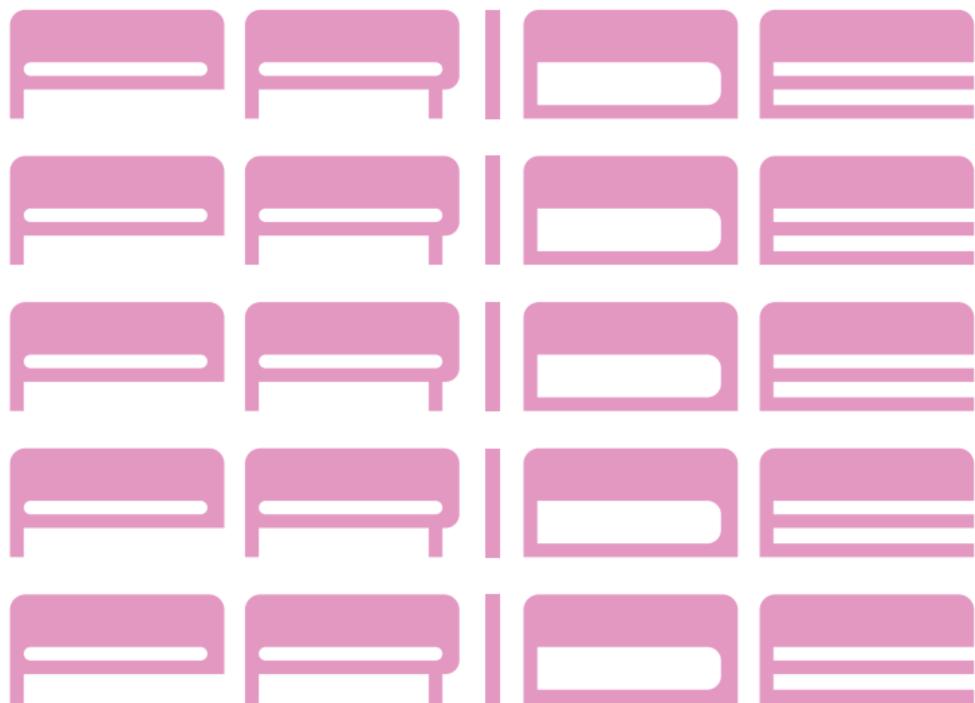


## **A GUIDE TOWARD QUEER FUTURITY**

ESSAYS ON PRIDE, HOMEOKIN, & SOUND.  
THOUGHTS ON PRODUCING INTENTIONAL FUTURES.



*To homeokin-makers.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Orientation	5
Glossary	6
Framing & Anchoring	10
A Brief Introduction: Pride	16
Homeokin	20
Producing Sounds: Producing Homeokin	24
Community Profiles	32
Queer Futurity	36
Facilitation	40

## ORIENTATION

The terms in the glossary have been offered as an orientation: to thinking about the way we speak of queer histories, write queer historiographies, and how we bring intentionality to queer futurity. I'd like to offer another orientation from Sara Ahmed:

*"What difference does it make 'what' or 'who' we are orientated toward in the very direction of our desire? If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit spaces as well as 'who' or 'what' we inhabit spaces with."<sup>1</sup>*

—Sara Ahmed

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, urban physicalities are generally nebulous and strained. We are all operating in liminality without the presence of others and, especially, without the knowledge of others...beyond the visibility of calendar blocks, Zoom rectangles, and digital messaging. Effectively, we're all operating covertly in the city the ways queer people have operated covertly for decades: we're constantly negotiating our presence in public spaces, we're constantly questioning the safety of being near others (both presumed and actual). Our orientation in the city's spaces is in flux. How queer people have contributed to soft infrastructures is how we're all contributing to soft infrastructures: through a lens, the other side of a camera, underground, in "pods." I hope this text serves as a guide for intergenerational homeokin-making. There is a definition, and examples, of homeokin later in the book. The guide's physical form offers options of discreetness and intentionality for its visibility and gives the owners and users their own agency to facilitate queer communities toward queer futurity in the way that is best for them.

<sup>1</sup> Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology Orientations, Objects, Others*, London: Duke University Press, 2006, 1–2.

## GLOSSARY

In this glossary, I use definitions from the Dictionary app on my Mac computer. Though I consider this to be a widely accessible source, and therefore more familiar, these definitions are still selected—chosen—based on my own understandings and perceptions. These definitions represent those which are easily recalled...they are, in a way, because of this accessibility, the normative (read: majority) frameworks through which queer histories can largely be understood and queer historiographies are composed. But to queer-identifying people (and, especially, non-queer people), I invite you to consider your own definitions of these terms to better situate your self in this text and these ideas. It will be (y)our interpretations that ultimately propel us toward a diverse and all-voices-heard queer futurity.

It's also important to consider the definition as an object of inquiry. That definitions can differ slightly based on the source from which you cite breathes malleability into a word's meaning and colors the threads that are woven into its surrounding contexts. And, again, that each word has multiple definitions per source only adds to this imbrication of possibility. This can be used for good or manipulated for inequitable gain. I hope to offer *these* definitions (for good) as an entry point and means to inspire imagination and thinking.

### Event

a thing that happens, especially one of importance

### Festival

a day or period of celebration

### March (noun)

a procession as a protest or demonstration

### Parade (noun)

a public procession, especially one celebrating a special day or event and including marching bands and floats

### Pride (noun)

a feeling or deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired

### Protest (noun)

an organized public demonstration expressing strong objection to an official policy or course of action

### Rebellion

an act of violent or open resistance to an established government or ruler

### Riot (noun)

a violent disturbance of the peace by a crowd

### Uprising

an act of resistance or rebellion; a revolt

**“It was a rebellion, it was an uprising, it was a civil rights disobedience— it wasn’t no damn riot.”**

## FRAMING & ANCHORING

How we call a thing affects how we think about that thing. Naming has implications (for better and for worse).

Eve Tuck wrote a letter in 2009. It was called, *Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities*.<sup>1</sup> This letter urges researchers, students, academics, community and organizers to shift the focus from what Tuck calls “damage-centered research” to that of desire-based research. This decision, to write the text as a letter in its epistolary form, addresses past selves, current readers, and future interlocutors. It situates the piece in an understanding of position in academia and urges comrades to bring desire to their work. And, especially, to the people and communities sitting as objects of inquiry. Tuck fosters an intimacy and line of communication directly between yourself (the reader) and herself (the writer). That is intentional and holds us accountable in the way we mediate as students and researchers. A letter is also relationship-forging.

The way queer worlds are portrayed (how the gaze on this community is mediated) might preclude, occlude, celebrate, or encourage any manner of behavior. All are possible and while this mediation might have negative consequences, reframing, moving away from the idea of queer communities being less-than, damaged, second-to-normative majorities, toward desire and toward futurity, is an act of intention, maybe design, but hopefully always desire.

Stonewall is our (the modern-called movement for LGBTQ+ equality) historical anchor. Can we reposition our focus? Revitalize a movement to be more inclusive and desire-driven, less damage-centered?

We revolve and evolve around the events of Stonewall, often lauded as the beginning of the *modern* LGBTQ+ movement. While this doesn't absolutely erase the decades of prior history, it excludes important narratives, especially and primarily those of Black Trans Women and Queer People of Color by putting the movement's focus on an event and less on the individuals and communities who strengthened and inspired people to act at said event (here, Stonewall). As our collective historiography has evolved, so has Pride; so have the needs and expectations of not only our community (internal) but also those placed upon us from allies, governments, dismissive parties, et al. (external). I wager, it's time to pull our movement's anchor closer toward us, something of our time. By doing so, however, we *must* acknowledge where we came from, how we got here, honor lives lost to, for example, police brutality and AIDS.

### A contemporary putsch » a contemporary push

We *must* look to the wisdom of queer elders and find ways to negotiate their lived experiences with our newly available freedoms. And while we're at it, we *must* also allow underrepresented voices to speak and work to dismantle dominant Western perspectives of queer liberation by welcoming diverse discourse from around the world.

<sup>1</sup> Tuck, E. (2009). *Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409-428. doi:10.17763/haer.79.3.n0016675661t3n15



“...a refusal to be shamed by witnessing the other as being ashamed of you.”

## PRIDE

Petra Doan, whose writing focuses on LGBTQ+ neighborhood and urban planning says, the “queer community comes together to party, to protest, or otherwise expropriate public spaces on a temporary basis through the use of parades, festivals, and what [Martin] Malanasan has called ‘demarcated moments.’ The most visible examples of these transient spaces are the Gay Pride parades that are now big business in many large metropolitan areas and are usually centered in and around the LGBTQ neighborhoods.”<sup>1</sup> I appreciate Doan’s use of expropriate and thought of it in possible dialogue with Brian McGrath, who said, “My intention is to describe queer public space, not as a defined realm that exists separate from ‘normative’ space, but as a minority appropriation of a majority space...It is an individual’s appropriation of the public realm through their personal, ever changing point of view which creates ‘queer space.’”<sup>2</sup> Both Petra and Brian allude to the exceptional nature of queerness in public. And Pride, serving as the pinnacle of queerness in public, is situated as an excellent case study for *finding homeokin* (pg.20).

George Chauncey, writing about early Ball culture in New York, declared, “The idea that people had remained isolated, ashamed, and invisible was so powerful that it would have been easy to view these events and spaces as ‘exceptional’ and rare rather than to see that cumulatively they provided evidence of what people in the 1930s were already beginning to refer to as a densely organized ‘gay world,’ albeit one fractured along the lines of race, class, citizenship, and gender difference and inequality.”<sup>3</sup> This line of thinking calls on Eve Tuck’s letter to communities to cease damage-centered research and focus on desire. Rather than focusing on the dejectedness, hiddenness of gay life, why can we not celebrate the life itself? Celebrate the lives who are making demands for equality and

giving visibility and credence to lesser-heard voices? Celebrate Pride because it is prideful, not denigrate Pride because it might fail to produce meaningful and resonant change for every LGBTQ+ person. Though, work to hold Pride accountable for what it represents and what it *can* accomplish. In speaking with Sue Doster, female-identifying chairperson for Heritage of Pride, I asked if building meaningful connections with others at and because of Pride is possible. Sue said, “some of my best friends I met through Pride, so, I think absolutely.” She continued by saying, “Does everyone? I don’t know... but some of the friends that I’ve met during Pride have been my friends for decades. Literally. Part of what Pride does is...it connects people and, you know, in the early years, when it was hard to connect, it wasn’t so easy to reach out and find like-minded people. So you have this concept of Pride, which attracted like-minded people, and then you have this community of like-minded people.”<sup>4</sup> Swedish author, Ulrika Dahl’s research asks, “Is it kinship between queers? Or is it queer ways of making kinship?”<sup>5</sup> I think this is unanswerable, or at least not definitively answerable. Dahl talks about affinity groups as arrangements of sharing both emotional and material support. This choosing, or intentionality, to create spaces of “love, devotion, recognition, and gratitude” is indicative of what Sue was speaking with me about: communities of like-mindedness.

Having a center of gravity, much like Stonewall has served as the center of gravity for the queer liberation movement, is serving the Pride community at large by giving space and time, particularly in cities, to these dense and vibrant groups of LGBTQ+ people to meet one another, share, bond, and leave inspired to maintain that relationship. Apropos of our meeting on Zoom because of COVID-19, a couple I interviewed about organizing Pride concluded our conversation by mentioning, “that common goal [of organizing successful Pride events] makes you bond really quickly at the conferences. And then you get to keep that up throughout the year via email or FaceTime or Zoom.” What stood out to me in this statement is the operative, *you get to*. As though the

ability to make these relationships, to become parts of, is a privilege that must not be taken for granted. This excitement to commit is necessary, I think, for homeokin to be a sustainable and repeatable way to invite a diverse and radical queer futurity. Without it, staying in touch, facilitating these relationships is a chore.

- <sup>1</sup> Doan, P. L. (2015). Why Plan for the LGBTQ Community? In *Planning and LGBTQ communities: The need for inclusive queer spaces* (p. 10). New York, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- <sup>2</sup> McGrath, B. (1994). *IMG-0642* [jpg]. New York City: Queer Space Scrapbook.
- <sup>3</sup> Chauncey, George. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2019, xvii.
- <sup>4</sup> Sue Doster. In conversation with the author.
- <sup>5</sup> Dahl, U. (2014). Not Gay as in Happy, but Queer as in Fuck You Notes on Love and Failure in Queer(ing) Kinship. *Lambda Nordica*, 143-167.
- <sup>6</sup> Interviewees (anonymous). In conversation with the author.

## HOMEOKIN

Feminist thinker and story-teller, Donna Haraway, and a full slate of feminist thinkers like Adele Clarke, Kim TallBear, Anna Tsing, Elaine Gan, Maggie Nelson etc. are trying to find better ways to describe the evolving ways of committing to and creating community *and* family (biological, by marriage, and, especially, family of choice). These variety-commitments and -relationships make “more satisfying lives.”<sup>1</sup> Kinship, and the act of making kin, has long been attributed to blood relations or relationships that are given, not made. This is a dominant framing in anthropological inquiries and examinations. “Making kin” is vernacular, too. It’s processual, action, inquiry, and aspirational. “Kin is an assembling sort of word” as Haraway puts it.<sup>2</sup> The scholars at the start of this paragraph, in conversation with one another, argue that kin-making is—or needs to be—approached and understood as a more inclusive and holistic way of relating to one another. Clarke says, “People become kin largely by sharing experiences and generating a sense of belonging. Kinfolk are parts of one another to the extent that what happens to one is *felt* by the other, such that we live each others’ lives and die each others’ deaths. *Biological* connection is not requisite.”<sup>3</sup> I’m particularly interested in the idea that *kinfolk are parts of one another*. Kinfolk retain their selfness but obtain + partake in + have the sensations of others—what an extraordinary opportunity! The LGBTQ+ community, as the focus of my inquiry, as a group or collectivism, has a wholly applicable unifier: that of being part of the LGBTQ+ community. While that spectrum is fluid, far-reaching, and sometimes nebulously borderless, it can serve those identifying as such by enabling our selves to be open to, accepting, and sensible to parts of one another.

Jeffrey Escoffier wrote, “Homosexual, lesbian, gay, queer, dyke, black gay, gay black, Latino/a, African American, Ms.—each word, each name implies a relationship to the social majority or to ‘mainstream’ society.”<sup>4</sup> Queer liberation, the eponymous movement, continues to make demands, in the shape of organizations like the Reclaim Pride Coalition, counter-Pride protesting, and even some aspects of Pride, for *liberation* from repression (attributed to mainstream society). Showing up and being available to be together as kinfolk that are parts of one another, without shame—or the more optimistic inverse: with pride, is paramount in placemaking for queer communities, bodies, and relations.

The assimilation of many queers into the mainstream—the “embrace of dominant society and its identity standards”<sup>6</sup>—is an acknowledgment, conscious or not, that a “mainstream” or “majority” or “normal” exists in which it is possible to assimilate. I offer *homeokin* as a framing for understanding queer kinship. I argue that *homeokin* is a substantive, albeit imbricated, typology of queer kinship. I have felt constantly confronted by the prefix of “queer” to kinship. This line of defining kinship as queer in opposition to or qualification of its normative suffix felt exclusionary or an action of making-less-than. *Homeokin* became a singularly substantial affinity, way of relating, and being that was distinctly queer and *equal* to kinship. It does not necessitate a distinction or qualification (here, queer) as *homeokin* is reified by *not* having such a distinction or qualification. Equal but different, not equal but opposite. *Homeokin* can exist because kinship exists. So, here, I use queer as an identifying identity and not an act of queering. Haraway’s writing on kin-making is about climate justice, reproductive justice, ending Indigenous genocides, Black futures, etc. *Homeokin* is a social infrastructure and can address—not single-handedly solve—each of those urgent crises but my focus is primarily on the human-human relationship that is all: elusive, lasting, and intentional. The ways queer people have fought for the right to be seen and accepted

are at once political demands (marching, assembling, etc.) and acts of assimilation (marrying, visibility, etc.). So as not to digress into the belly of an assimilation versus thriving (read: liberated) argument, I want to note that I see homeokin as a way out, a way up. A way to celebrate communities and individuals who need to be both (assimilated and liberated) on their personal journey of self-actualizing and community-, family-, and love-building—a way to celebrate liminality and its inescapability. Queer liberation, however, seeks equality for all people, not just the dominant figures (cisgendered, white, and gay) in the LGBTQ+ community and that hard and long fought battle needs to continue to break oppressive systems. But, to begin where we are is to acknowledge, each, our position in the process of homeokin making. The recognition (of LGBTQ+ people) by a society that is laden with gender-sex roles and expectations will only offer (demand?) such roles of those it observes and includes. Homeokin is a summative demand that sits within Stonewall-era activism because it is at the heart of queer identity in cities: our queerness is a unifying, relational aspect that, despite room for differing belief systems and practices, acts as a bonding agent to be parts of one another.

<sup>1</sup> Adele E. Clarke, Donna Jeanne Haraway, and Adele E. Clarke, “*Making Kin Not Population*,” in *Making Kin Not Population* (Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2018), pp. 1-40, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Donna Haraway, *Staying With the Trouble Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, (London: Duke University Press, 2016), 103.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Escoffier, *American Homo: Community and Perversity* (London, United Kingdom: Verso, 2018), 26.

<sup>5</sup> Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 117.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* (Escoffier), 27.

## PRODUCING SOUNDS: PRODUCING HOMEOKIN

I attended the second (annual) Queer Liberation March, organized by the Reclaim Pride Coalition in Manhattan on June 28, 2020. This event took place in spite of the threat of COVID-19 and coincided with the unrest and protest around the country for Black Lives Matter and the murder of George Floyd. The theme of the QLM this year was *For Black Lives and Against Police Brutality*—intentionally in solidarity with BLM which also situated the Queer Liberation March in the context of the intersectional origins of queer liberation circa 1969. The day was street-meltingly hot but, still, tens of thousands (20,000 up to 40,000 depending on your source) of people gathered in Foley Square in southern Manhattan and marched northward in protest and as one. There was clear spatial prioritization for BIPOC voices and presence, clear spatial prioritization for any-and-all-abilities bodies. As a result, the spaces along the march felt knit together by our commonalities: those very prioritizations. Without police actively monitoring the protest route we served as our own source of comfort and protection. I heard people laughing together, people shouting together, people being polite, people sharing acknowledgment and excitement with others—the efficaciousness of homeokin. The unspoken rules of the day were to show respect, foster and share love (which was constantly on display), make room for typically-less-visible people and less heard stories: pass the proverbial mic to someone else. Most of all, though, there was an

implicit expectation to celebrate the people who share their experiences and their vulnerability.

A curious—it was curious to me—spectacle during the march was the use of hand fans to produce a slow-clap effect throughout the march. Here, I attempt a sound analysis to better understand this action, how, I argue, it was a homeokin producing phenomenon, and give an example of how you could also produce homeokin with sound and protest.

Clack fans are folding hand fans constructed in a way—with specific materials—that produces a staccato *thworp* with the conditioned wrist-flick-movement that opens the fan. Built in a neo-Japanese style:<sup>1</sup> bamboo bones or ribbing covered in (now often highly decorated) nylon, the fans hearken to the objects' history in Japan as class-specific, “considered suitable as gifts for royalty.”<sup>2</sup> It would seem a co-optation then that an object of high class would find its way into club culture and fill the streets as conduits of protest.

A reframing, however, could position the queer community using these fans as an endowment or honorarium, especially in reference to the Harlem Ball culture: a (deserved?) sociopolitical class acknowledgment. The fan's shape is a segment of a circle, not a complete whole, which, semiotically, produces a possible reading of their use at the Queer Liberation March: this object is *incomplete* much as the struggle for queer liberation is *incomplete*.

We are hearing—bearing witness to—only a portion of what has come before our current movement and what is to come next.

The fans have become iconic accessories, if not hotly contested, at raves and music festivals. Some events go as far to list the fans as banned objects as their sound (disparaged for being off-beat or out of time



with climactic ‘drops’ in electronic music) is distracting and bothersome to attendees.<sup>3</sup> Vloggers have tutorials on how to appropriately clack your fan and offer do’s and don’ts of their use at raves.<sup>4</sup> Other videos show vloggers polling followers for their own experiences with the fans—and any resulting opinions about the fans’ uses—at music venues and events.<sup>5</sup> That being said, these fans having a presence at the Queer Liberation March is apropos for queer culture’s footing in the underground, the nighttime, the club scene. The fans offer cooling—so they are utilitarian, they serve as an accessory—in the case of the Queer Liberation March, another sign or object of protest—and are specifically designed with sound making as an outcome of use. Their use embodies a collectivity as well as a displacement of sound from body to object. Collective in that every marcher was touched by the sound produced from the fans. To view our march as a single body crawling north through Manhattan is to perceive the fan *clacking* as a singular sound produced by atoms and bamboo colliding across our being. Displacement in that the sound was not directly produced by our bodies but by tools enacted by our bodies. This displacement reflects an observation of queerness in public as, historically, congregations of any number—tens of thousands estimated at this particular event<sup>6</sup>—of queer bodies was at one time considered disorderly and illegal. Rather than producing sound with our bodies, calling attention to our persons,<sup>7</sup> the fans were a powerful, energy-producing

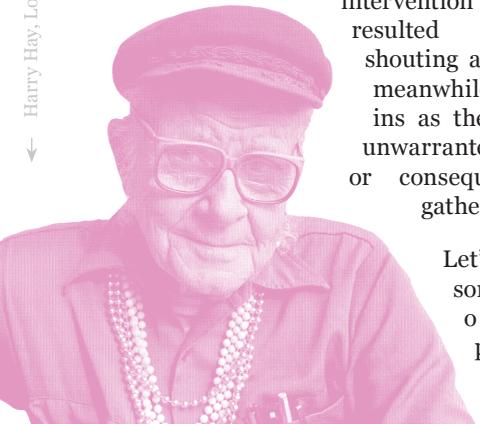
intervention that inevitably resulted in raucous shouting and cheering but meanwhile were stand-ins as the targets of any unwarranted attention or consequence for our gathering that day.

Let’s consider some of the many onomatopoeia produced by and

attributed to these objects: *clack*, *snap*, *fwap*. The last in this list, *fwap*, also invokes a similar, *fap*, which is a colloquialism for masturbating. Peter Hujar’s images of the Chelsea Piers in their dilapidated state peopled with sunbathing gay men are seminal in documenting gay sexuality and cruising in New York. Known for his striking images of men in a variety of states of self- and partner-pleasure, Hujar’s images might be recalled with the *fwapping* (*fapping*) fans used by marchers at the Queer Liberation March. In Harry Hay’s—co-founder of the Mattachine Society and the Radical Faeries—obituary written by members of the Radical Faeries, we are urged to “Please hold the Dutchess in your thoughts, throw glitter, be real with someone, kiss a man in public, or jack off to help Harry have a good transition. She loved us very much, and we have much to thank the cantankerous old girl for...”<sup>8</sup> These visual and written charges for solo or group orgasm are underscored by the repetitive *fwapping* resulting in a burst of cheering on the march route. Without a pier on which to perform these physical acts, marching through Manhattan in solidarity with Black Trans Lives, the fans act as a de facto facilitator for bonding. Without a pier, we *fwap* together along the streets of Manhattan.

*Clacking*, another sound—and a trademarked brand of fans<sup>9</sup>—can be associated with the sharpness of stilettos on hard flooring, which was popularized by the Clackers in the 20th Century Fox feature, *The Devil Wears Prada*. A character in the film mocks the women she works with for their worshiping of a magazine’s contentious editor-in-chief. These women, so it is said, all wear high-heeled shoes that produce a clear sound when striding through the lobby. Such a sound has earned them the colloquialism, Clackers.

This, again, is a sound that in the context of the Queer Liberation March, hearkens to the adornment of the heel on a queer body. We’re reminded of the Balls in Harlem from the late 19th century to the late 20th. George Chauncey wrote, “Drag balls were the largest communal events of prewar<sup>10</sup> gay society, and the drag queens and other ‘fairies’ spotlighted at them were its



most visible representatives.”<sup>11</sup> Those snapping fans at the March were, of course, the most spotlighted and most audible representatives of the group. Balls will have become influential for Black queer culture in the later 20th century and inspire documentaries like, *Paris is Burning*, and—now—streaming television series like, *Pose*. The Balls, and specifically voguing—a dance style attributed to the Harlem Balls—will also inspire Madonna’s 1990 song, *Vogue*.

“The balls made the existence and scope of that world manifest. In a culture hostile to gay men, the balls confirmed their numbers by bringing thousands together. In a world that disparaged their culture, it was at the drag balls, more than any place else, that the gay world saw itself, celebrated itself, and affirmed itself.”<sup>12</sup>

Spaces used by, created by, and activated by queer-identifying bodies build the body electric.

“I sing the body electric,  
The armies of those I love engirth me and I engirth them...”<sup>13</sup>



—Walt Whitman

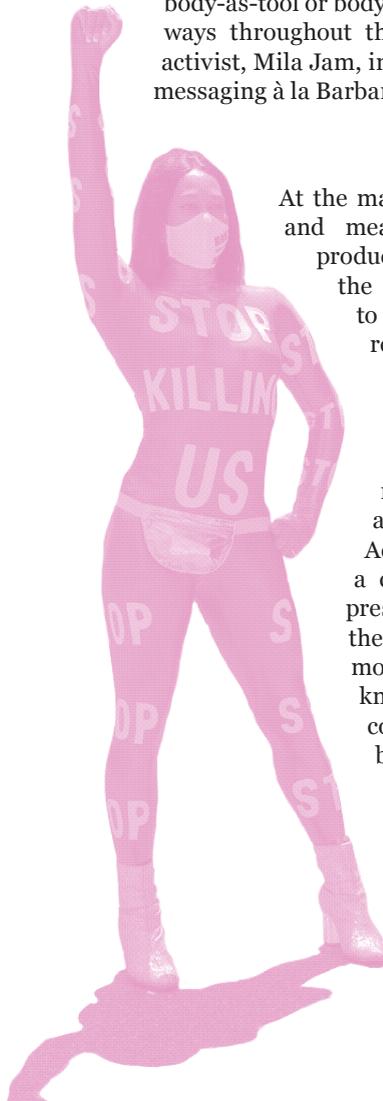
These fans, these shoes, this audible vernacular are constitutive of a stunning camaraderie. They're symbolic of mystery (shielding oneself), sexiness (enabling voyeurism for the holder), costume (by design and level of detail), and indulgence (the object intended to create sound, drama). The slow clap is an audience-controlled hive mentality. Cheering is a sign of support,

September Dawn Bottoms, Mila Jam, Poses for a Photo during the Queer Liberation March., photograph (New York, NY), The New York Times.

a sign of common belief being elevated in a group setting, a celebration of a performance or the idea being presented by such a performance.<sup>14</sup> The slow clap (here the fan *fwap*) is an act of homeokin making—an uniting, bringing together...resulting in an orgasmic rush of cheering and shouting while marching continues. This body-as-tool or body-as-protest was evidenced in other ways throughout the march, like the musician and activist, Mila Jam, in a blue-glitter bodysuit covered in messaging à la Barbara Kruger:

“STOP KILLING US”

At the march where sound is as important and meaningful as silence, the group production of sound with these fans, and the chants, and the group silencing to pay homage to queer lives lost, represent histories of protest, queer histories...the queer praxis that enables the marching for Queer Liberation. “Act up don’t be quiet Stonewall was a fucking riot!” The message, with dualities and multiple demands, references Act Up and uses the movement as a call to action to make noise, be present, and do something because the Stonewall riots were all of that and more. Clapping and *fwapping* and knees-of-silence are contemporary containers for the types of demands being articulated by activists in the mid-20th century and, now, by the Reclaim Pride Coalition. Passive participation in the commercialized avenues of Pride are no longer sufficient methods of protest for the organizers of the Queer Liberation March who believe, as do I, queer liberation remains to be won.





- <sup>1</sup> Lucy Dayman, “5 Things You Should Know About Traditional Japanese Fans,” Japan Objects (Japan Objects, February 8, 2019), <https://japanobjects.com/features/japanese-fans>.
- <sup>2</sup> “SOAS University of London,” Origin of the folding fan, Brunel Gallery, SOAS, University of London, September 29, 2020, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/gallery/traditionsrevised/origin-of-the-folding-fan.html>.
- <sup>3</sup> Karlie Powell, “Major Music Festival Takes A Stand Against Annoying ‘Fan Clacking’ Epidemic,” Your EDM, August 22, 2019, <https://www.youredm.com/2019/08/21/crssi-festival-discourages-rave-attire/>.
- <sup>4</sup> FatBoyDoug, “Fan Etiquette - DO’s and DON’T’s || Rave Tips,” YouTube (YouTube, October 19, 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v.>
- <sup>5</sup> Rinnyea, “HOT TAKE: FAN CLACKING AT FESTIVALS,” YouTube (YouTube, October 21, 2019), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tomJz26KGoY>.
- <sup>6</sup> Michael Schulman, Masha Gessen, and Jeffrey Toobin, “A Radical Challenger to New York City’s Pride March,” The New Yorker, June 25, 2020, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/queer-liberation-march-a-radical-challenger-to-new-york-city-pride>.
- <sup>7</sup> Which, of course, our bodies did produce sound—that did happen during the protest but the use of an object, an extension of our selves, removes the focus from queer persons to queer objects and the quasi-personification of queerness to demand socio-political change.
- <sup>8</sup> “Harry & John,” radfae (Radical Faeries, 2002), <https://www.radfae.org/harry-john>.
- <sup>9</sup> “All Clack Fans,” Clack That Fan, accessed November 9, 2020, <https://clackthatfan.com/collections/clack-fans>.
- <sup>10</sup> World War II
- <sup>11</sup> Chauncey, George. *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2019, 1.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 299.
- <sup>13</sup> Walt Whitman, “I Sing the Body Electric,” Poetry Foundation (Poetry Foundation, 1855), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45472/i-sing-the-body-electric>.
- <sup>14</sup> Megan Garber, “A Brief History of Applause, the ‘Big Data’ of the Ancient World,” The Atlantic (Atlantic Media Company, March 16, 2013), <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2013/03/a-brief-history-of-applause-the-big-data-of-the-ancient-world/274014/>.



## BLAKE

What kinds of planning or logistics go into organizing an event like Pride to ensure that everyone feels they can equally take part?

## SUE

I think we do our best but over the years our best has evolved. I guess...same for me. Apply that statement to anyone! I do think we try not to be very polarized. And I think we're successful to various degrees. Pride is a hard thing...the community leaves big shoes to fill and a lot of times they don't always agree. So, it's challenging but important to continue to strive towards inclusion and safety and I think that's more of a process than an end goal. I don't think we will ever fully arrive...it's iterative.

I was having a conversation with someone I know, talking about this recently, but I feel like the big picture is moving in the right direction, sometimes glacially slowly—which can be excruciating. I think the larger Pride community is a microcosm for society. So if we can figure out a way to work out some of this then there's hope for the greater society at large.

## BLAKE

Does assimilation take away from the queer magic often associated with being covert or on the fringes?

## ANDREW

Covert groups, fringe groups, are part of the history of the country. The evolution of queerness in America has become, for a significant portion of queer people if they're lucky enough to live in certain places, they've become part of a kind of mainstream.

That's not true of everybody. I don't actually believe the movement was always a fringe movement. There were many queer people that were not involved in the political activism for whatever reason. So it was a fringe of radical people who have allowed many, many people to become part of the mainstream. And many, many of them hoped to become part of the mainstream. They wanted to be accepted and to make sure that things queer were not deviant. It's very complicated. I think that one should celebrate the fringe and one should recognize the mainstream as well.



## BLAKE

So I'm curious, then, to know what sources you use to learn about drag culture and Pride.

You watch RuPaul's, you go to shows whenever you're at Pride, you're familiar with the culture and the history. Where do you learn about it all...outside your firsthand experiences?

## BRETT

There's an insane amount—and it's really beautiful—that's sort of passed down from older gay people to younger gay people. There's a strong tradition of that, especially in the gay community. Having older gays pass along this knowledge...they have a wealth of knowledge! Things like phrases, mannerisms, movies to watch, camp culture. And it's really hard when there are some young gays who don't give a fuck and think older gays are just, like, crusty or whatever!

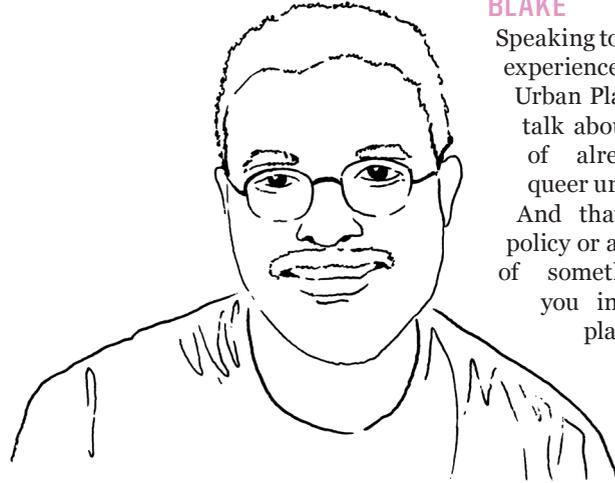
You can sort of get keyed into these things that you should know as a gay person. And then you get the concept of the "bad gay." You're not a bad person if you haven't seen, *Mommy Dearest*, though. It's just that... we have this catalogue of things that if you want to understand the gay experience, you want to feel seen, you can watch these movies and understand these references.

RuPaul says, "if we don't make these references we lose them."



## BLAKE

Speaking to your personal experience as a queer Urban Planner, can you talk about an example of already codified queer urban planning? And that could be a policy or a spatialization of something...however you interpret queer planning.



## ADDISON

I'm interested in how queer urbanism or queer space was not only socially constructed but how it was always politically contested. And so I've been looking at how it was always a space where irreconcilable differences could clash. Not in the sense where Republicans and Democrats can be friends...but where lesbians and gays and indigenous people all are laying claim to the same space.

And there's an imperative to develop a way of sharing it justly. On one hand you can observe segregation but on the other hand you can observe an incredible cross-section: co-existing. Queer spaces where lesbians, gays, transgendered people have different claims on different spaces, whether it's a beach, club, or any geography.

The queer space and space making I believe in is that there's an imperative for people to create this space together with respect for one another. And not respect as in, tolerance, but political solidarity with one another's goals. It's about finding different ways of supporting one another.

## QUEER FUTURITY

What can queer futurity be? Not what *should* queer futurity be. How can we create desire-based, thriving connections between researchers asking these questions and queer communities living the outcomes? And not even necessarily living the outcomes as much as living their lives which happen to be the object of inquiry?

Each of these people—historians, community members, event organizers, planners—shared stories with me of kinship. Pride, and its multifaceted evolution, serves a community, just as other spatio-temporal events like the Queer Liberation March serve a community. Queer history has been, largely, an oral history. Sharing some of their stories feels like the most genuine-to-form transmission of queer culture. Story telling for earthly survival, as Donna Haraway would put it.

Their experiences with—and their sharing of—making homeokin are how I see queer futurity flourishing and becoming a space of desire-driven production both of the self and the institutions in orbit.

If we lose these stories, if we forget where we came from, how can we imagine recentering ourselves to act on our current situation?

Understanding and accepting that debate, struggle, and compromise are all inevitable in queer worldbuilding is necessary. Moving away from the idea of queer communities as damaged, second-to normative majorities, toward desire, is an act of intention, maybe design, but hopefully always desire. I urge you, reader, to consider how to pass on a story or listen to a story being told. Ask yourself, how can I make a meaningful connection by sharing a moment of truth, laughter, respect?

# IX

I dreamed in a dream of a city where all the  
men were like brothers,  
O I saw them tenderly love each other—I  
often saw them, in numbers, walking  
hand in hand;  
I dreamed that was the city of robust  
friends—Nothing was greater there  
than the quality of manly love—it led  
the rest,  
It was seen every hour in the actions of the  
men of that city, and in all their looks  
and words.—

## FACILITATION

As a work-in-progress, this text serves an immediate purpose of capturing ideas, reflecting goals of people and communities, and postulating that a queer futurity, the one I hope for at least, might have possible prerequisites.

In its final iteration, I hope this book will be produced and distributed: places like the LGBT Center in New York's West Village, Callan Lorde, etc. It will be shared with the diverse experts, participants, organizers, and community members who helped shape the ideas herein.

Intended as a tool for facilitating intergenerational, cross-boundary, and unexpected conversations within the LGBTQ+ community, the book is meant to be a guide, maybe a travel guide, on the path toward an equitable and loving queer futurity.

It will include a more robust multi-media component that explores and celebrates the excitement of fan *fwapping*, paying homage to Ball and Drag cultures, as a symbol of protest.

The goal of my writing and the amplification of these stories is to be accessible, understandable, and, above all, make visible the emotions that bind us. Someone posed the question to me while I was working on these essays: "who is our research for?" I think this information can be just as useful for organizers of the Queer Liberation March and Pride as it would be for people—queer or not—outside of cities who've participated in their own struggles to be seen and to find what they stand for. It's admittedly a wide net! But acceptance, joy, and empathy are not exclusive-to-a-majority characteristics. We're all deserving of the actualization of our imaginations.



Advised by  
Shannon Mattern, PhD

Anthropology + Design 2020