and gay parenting groups (i.e., Lesbian Mothers' Union, founded in 1971). The use of bold sexual identity terminology in organizations' names illustrated their new devotion to pride and identity building. The sudden explosion of support groups, which were unheard of before 1970, created contexts in which individuals could discover and express themselves.

The changing density of various kinds of homosexual organizations provided another confirmation of the timing of the consolidation of the gay identity movement. Figure 6.1 shows the decline of both homophile and gay liberation organizations and the proliferation of gay rights and gay pride organizations. The existence of multiple kinds of organizations in the years from 1969 to 1972 indicates the unsettled nature of the field. The field coalesced in the early 1970s.

The creation of resource guides in the early seventies also indicated field crystallization. While the community published bar guides throughout the

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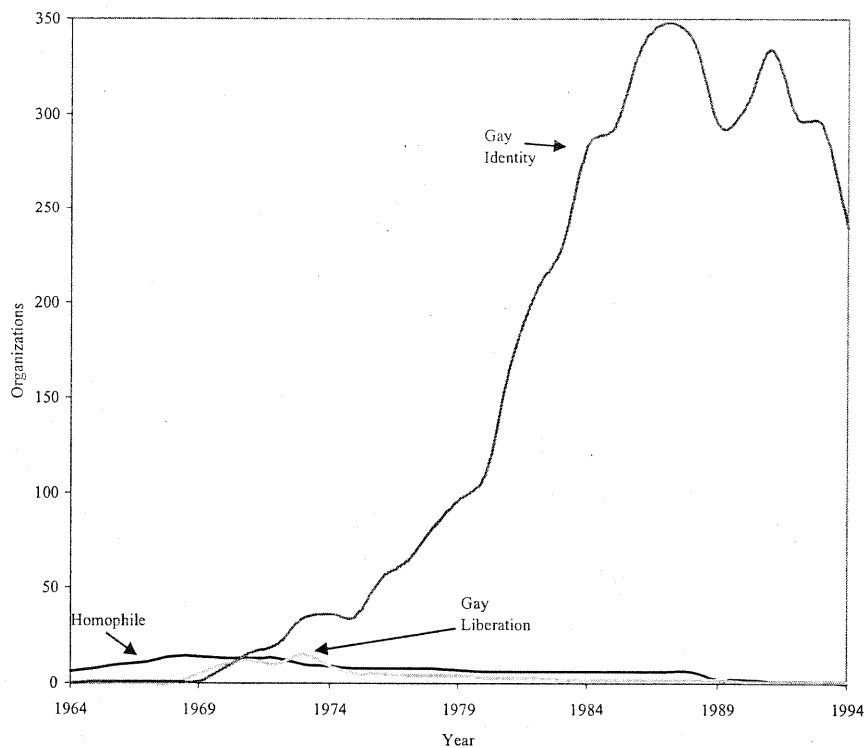


Figure 6.1 Total Number of Homophile, Gay Liberation, and Gay Identity Organizations in San Francisco, 1964–1994

1960s, the first guides to list both nonprofit and commercial organizations were published in 1972. *Gayyellow Pages*, the first national guide to both nonprofit and commercial organizations to be published annually, was first published in 1973. These guides listed bars and bathhouses as well as political and cultural organizations, revealing that gay activists saw their project in terms of the expansion of all kinds of gay social space.

Today, lesbian/gay freedom day parades occur in all major U.S. cities and some small towns each June. The intent of the founders of the parades was to commemorate the June 1969 Stonewall uprisings in New York. Organizers of the first parade in New York in 1970 defined the event as an opportunity for the gay community to show its pride, its unity, and its diversity. San Francisco organized its first freedom day parade in 1972, and has had a parade every year since. Each year the original language of “pride,”

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“celebration,” “unity,” and “diversity” appears in parade themes and mission statements.

The year 1972 also marked the first time, after years of effort, that a national conference of homosexual organizations reached a consensus on a political platform (Humphreys 1972: 165). In February 1972, at a National Coalition of Gay Organizations, jointly sponsored by New York’s Gay Activists Alliance and Chicago’s Gay Alliance, eighty-five organizations from eighteen states agreed on a Gay Rights Platform in preparation for the 1972 elections (Humphreys 1972: 162). Never before had a national conference of gay organizations been able to agree on a gay stance. Throughout the late 1960s multiple attempts had failed to produce such a consensus (Humphreys 1972: 165). Together, these indicators provide strong evidence of field consolidation in the early 1970s. The next section explains how this outcome came to pass.

Explaining Field Crystallization

The movement that developed in the 1970s and 1980s was not the only kind of movement that could have been organized on behalf of homosexuals. Even in 1969 when much of the groundwork for the contemporary lesbian/gay movement was in place, the shape (and even the existence) of the future movement was not fully determined. Activists might have endorsed a more revolutionary option, as did some aspects of the New Left. Or the movement could have split off into different wings, as did the women’s movement. It is also possible to imagine internal conflict destroying the movement altogether. The crystallization of a field of lesbian/gay organizations was not inevitable, but a result of political decisions made within a historically specific context. Below I demonstrate that framing and strategic leadership were much more difficult at the peak of the New Left. Thus, the decline of the New Left, which made the political environment more transparent, rapidly changed the environment in which activists struggled to arrive at the best way to proceed. The timing of the intersection of homosexual organizing with the New Left, and of the decline of the New Left, played a crucial role in determining what actors, political approaches, and possibilities intersected. Even slight differences in the way events unfolded might have led to different convergences among actors, political models, and political possibilities that could have channeled the movement in a different direction.

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How Possibility Paralyzes

Few would dispute that the 1960s was a time of great cultural and political upheaval in the United States. The generalized nature of the cultural crisis called into question the rules of multiple arenas. Debra Minkoff described “an open environment for social action that was (and is) unmatched in U.S. history” (1999: 1669). Todd Gitlin, who was deeply involved in the New Left, described “the hallucinatory giddiness of the late Sixties . . . whose sheer wildness, even now, seems the stuff of another century . . . people were living with a supercharged density: lives were bound up with one another, making claims on one another, drawing one another into the common project.” The expansive feeling of possibility expanded the boundaries of the thinkable, producing “unraveling, rethinking, refusing to take for granted, thinking without limits . . .” (Gitlin 1987: 7). Wini Breines, also an activist, echoed Gitlin’s description of the moment: “We believed that we were going to make a revolution. We were convinced that we could transform America through our political activity and insights. . . . A deep enthusiasm characterized our faith in our own political and social power. . . . The new left opened everything to scrutiny” (1989: xxi-xxii).

The relaxation of beliefs about the impossibility of major structural change in the United States, combined with the intense interaction characteristic of crisis and the intersection of distinct cultural traditions, created an unusual context of collective creativity (Armstrong 2002a). The encounter with the New Left introduced homosexual activists to new ways of thinking about organizing around sexuality. Introduction to an identity logic generated new strategies such as coming out, pride parades, rap groups, and cultural zaps. Coming out, the practice of revealing one’s sexual identity for psychological, cultural, and political gain, seems obvious now. However, until homosexual activists were able to conceive of the public revelation of sexuality as politically productive, the practice did not and would not have developed. These new strategies developed through bricolage, in this case the combining of elements of the New Left with homosexual movement approaches.

The encounter between the New Left and the homophile movement was historically contingent. Had homophile politics not collided with the New Left, say, because of an earlier decline of the New Left, it is not certain that strategies such as coming out would have been created. Cornerstone assumptions of contemporary gay politics owe much to the fact that an existing homosexual movement collided with the New Left early enough in

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the New Left's lifespan for the gay movement to experience the full creative benefit of involvement with this encounter. The cultural tools needed to forge the lesbian/gay movement field were created in the encounter between existing homophile organizations and the New Left.

However, this moment of creativity also generated political conflict. The intersection of the New Left and a preexisting homophile movement generated the view that gay liberation could not be achieved without simultaneously addressing class, race, and gender inequality. In 1969, it was very difficult for activists to assess what was politically possible. The fate of the New Left was not yet clear. Some still felt that revolutionary change was possible, while others had lost faith, and still others had never been convinced. Activists fought about what was politically possible as well as about what was politically desirable. It was difficult to ascertain whether it made more sense to support the gay power frame which aligned the gay movement with the New Left and its revolutionary project, or to support gay rights and gay pride frames which resonated more readily with fundamental features of the American political environment. In 1969, though, in the midst of the excitement of the moment, the limits of the politically possible were opaque.

Throughout the fall of 1969 and the spring of 1970, conflict between the various strands of gay liberation escalated. In November 1969, a faction of New York's Gay Liberation Front (GLF) split off to found the Gay Activists Alliance (Dong 1995; Marotta 1981: 142). The issue which brought the crisis to a head was whether the Gay Liberation Front should support the Black Panthers (Dong 1995; Marotta 1981: 135, 142; Teal 1995: 78). Gay liberation activists on the West Coast also faced the Black Panther issue. According to Rt. Rev. Michael Irkin, the November 15, 1969, March for Peace revealed

a clear division in the ranks of the Homosexual Liberation Movement as represented by the Committee for Homosexual Freedom, the Gay Liberation Theatre, the Gay Liberation Front, and some other groups. [This] became clear to all during the rally at the Polo Grounds when, during the speech of David Hilliard of the Black Panther Party, dissension broke out when some of our members, among them the author of this article and some others under our banner, joined with other pacifists in shouting down David Hilliard's speech with cries of "Peace, Now!" while others showed their support of his statements with clenched-fist salutes and cries of enthusiasm (Irkin 1969: 8).

Irkin was critical of the Black Panther Party, while the gay power activists were enthusiastic supporters. Irkin felt that "under the pretense of

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speaking for peace, [Hilliard had] called for violence. . . . We cannot see that violence, in any man's hand, is any less violence" (Irkin 1969: 9). In response, Irkin clarified the ideological differences internal to gay liberation: "[The Committee for Homosexual Freedom] at present has among its members many who have not come to any particular socio-economic or political philosophy. While the majority of our members . . . call themselves socialists, I know personally of at least a few members who believe that capitalism should continue in some modified form" (Irkin 1969: 8). Similar conflicts about related issues occurred in late 1969 and 1970.

Thus, the encounter between the New Left and the homophile movement created potentially paralyzing internal conflict. The intensity of the conflict could have become debilitating, as it did for other parts of the New Left. By introducing new cultural possibilities and making the context difficult to read, this unsettled moment escalated the social skill required to arrive at a stable way of organizing around sexuality. This provides an example of how unstable political environments influence action differently than stable environments. In stable environments actors may be able to assess opportunities and constraints with reasonable accuracy. In unstable environments this is less possible. Uncertainty may generate intense conflict about how to proceed, as it did among gay activists in 1969. However, this particular case does not allow us the opportunity to see if and how activists are able to stabilize political projects in uncertain environments, as the environment grew more predictable with the rapid demise of the New Left in 1970 and 1971.

The Timing and Rapidity of the Decline of the New Left

In the 1960s many movement activists believed the United States was on the verge of radical social change (Gitlin 1987). This optimism faded quickly as the sixties came to a close. Scholars point to the election of Richard Nixon as a political turning point: "The 1968 election of Richard Nixon signaled a turn away from the supportive political agendas associated with the Kennedy-Johnson decades, and as antiwar and student movements escalated, a period of intensive political retrenchment began" (Minkoff 1995: 65). By the early seventies, it was clear that revolutionary change was not likely.

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) "burned up and out in a spectacular fashion" in 1969 and 1970 (Echols 1992: 22; Polletta 2002). Echols noted that "the conventional sixties' story line," developed by white male

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leaders who have written on the New Left, tends to equate the disintegration of the SDS with the end of "radicalism," finalized by the "February 1970 Greenwich Village townhouse explosion" (1992: 23). Humphreys and Echols also pointed to the Kent State killings later that year as a common marker for the end of radicalism (Echols 1992: 23; Gitlin 1987; Humphreys 1972).

Feminists Wini Breines and Alice Echols de-emphasized SDS in their accounts of the radicalism of the times and claimed that male leaders exaggerated "the significance of the collapse of SDS at the end of the decade" (Breines 1989: xv; Echols 1992).

What is overlooked in accounts that focus on the fate of SDS as an organization is the mass movement after 1968, regional and local activity not dependent upon a national organization, students organizing and grass-roots activists (including women and people of color), the counterculture, and the significance of the birth of other movements such as the women's liberation and gay movements. (Breines 1989: xv)

Alice Echols argued, "if one's narrative is conceptualized around the idea that radicalism was simply played out by the decade's end, then there really is only token narrative space available for women's liberation (or for the Chicano, Native American, or gay and lesbian movements)" (1992: 13). Breines and Echols have a point. Radicalism did survive beyond 1970, but the demise of the SDS in 1970 marked a fundamental shift in the nature of activism and the optimism associated with it. Activism shifted away from an effort to bring about a socialist transformation of society, and away from Marxist-influenced, class-oriented, redistributive politics.

While opportunities for some forms of political action contracted in the late sixties and early seventies, other opportunities began to expand. Debra Minkoff has shown in her work on women's and racial-ethnic organizations that while it became more difficult to form and maintain protest organizations, the environment improved for more moderate service and policy advocacy organizations. She argues that: "The increasing efforts at law and order during the Nixon administration and into the 1980s did not so much repress collective action as channel it into more institutionally acceptable organizational activity" (Minkoff 1995: 74).⁹ Minkoff, drawing on the work of Jenkins and Walker, pointed to the improved "funding opportunities" for

⁹ Minkoff (1995) cites Haines (1984), Jenkins and Ekert (1986), and McAdam (1982). See also McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson (1991) and Meyer and Imig (1993).

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“interest groups and a broader range of policy advocacy organizations” in the seventies (1995: 55).¹⁰ Foundations increased their level of support for nonprofit organizing. “Congressional reforms that began in the early 1960s gradually decentralized authority, creating broader opportunities for nonprofit advocacy” (Jenkins 1987: 301). In 1969 and 1976 the tax deductibility of contributions to nonprofit organizations involved in political advocacy were liberalized (Jenkins 1987: 301). McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson (1991) describe the emergence of a “tangle of incentives” pushing movements toward nonprofit organizational forms.

While more radical socialist ideologies lost their luster, the pursuit of ethnic group equality and civil rights remained viable. Together, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 enhanced the political utility of an ethnic self-characterization. An ethnic framing of gay identity and an orientation toward gay civil rights fit nicely with the structure of American politics (D’Emilio 1992 [1972]: xxvii; Epstein 1987: 2; Gamson 1998: 20). Epstein noted that “This ‘ethnic’ self-characterization by gays and lesbians has a clear political utility, for it has permitted a form of group organizing that is particularly suited to the American experience, with its history of civil-rights struggles and ethnic-based, interest-group competition” (1987: 2).

In addition, the cultural permissiveness introduced by the 1960s survived well into the 1970s. A revolution in the sexual mores of heterosexual Americans, particularly the young, was ongoing. The broader cultural focus on authenticity, therapy, self-actualization, and “doing your own thing” supported an acceptance of gay identity and lifestyle as one possible result of a search for a “true self.”

How the Rapid Decline of the New Left Mattered

The most commonsensical story about how the decline of the New Left mattered for the gay movement is that it simply accommodated to a political environment growing more conservative. In an essay drafted in 1991, historian John D’Emilio argued that

one reason [for the demise of gay power] is that the soil that fertilized GLF, the radicalism of the 1960s, was drying up rapidly. The belief that a revolution was imminent and that gays and lesbians should get on board was fast losing whatever momentary

¹⁰ See Jenkins (1985a, 1987) and Walker (1983).

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plausibility it had. By the early 1970s, the nation was entering a long period of political conservatism and economic retrenchment. With every new proclamation of revolutionary intentions, radicals compromised their credibility. (D'Emilio 1992b: 245)

The plausibility of this account is difficult to dispute. And, indeed, it is part of the story. The decline of the New Left revealed a political environment more transparent and more conservative than what had gone before. In this new context, gay activists found gay power's revolutionary vision less plausible than gay rights or gay pride approaches.

However, simply pointing to the implausibility of revolutionary change is an incomplete explanation. Not all parts of the New Left responded to the change in the political environment by modulating their notions of what was possible and desirable. Some parts of the New Left remained committed to revolutionary visions. Some even turned to violence. Why gay activists found it relatively easy, compared to other New Left activists, to turn away from a multi-issue social justice vision still must be explained. The answer lies partially with the timing and rapidity of the decline of the New Left. Gay activism intersected with the New Left long enough to benefit from the tremendous creativity of the moment but not so long as to enable (many) gay activists to become deeply invested in the more radical political project.

As mentioned above, the encounter between the homophile movement and the New Left provided the crucible in which the gay pride model, emphasizing coming out and identity expression, was forged. The existence of this model provided an alternative to the radical gay power approach – an alternative that became increasingly appealing as its mobilizing power started to become obvious. In New York, the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) staged highly successful cultural zaps. The GAA, tailored to the “hip’ homosexual mainstream” was “activist but nonviolent, imaginative, cool, and very successful” (Humphreys 1972: 160; Marotta 1981: 146). In San Francisco, the Society for Individual Rights (SIR) was aware of the successes of the GAA in New York. In June 1971, the SIR's publication, *Vector*, expressed admiration for New York's GAA, while criticizing New York's GLF. The *Vector* editor indicated that the SIR needed to adapt to stay vital: “Gay liberation is on the move and if SIR does not stay aboard it will go the way of the Mattachine Society” (*Vector* 1971: 4). SIR organizers situated themselves in a parallel position to New York's GAA. Activists observed what seemed to work and imitated it.

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The SIR experienced immediate success with the gay pride formulation. In June 1971 the SIR organized a “work-in” at the San Francisco Federal Building. This ingenious demonstration involved homosexuals (with signs on their lapels identifying themselves as such) volunteering their services to the government “until they were ‘fired’ by the Security Guards. For a time, Uncle Sam had homosexuals working for free in the IRS, Federal Employment Information Center, the US Printing Office Book Store, and homosexuals working as Indian Guides, and elevator operators. The Federals went into a ‘panic’ when a homosexual tried to be a janitor, by pushing a broom across the lobby” (Broshears 1971: 1). This demonstration was organized to protest “what SIR’s president, Bill Plath, called ‘an unjust government policy in refusing to employ homosexuals’” (Broshears 1971: 1).

Thus, part of the reason that gay activists turned away from gay power was that an exciting alternative existed. That this alternative existed, and was beginning to reveal its potential, is a consequence of the timing of the intersection between homophile and New Left movements. People are less likely to abandon a line of action, even one that is doomed, if they do not have an alternative available. However, people do not always support even the most exciting alternatives if they are already deeply committed to another approach (Wilde 2004). And, here, timing played a role in gay activists’ relative lack of commitment to radical politics.

The intersection between homosexual organizing and the New Left was brief, limiting homosexual commitment to a revolutionary agenda. By the time gay liberation emerged in 1969, signs of the decline of the New Left were evident. Gay activists witnessed the pitfalls of revolutionary politics without experiencing the series of events that led other movements down that path. Some gay leaders, such as New York’s Jim Owles, were self-conscious in their efforts to try to prevent the gay movement from repeating what they saw as the mistakes of other branches of the New Left. In a 1971 statement, Owles made the case that trying to create an ideologically homogenous movement would be a mistake. He asserted that “few of us are anxious to see a uniform and monolithic movement develop out of the foundations we have laid. We have seen other mass movements develop in this direction in the past, only to be torn apart by internal struggles over ideology and leadership, eventually to fail in achieving their goals” (Humphreys 1972: 126–7). Owles saw efforts to develop ideological consensus to be dangerous, potentially leading to movement factionalization. Thus, the relatively late emergence of gay liberation in the cycle of protest,

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combined with the very rapid decline of the New Left, helped protect the gay movement from the fate of kindred movements.

The enthusiasm of gay activists for the gay power perspective also was reduced by the reaction of other movements to this attempted alliance. Gay activists reported painful experiences of homophobia within the New Left. Jim Owles, one of the founders of New York's GAA, experienced the New Left as "viciously antihomosexual":

When [gay liberationists] did go out to other actions – let's say a support rally for the Panthers or the Young Lords or the more radical groups – ... they were still getting spit at. The word faggot was still being used at them. They were relegated to 'back' roles, and were told, 'Don't come out in front! We don't want our groups to become known as homosexual things.' That happened in other groups: in women's lib the lesbians are told, 'Get in the back. We don't want women's lib to be identified as a lesbian movement.' It was just one put-down, spit-in-the-face thing all the way. And I just couldn't do that. ... (Teal 1995: 297–8)

Owles was explicit that this treatment contributed to his desire to work in a single-issue organization because in this brief moment of experimentation activists learned that linking homosexual interests with those of other minorities could lead to rejection. The New Left never fully incorporated gay liberation because of the challenge it posed to its gender and sexual politics.

Even with the mixed reception gay liberation received from the women's movement, women's liberation was, of all the various strands of the New Left, most akin to gay liberation. Women's liberationists were already discussing the need to break away from a male-dominated New Left movement by the time gay liberation emerged (Echols 1989: chap. 3). The separation of women's liberation from the New Left decreased the likelihood that gay activists would make a deep commitment to revolutionary politics. If the New Left would not take women's issues seriously, what hope could gay activists have that homosexuality would be taken seriously? In addition, by splitting off from the New Left, the women's movement modeled a possible path for the gay movement and shaped the relationship between women's and gay movements. Just as the women's movement separated from the Left, lesbians turned away from participation in gay politics toward a separatist lesbian feminism (Martin 1970). The departure of women from the gay movement increased the likelihood that the gay movement would turn to a single-issue rights politics. Lesbian involvement in gay liberation militated toward a multi-issue politics because women were more likely to argue that issues of gender and sexuality both needed to be addressed.

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Thus, the abandonment of the gay power agenda by gay activists was partly a pragmatic response to a changing environment. Activists wanted the gay movement to survive this tumultuous moment. In this moment when multi-issue movements were floundering, gay activists saw the turn away from multi-issue politics as key to survival. However, pragmatism cannot fully explain the abandonment of gay power. A lack of commitment to radical politics, partially a result of the timing of the decline of the New Left, also played a role. The late development of gay liberation in the cycle of protest meant that the intersection between the homophile movement and the New Left was brief. This, in turn, meant that the vision of gay interest as inextricably connected to the interests of those oppressed in terms of gender, race, and class was tentative. This vision did not stand much of a chance as gay activists witnessed the failures of more radical approaches, and the successes of the gay pride and gay rights approaches. All of these features of the situation guided activists away from gay power approaches. The lack of appeal of gay power was not inevitable, but a result of the specific historical circumstances.

The fact that white middle-class men created and experimented with gay power politics suggests that a different formulation of gay interest was possible. Interests are constructed and reconstructed, and do not emerge directly from identity, which is itself an historical and political accomplishment. Some gay men were, and still are, advocates of a multiracial, multi-issue social justice politics. A view that assumes that the way actors interpret their interests can be derived from an objective analysis of social structure cannot explain the existence of the many middle-class white men who were and are devoted political radicals.

The abandonment of gay power by many (although not all) gay activists had both immediate and long-term consequences for the movement. In the short run, it reduced conflict internal to the gay movement, and thus, the social skill needed to forge agreements. Given the intensity of the conflict internal to gay liberation in 1969 and 1970, the continuation of those conflicts could have destroyed the movement. Attempting to reach agreement on goals and strategy in an uncertain political context might have led to a slow, contentious movement death. The timing and rapidity of the decline of the New Left meant that activists encountered this new (albeit more conservative) environment in a highly mobilized state. For most, turning to the more moderate gay pride and gay rights approaches did not feel like "selling out," but felt ripe with fresh possibilities. Thus, the rapid decline of the New Left in the early 1970s meant that the political environment

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became more transparent before activists were worn down by years of disagreement. Thus, the sharp decline of the New Left and the associated rejection of gay power played a pivotal role in the dramatic crystallization of a gay rights/pride agenda and the explosive growth of the gay movement in the 1970s.

Because of the sharpness of the rejection of the gay power agenda, the gay movement became more aggressively single issue than it might otherwise have become. This has had long-term consequences on the inclusivity of the movement. The turn away from gay power meant the abandonment of a politics that saw race, class, and gender politics as inextricably linked with sexual liberation. The race, class, and gender implications of this turn were not lost on activists at the time. The split of the GLF in New York occurred around the issue of the Black Panthers, giving the conflict between gay pride and gay power a distinctively racial cast. When interviewed in the 1990s for the documentary *Out Rage '69*, African American activist Bob Kohler talked about his feelings about the founding of the GAA as if the events had happened yesterday. He explained that, in his view:

[The Gay Activists Alliance] was formed as a class thing. It was formed because of class and because of race. . . . The dirty little secret of the gay movement is how and why the GAA was formed. . . . They wanted white power. And so they let the freaks, the artists, the poets, the drag queens, the street people, the street queens, the blacks, and the colored people keep the GLF. We're going to go form this thing that is going to change laws. That is a good idea. Change laws. But it was mainly reformist. The vision was broken. The vision went. (Dong 1995)

Kohler's palpable sense of loss was fueled by the knowledge that for a brief moment that possibility of a fundamentally different kind of gay identity and movement existed. Middle-class white men experimented with a way of thinking about sexual identity and interest that would have aligned their interests with those disadvantaged in terms of gender, race, or class. But this experimentation had little time to develop. The decline of the New Left shut this conversation down by resolidifying earlier formulations of class, race, and gender interest and identity.

The rapid response of gay activists to the restabilizing of the political environment suggests how much easier it is for people to act collectively (or to agree that it is too dangerous to act collectively) when they receive clear signals from stable environments about the likely consequences of action. Framing and strategic leadership are difficult in unstable environments. This case also provides an example of the role of temporality in

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field settlement. While the gay movement abandoned gay power partially because of the pragmatic assessment of political possibility, activists also were guided away from gay power because of *the particular timing and sequence of events*. Had the decline of the New Left unfolded in a different way, activists might have built a more radical (and unsuccessful) movement, or perhaps no movement at all. What we take for granted as the obvious and inevitable way of organizing around sexuality is only one possible outcome.

Discussion and Conclusion

A historically specific sequence of events enabled the crystallization of the lesbian/gay field in San Francisco in the early 1970s. A rapidly changing political environment in the late 1960s engendered a sense of nearly infinite possibility, which, in turn, generated both creative bricolage and internal conflict within the gay movement. Many ways of framing the movement seemed possible and it was difficult to assess which would resonate with surrounding movements and the larger political environment. Thus, strategic leadership at this moment was extremely difficult.

This moment of possibility ended abruptly, when actors suddenly found themselves in a much more predictable environment in the very early 1970s. The task of framing then became easier as it was more obvious which frames were likely to resonate with the larger political environment. While the stabilization of the environment curtailed creativity, the earlier period had generated many creative ideas about how to organize around sexuality. Strategic leadership in this case involved accurately reading the environment and acting to streamline the movement to take advantage of political possibility. Thus, the highly uncertain environment generated creative ideas but also conflict and paralysis, while the more transparent environment curtailed creative activity, but encouraged strategic thinking by allowing activists to select which frames would resonate in the new context. The rapid change in the political environment meant that possibilities that existed in one moment did not in the next. In order to take advantage of these fleeting possibilities it was necessary for actors to be there with cultural tools ready. Actors and frames intersect in contexts created by the unfolding of events over time.

The use of social movement and institutional theory in the explanation of field crystallization has implications for future theoretical development and empirical scholarship. Theoretically, the analysis here suggests

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that common mechanisms identified by organizational and social movement scholars are a powerful starting point in the analysis of organizational and social movement development and change. However, the analysis here also suggests that both intellectual arenas are much better at understanding social action under conditions of social order than in conditions of serious social upheaval. Both social movement and organizational scholars should attend more closely to the problem of action in conditions of uncertainty, and to sources of innovation and creativity. The analysis also suggests the importance of temporality to processes of field transformation. A variety of social movement theorists currently are focusing on such issues as the roles of place, identity, and emotion in movements (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Sewell 2001). It would be a mistake if the intersection between social movement and organizational theory neglected the insights of these scholars and developed an approach based on the shared resource/rationalist basis of much social movement and organizational theory. The third party to this new intersection between social movement and organizational sociology is culture. Attending to culture means attending not only to framing processes, but also to the sources of cultural repertoires, and the ways in which culture is constitutive of structures, institutions, identities, interests, grievances, goals, and strategies.

A focus on processes also has methodological implications. New settlements form through contentious social and political processes. The more that established arrangements are disrupted, the more contentious the process is likely to be. This approach suggests the examination of questions such as: what the rules of the game were before the field was thrown into crisis, how the field became unsettled, who the various actors with stakes in new framings of the field were, how the interests and identities of these actors were reconstructed through the political process, how actors constructed events to be consequential, what the alternatives were that actors were promoting, how one solution or another succeeded at organizing the field, and how the processes unfolded through time.

Studying field transformation and using theory from both institutional and social movements is consistent with the suggestion that social movement scholarship move away from narrow studies of the internal processes of movements (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Social movement and institutional processes and theories are inextricably connected: we need to understand change to understand social order, and vice versa. Drawing

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simultaneously on the theories developed in both of these sociological traditions provides a powerful set of analytical tools. These approaches enable the explanation of field transformation in a variety of arenas in society, including economic, political, cultural, medical, educational, and sexual arenas.

