2012

"What You Can Learn From the Kinsey Report": Kinsey and the Gay and Lesbian Population, 1970-1993

Becky Little
College of William and Mary

“WHAT YOU CAN LEARN FROM THE KINSEY REPORT”:
KINSEY AND THE GAY AND LESBIAN POPULATION, 1970-1993

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors in
History from the College of William and Mary in Virginia,

by

Becky Little

Accepted for ____________________

___________________ Director

____

____

Williamsburg, Virginia
April 2012

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACT UP	AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASA	American Statistical Association
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
DOB	Daughters of Bilitus
GCN	*Gay Community News*
GLF	Gay Liberation Front
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
Institute	Institute for Sex Research (1947-1981)
Kinsey Institute	Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction (1982-present)
NGLTF	National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (1985-present)
NGTF	National Gay Task Force (1973-1985)
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
NORC	National Opinion Research Center
NSM-I	National Survey of Men
SBHF	*Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*
SBHM	*Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

In 1948, 5,000 advance copies of Alfred C. Kinsey's 804-page *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (*SBHM*) were printed for the report's January 3rd release. Within the first two weeks of publication, 185,000 additional copies went to print in response to the high public demand for Kinsey's study. Both the male volume and Kinsey's 1953 *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (*SBHF*) spent several weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list.[1] As the most comprehensive studies of white American sexual behavior at that time, Kinsey's reports were unprecedented, as was the public response to the massive volumes written in a dry, scientific style and filled with lengthy statistical charts. The initial popularity of the Kinsey reports was due in part to Kinsey's claim that the studies contained new revelations about human sexual behavior. One of Kinsey's most controversial claims – that same-sex sexual behavior was practiced by a substantial minority of the American population – would later be considered useful by activists who sought to argue that anti-gay and lesbian laws discriminated against a significant portion of United States citizens.

In his reports, Kinsey used his interviewees who reported same-sex sexual experience as evidence for his argument that this behavior was normative. Kinsey was surprised to find that thirty-seven percent of his male interviewees and thirteen percent of his female interviewees reported having a postadolescent same-sex sexual experience resulting in orgasm.[2] In recording and reporting his data, Kinsey focused on individuals' same-sex sexual *behavior* rather than on individuals' *identity* as "homosexual." He posited that, rather than existing in a "homosexual" and "heterosexual" binary, sexual orientation was better represented in a zero-to-six scale where

[1] John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 34.
[2] Alfred C. Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders Company, 1953), 487.

"zero" represented exclusively opposite-sex sexual behavior and "six" represented exclusively same-sex sexual behavior.[3] Kinsey concluded based on his findings that same-sex sexual behavior was a normative form of sexual behavior practiced among a significant portion of white Americans which should not be prohibited by law.[4]

Kinsey's reports did not comprehensively represent the sexual behavior of all Americans. Both of the reports made claims based on interviews with mostly educated, middle-class Americans, all of whom were white. Additionally, Kinsey did not use random sampling when selecting his interviewees. Although the American Statistical Association (ASA) praised Kinsey's volumes containing data on 11,240 white American men and women as a far-reaching and groundbreaking, their one sharp critique was that his sampling methods were flawed. Therefore, his statistics could not be extrapolated to make conclusions about the sexual behavior of all Americans during that time period, let alone across decades.[5]

Despite his reports' flaws in terms of methodology and representation, many journalists, scholars, medical experts, and government officials used Kinsey as a reference point for discussions of American sexual behavior in the wake of the reports' immediate publication. Historian Leisa Meyer writes that the Kinsey Reports sparked wide public interest in the late 1940s and early 1950s because they "provided one way for some Americans to make sense of broader cultural shifts resulting from U.S. involvement in World War II."[6] However, Kinsey's data was not just used to make sense of changes in the immediate post-war period; rather, his reports continued to be a reference point during the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s.

---

[3] Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 470.
[4] Julia A. Ericksen with Sally A. Steffen, *Kiss and Tell: Surveying Sex in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 55; Alfred C.Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders Company, 1948), 663-666.
[5] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 58; *Kinsey*, dir. and prod. by Barak Goodman and John Maggio (Twin Cities Public Television/TPT and Ark Media in association with the BBC, 2005); Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 3.
[6] Leisa D. Meyer, "Forward: Sexual Revolutions," *OAH Magazine of History* 20, no 2 (March 2006): 5.

Beginning in the 1970s, gay and lesbian activists cited the Kinsey Reports as an authoritative source on the population size of gay men and lesbians. They did so in order to give the general population a sense of how many Americans were affected by laws and policies which discriminated based on sexual orientation. During this decade, prominent activists from organizations like the National Gay Task Force (renamed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1985) publicly defined gay and lesbian identity as an inborn characteristic that an individual could not choose to reject in favor of heterosexual identity. Because Kinsey measured same-sex sexual behavior rather than gay or lesbian identity, some activists began to interpret Kinsey in a way that reinforced their project of defining gay and lesbian identity. Using Kinsey's estimates about men and women who had engaged in same-sex sexual behavior for at least three years, activists like National Gay Task Force (NGTF) co-founder Bruce Voeller posited that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian. Activists like Voeller were aware of both the flaws in Kinsey's data as well as Kinsey's argument that sexual orientation did not only exist in binary sexual identities. However, Voeller felt that the 10 percent estimate was politically useful for a movement that sought to define itself as a substantial minority of the population both to those who identified as gay or lesbian and those who identified as heterosexual.[7]

Although the 10 percent estimate was promoted by gay and lesbian activists into the early 1990s, new estimates of gay men and lesbians as well as the perception that the Kinsey Reports were outdated and inaccurate challenged the validity of the Kinsey Reports and the 10 percent estimate beginning in the late 1980s. In 1988, the 10 percent estimate was challenged with a new projection of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) infections which placed the

---

[7] Bruce Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," in *Homosexuality/Heterosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation*, ed. by David P. McWhirter, Stephanie A. Sanders, and June Machover Reinisch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 33-36.

population of American gay men much lower than the 10 percent estimate suggested. In 1993, a Battelle Research Center study also concluded that a much lower percentage of American men were gay. These lower estimates emerged in a climate in which journalists increasingly reported that the Kinsey Reports were outdated, inaccurate, and unrepresentative sources with which to evaluate a disease which affected primarily men who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior and/or African Americans and Latinos. The age and methodological flaws of the reports were highlighted when journalists charged that the government's use of these reports to make projections about a contemporary crisis was irresponsible. This public outcry concerning the need for current data was fueled in part by the misperception that AIDS was spreading to white heterosexuals. The combined effect of challenges to the 10 percent estimate as well as the popular perception that the Kinsey Reports were unreliable led activists to abandon the reports and the estimate they had derived from them as useful foundations for political arguments.

Although citing Kinsey to make claims about the population size of gay men and lesbians was no longer a politically valid option for activists after 1993, Kinsey's claim that people who practiced same-sex sexual behavior constitute a substantial minority of the American population remains his most important contribution to the gay and lesbian rights movement. The Kinsey Reports were useful to gay and lesbian activists because their interpretations of the reports allowed them to define who gay men and lesbians were by providing a statistic about how many there were. Commenting on the 1993 Battelle study's suggestion that 1 percent of the population was gay or lesbian, Campaign for Military Service activist Thomas Stoddard told *The Washington Post* that "'[c]ivil rights shouldn't be a matter of numbers, but…they are.'"[8] However, even though Kinsey lost his status as an authoritative source of knowledge on the gay and lesbian population in the late 1980s and early 1990s, his claim that gay men and lesbians

[8] Boyce Rensberger, "How Many Men in U.S. Are Gay?" *Washington Post*, April 17, 1993, A1.

“‘are everywhere’” continued to influence gay and lesbian activism.[9]

[9] Bruce Voeller, “Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale,” 35.

Part One

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Kinsey Reports became established as an authoritative source concerning how many Americans practiced same-sex sexual behavior. Published in 1948 and 1953, the Kinsey Reports on male and female sexual behavior quickly became bestsellers.[10] The claims in the reports proved controversial because they seemed to reveal a gap between dominant cultural norms and the sexual behaviors that people practiced. One of the most controversial of Kinsey's findings was that same-sex sexual behavior was practiced more widely than had previously been thought. Furthermore, Kinsey argued that this behavior was normative and could be found in every segment of society. Although some government officials viewed Kinsey's findings as an indicator of wide-spread sexual deviancy, his reports were also ideologically useful to early gay and lesbian activists who argued that gay men and lesbians were a substantial minority of the population who deserved rights equal to those held by heterosexuals. Eventually, Kinsey's claims about the prevalence of same-sex sexual behavior would "provide[] ideological ammunition" for gay and lesbian rights activists in the 1970s.[11]

Alfred Charles Kinsey was born in Hoboken, New Jersey on June 23, 1894. In keeping with his father Alfred Seguine Kinsey's wishes that he would become an engineer, Kinsey spent two years studying engineering at the Stevens Institute before enrolling in Bowdoin College in 1914. After graduating from Bowdoin in 1916 with a degree in biology and psychology, he enrolled in the Bussey Institute at Harvard and began his graduate studies in Biology, and found that his greatest research interest at that time was the taxonomy of gall wasps. In 1920, he

---

[10] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 34.
[11] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 37.

accepted a position as assistant professor of zoology at Indiana University.[12]

Kinsey began his studies and professional career at a time when taxonomy was divided into two schools of thought. The majority of taxonomists during this period assigned specimens to existing categories, overlooking small variations in groups. Unlike these "lumpers," a minority of "splitter" taxonomists insisted on creating new species classifications based on small variations. The latter school of thought was informed by Darwin's ideas that diversity was normative and that "species had no fixed essences, only a range of variations."[13] As a student of taxonomist William Morton Wheeler at the Bussey Institute, Kinsey was taught to embrace the theories of Charles Darwin, who argued that "monstrosities cannot be separated by any clear line of distinction from mere variations."[14] It was this approach to taxonomy that informed his research on gall wasps, and later, human sexuality.[15]

Kinsey was thrilled to find that out of the millions of galls wasps he studied, "*not one* was the same."[16] As a result of his fascination with this variation, Kinsey found it necessary to catalogue and categorize a vast number of wasps in detail. His research method was to amass as large a population as possible in order to document the diversity of the wasps.[17] Kinsey's approach was in part a reaction to his frustration with taxonomists who made generalizations based on very small samples.[18] In gathering his samples, Kinsey "produced a thorough

[12] Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *Alfred C. Kinsey: Sex the Measure of All Things: A Biography* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), 3, 27-28, 35, 39-41, 51.
[13] James Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Public/Private Life* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997), 145-146.
[14] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species: A Facsimilie of the First Edition,* 6th printing (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1964, 1981), 8.
[15] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 145-47; Gathorne-Hardy, *Sex the Measure of All Things,* 102-103.
[16] Gathorne-Hardy, *Sex the Measure of All Things*, 100.
[17] Janice M. Irvine, *Disorders of Desire: Sex and Gender in Modern American Sexology* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990), 41; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 58.
[18] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 203.

taxonomy of almost an entire genus."[19] The research methodology and ideology that characterized his work with gall wasps – cataloguing an entire "population," interest in finding diversity and difference, and the assumption of natural variation – were to inform his approach to his most famous publications on human sexuality.

Scholars cite the marriage class that Kinsey was appointed to teach at Indiana University in 1938 as the precipitating event that led Kinsey to switch his research focus from gall wasps to human sexuality. Although his biographer James Jones has traced Kinsey's interest in sex research prior to this moment, Kinsey's marriage class was where he was confronted by student questions which he could not answer.[20] When he turned to the available literature in an attempt to locate answers to his students' questions, he found that only a small amount of research had been conducted on human sexuality. The studies that had been conducted used sample sizes which Kinsey considered to be too small. Additionally, he believed that most literature on sexuality was concerned with moral imperatives rather than scientific objectivity. Kinsey's experience with the marriage course led him to conclude that a large-scale scientific study of human sexuality was needed in order to obtain enough relevant information to answer the types of questions his students were asking. It was from his students in that class that he began to collect the first case histories that he would use in his 1948 and 1953 publications.[21] Choosing Clyde Martin, Wardell Pomeroy, and Paul Gebhard as his main research teammates, Kinsey gained funding from the Rockefeller foundation to begin the largest survey of American sexuality that had yet been conducted.[22]

Among one of Kinsey's most controversial claims in the Kinsey Reports was that same-

[19] Gathorne-Hardy, *Sex the Measure of All Things*, 103.
[20] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 309.
[21] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 36-37.
[22] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 414, 500.

sex sexual behavior was practiced among many different types of people in much greater numbers than had previously been estimated.[23] Kinsey wrote that he and his research team "were totally unprepared to find such incidence data" of same-sex sexual behavior.[24] He noted that "homosexual histories are to be found in every age group, in every social level, in every conceivable occupation, in cities and on farms, and in the most remote areas of the country."[25] This revelation as well as his belief that "one sexual outlet was as good as another and that homosexuality was not only an acceptable outlet but represented only behavior and not a type of person" put him in contrast with a previous generation of sexologists and psychologists.[26] Instead of documenting types of people, he was documenting types of behaviors; and according to Kinsey, same-sex sexual behavior was not confined to a tiny fringe of the population.

Kinsey used orgasm as the unit with which to measure the type and frequency of sexual "outlets" of his interview subjects. Thirty-seven percent of the white American men and thirteen percent of the white American women reported same-sex sexual outlets.[27] Fifty percent of the white men and twenty-eight percent of the white women had experienced "homosexual response."[28] Four percent of the white men and between one and three percent of the white women practiced exclusively same-sex sexual behavior in their adult lives.[29] Kinsey believed that although more research was needed, these estimates were accurate approximations of American sexual behavior.

In his reports, Kinsey argued against the notion that "every individual is innately – inherently – either heterosexual or homosexual," and that these sexual categories constituted

[23] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 35.
[24] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 625.
[25] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin. *Human Male*, 627.
[26] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 53.
[27] Alfred C. Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 475.
[28] Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 474.
[29] Ibid., 474; Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 656.

"two very distinct types" of people.[30] Instead, Kinsey posited that most people's sexuality existed on a 0 to 6 scale, with "0" indicating exclusively opposite-sex sexual behavior and psychic responses and "6" indicating exclusively same-sex sexual behavior and psychic responses. Numbers 1 through 5 represented a gradation of behavior and responses between the opposite-sex and same-sex sexual extremes.[31] Kinsey believed that, given different social norms, many more people would fall between 0 and 6:

> If homosexual activity persists on as large a scale as it does, in the face of the very considerable public sentiment against it…there seems some reason for believing that such activity would appear in the histories of a much larger portion of the population if there were no social restraints.[32]

In arguing that social restraints inhibited people's sexual expression, he suggested that bisexuality was innate. Kinsey's ideology was therefore based in ideas of biological determinism as well as social conditioning.[33]

Using his findings, Kinsey argued that same-sex sexual behavior was not "rare" "abnormal," or "unnatural," nor was it evidence of "neuroses or even psychoses"; in other words, it was not a disorder or disease.[34] Locating same-sex sexual behavior within a framework of "natural" sexuality, Kinsey argued that same-sex sexual behavior, like opposite-sex sexual behavior, was "an expression of capacities that are basic in the human animal."[35] Even though Kinsey's work was not without its biases towards heterosexual marriage, Kinsey used his reports to argue for more understanding towards and tolerance of same-sex sexual behavior, especially with regards to the elimination of sodomy laws and the military's policies against gay men and

---

[30] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 637.
[31] Ibid., 638-641.
[32] Ibid., 659-660.
[33] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 45-51.
[34] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 659.
[35] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 46; Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 666.

lesbians in uniform.[36] Kinsey believed that he had exposed a gap between American society's supposed values and people's actual behavior, and that his findings necessitated the re-conceptualization of these values.[37]

Some future gay and lesbian rights activists would reference Kinsey's theory about innate bisexuality to argue that everyone had the potential to engage in same-sex sexual behavior. However, this aspect of Kinsey's sexual ideology would go unmentioned in the public rhetoric of the gay and lesbian rights movement as it solidified its identity politics in the 1970s and 1980s. Many activists who claimed to speak for the gay and lesbian rights movement would cite Kinsey in order to argue that sexual identities *were* innate, binary, and unchanging – a point which Kinsey argued *against*. However, whether activists used Kinsey to argue for sexual fluidity or binary sexual identities, Kinsey's most important ideological legacy to the gay and lesbian rights movement was his conclusion that same-sex sexual behavior was practiced among a substantial minority of the population, and that individuals who practiced this behavior could be found in every segment of society.

Kinsey contended that if he measured his subject as a scientist, he could create objective, value-free research about human sexuality. Kinsey's assertion that his work was objective was ideologically linked to his belief in natural variation. Because his goal was to catalogue as many different types of sexual behaviors as are practiced, rather than explicitly condemn certain behaviors while condoning others, he believed that he placed no value judgment upon his findings. Sexology historian Janice Irvine has pointed out that for his era, "Kinsey's claim to objectivity was…quite radical" considering that most sex literature during that period imposed

---

[36] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 55; Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 663-666.
[37] John Bancroft, introduction to *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, by Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, and Paul H. Gebhard (Boomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1953, 1998) h.

pathologizing labels on same-sex sexual behavior or reinforced heterosexuality as normative.[38] Additionally, his goal to appear nonjudgmental or encouraging of the interviewees' sexual histories "undoubtedly gave people permission to reveal their deepest secrets, which other researchers may have underestimated."[39] Rather than asking whether a person had engaged in a certain type of behavior, Kinsey's team began each question by asking when they had first engaged in certain behaviors. The goal was to assume that a person had done everything so that they would feel more comfortable sharing their experiences. Furthermore, Kinsey's research team's policy was to respond to case histories in a way that they considered either neutral or positive, but never negative.[40] "Objectivity," however, has its own ideology. The belief that one has an objective viewpoint makes one blind to the subjective factors that inform one's opinions and world view. Kinsey's position as a white, educated, middle-class male professor married to a female professional informed how important he believed certain categories of difference were to creating a study of American sexuality.[41]

Kinsey broke his male data down by factors such as race, education, occupation, social level, and "urban rural, rural, [or] mixed backgrounds."[42] Based on his method of large population size, he concluded that he did not have enough data to make thorough generalizations about some of his interviewee groups. Of the 6,300 males that Kinsey interviewed, 5,300 were white and 1,000 were classified as "Negroes" and "other races."[43] Kinsey explained that "the Negro sample, while of some size, is not sufficient for making analyses comparable to those made here for the white males."[44] Absent from his studies, his African American male and

[38] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 37.
[39] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 58.
[40] Ibid., 57; *Kinsey*, dir. and prod. by Barak Goodman and John Maggio.
[41] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 37.
[42] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 5.
[43] Ibid., 5.
[44] Ibid., 6-7.

female data would not be published in full until 1979. As Janice Irvine has noted, this absence has meant that the "most comprehensive sex research ever published, which has been used for decades to generalize and form conclusions about people's sexual activity…is based exclusively on whites."[45] Similarly, Kinsey claimed that he did not have enough data to make substantial generalizations about male factory workers, manual laborers, and "the rural population."[46]

Although Kinsey called attention to the 1,000 non-white interviews he did not use in *SBHM*, there is no mention of the women of color that he interviewed and did not include in *SBHF*. The study opens by saying that just as the first volume was based upon 5,300 white males, the 1953 female volume was based on data from 5,940 white females.[47] Though "Negro, histories" and "Race-cultural groups" appeared in the index of the male volume, neither of those terms appeared in the index of the female volume.[48] By not discussing why he did not use his interviews with non-white women, Kinsey presented his information as if he had no data on women of color. Although race was removed as a category of analysis, Kinsey still analyzed his female data along lines of education, occupation, rural-urban location, and geographic origin.[49] Similar to his male study, he concluded that "generalizations reached in the present volume are least likely to be applicable" to "laboring groups," "all rural groups," and those without higher education who had less than or equal to a high school education.[50]

Kinsey's method of sampling and his blindness about race and class went hand-in-hand. Kinsey's access to certain populations was dependent on establishing contact with a person in that population. The largest portion of his interviews came from the northeastern part of the

---

[45] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 43.
[46] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 6.
[47] Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 3.
[48] Ibid., 830,835; Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 798, 801.
[49] Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 31-35.
[50] Ibid., 36.

United States, with another large portion coming from the state where Kinsey began his study, Indiana.[51] However, it was not just the regional location but also the social and racial make-up of his research team that influenced what contacts he was able to make. Kinsey purposefully chose Martin, Pomeroy, and Gebhard for his research team because they, like him, were "male, heterosexual, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants" with a doctorate or a medical degree.[52] Rather than considering that a member of a community would be most comfortable if interviewed by someone from his or her community, Kinsey argued that white male married interviewers would interfere as little as possible with the interview process.[53]

In his reports, Kinsey did not directly address how the race, class, and educational level of his interview subjects influenced the contacts that he and his research team were able to establish. Kinsey's status as a college professor, for example, made organizations like fraternities, sororities, and other student groups easily accessible populations.[54] This meant that many easily-obtainable histories came from educated young people, most of whom were white and middle-class. In his reports, Kinsey noted this problem without directly identifying the cause: "[p]ractically all of the contacts at lower levels…have depended upon introductions made by persons who had previously contributed their own histories"[55] This statement is a vague reference to the fact that Kinsey and his white, middle-class teammates did not have enough contacts with people in "lower levels." Furthermore, Kinsey's perception of who came from these "lower levels" was skewed by his own background. In a 1994 interview, Gebhard explained:

Kinsey was having trouble getting people with less than a high-school education, and he

---

[51] Ibid., 36-37.
[52] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 43-44.
[53] Ibid., 44.
[54] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 38-39.
[55] Ibid., 38.

> discovered that the prisons were full of them. His feeling was that they were pretty representative of that social group anyway, because he really believed that, for grammar school educated people, part of their culture was going to jail.[56]

Because Kinsey did not use probability sampling and because only he and his team established contacts with their interviewees or interviewee groups, the vast majority of his data was drawn from people who, like Kinsey, were educated, white, and middle-class.

A 1948 review of his first volume by the ASA praised Kinsey's first study and the ways in which it had improved on previous sex studies through large sampling, interview techniques, and statistical analysis. The ASA's one major critique was that he did not use probability sampling, making it less credible to extrapolate the results to the general American public.[57] In this type of sample, participants are randomly selected for a survey so that everyone has an equal chance of being chosen. This method aims to remove a researcher's selection bias in order to get the most representative results. Kinsey was upset by the ASA's critique of his methods and "dismissed all criticism of his work as prudish, even though most academic reviews were positive except for criticism of his sample."[58]

When Kinsey began his research in 1938, probability sampling was still a relatively new approach that was gaining acceptance. In his female volume, Kinsey explained that he did not use probability sampling because he did not believe that he could obtain enough participants who were willing to answer such personal questions about their sexual behavior through random sampling.[59] Because of this, Kinsey's "respondents consisted of people who crossed his path, plus what he called 100 percent samples"[60] Rather than interviewing a randomly selected sample from a population, his approach was to always conduct as many interviews as possible and full

---

[56] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 51.
[57] Ibid., 58; *Kinsey*, dir. and prod. by Barak Goodman and John Maggio.
[58] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 58.
[59] Kinsey et al., *Human Female*, 25.
[60] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 58.

populations when possible. Kinsey believed that obtaining one hundred percent participation from a diverse number of groups would be the best way to document the diversity of sexual behavior.[61] Research team member Paul Gebhard has stated that the team often relied on peer pressure within groups to convince everyone to participate in their research.[62] Despite critiques of Kinsey's reports, his studies were used as a reference point for discussions of American sexual behavior during the late 1940s and 1950s.

In 1948, the *Los Angeles Times* advertised *SBHM* as "the most comprehensive, scientific study ever made on the subject, it is a presentation of great social impact – of most profound significance."[63] Although both the male and the female volumes made the best seller list, Wardell Pomeroy of the original Kinsey research team has described the books as "the least-read bestsellers ever."[64] Rather than reading the dry, dense, scientific volumes, many Americans received information about the Kinsey reports through the media, which chose to highlight or not mention certain aspects of the reports. Often excluded from news articles was Kinsey's data on same-sex sexual behavior. The combined effect of selective press summaries caused particular Kinsey findings to become "accepted truths even among those who never heard of Kinsey."[65]

Kinsey's male and female volumes were received very differently by the news media. In contrast to its sober advertisements for the male volume, a 1953 *Los Angeles Times* advertisement for *SBHF* promised that "the book you've been waiting for" contained "the whole truth about these vital questions: How many brides are virgins?...Are women more or less easily aroused sexually than men?...and many others."[66] Although the male volume was not without

[61] Ibid., 58; Public Broadcasting Service, "American Experience: Kinsey," accessed February 29, 2012. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kinsey/; *Kinsey*, dir. and prod. by Barak Goodman and John Maggio.
[62] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 236.
[63] Display Ad 43," *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1948, D4.
[64] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 60.
[65] Ibid., 60.
[66] "Display Ad 32," *Los Angeles Times,* August 23, 1953, 33.

controversy, it was upheld as an important scientific work much more than the female volume. In the immediate post-war period amidst anxieties about shifting race and gender norms, "Americans found it disconcerting to learn that their growing anxiety about declining [white] female morality had some basis in fact," causing some to be "distinctly hostile to Kinsey's portrait of [white] female sexuality."[67] Throughout the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, it continued to be Kinsey's data on male same-sex sexual behavior or a combination of the male and female data – but rarely the female data on its own – that was most often cited in newspapers and periodicals.

The reaction of the African American periodicals *Jet* and *Ebony* to the exclusion of black women in Kinsey's female volume were necessarily complicated.[68] A year before the female volume was published, the weekly gossip magazine *Jet* published the article "Sex Habits of Negro Women," which talked favorably of Kinsey's upcoming report on female sexuality.[69] The article claimed that Kinsey's brief comments on black male sexuality in *SBHM* had suggested that the white perception of African Americans as hypersexual was not founded, and sexual differences cut along lines of class rather than race. Because Kinsey disclosed that he had found few differences between the black and white women he had interviewed, the article suggested that the inclusion of black women in *SBHF* would prove "that the super-sexuality of Negro women is just another fiction."[70] When Kinsey did not follow through by publishing any data on black women, "the first 'mass circulation' black magazine" *Ebony*, which targeted the middle-class, published an article titled "Why Negro Women are Not in the Kinsey Report."[71] The

---

[67] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 707.
[68] Leisa D. Meyer, "Strange Love": Searching for Sexual Subjectivities in Black Print Popular Culture during the 1950s," unpublished paper cited with permission of author, 7
[69] Meyer, "Strange Love," 4; "Sex Habits of Negro Women," *Jet*, January 10, 1952, 21.
[70] Meyer, "Strange Love," 7-8; "Sex Habits of Negro Women," 21.
[71] Meyer, "Strange Love," 4; "Why Negro Women are Not in the Kinsey Report," *Ebony* 8, October 1953, 111.

article speculated that not enough middle-class African American women were willing to be interviewed by Kinsey because they were sensitive to stereotypes about black female sexuality and therefore unwilling to disclose such information.[72] *Jet* articles remained interested in finding data on black female sexuality throughout the 1950s. In the hopes that such data would counter racist and sexist stereotypes, *Jet* continued to report on efforts to survey the sexual behavior of African American men and women as well the inclusion of African American women in the Kinsey Institute's *Pregnancy, Birth, and Abortion* study.[73]

Kinsey's conclusions about the "normalcy" of same-sex sexual behavior were ideologically influential to many gay and lesbian communities in the wake of *SBHM* and *SBHF*'s publication. Historian John D'Emilio observes that by "revealing the wide divergence between ideals and actual behavior, [Kinsey] informed ordinary men and women that their private 'transgressions' marked them as neither deviant nor exceptional."[74] Donald Webster Cory's 1951 book *The Homosexual in America* drew on Kinsey to argue that gay men and lesbians were "an oppressed minority."[75] Cory's, however, was a minority position in using Kinsey's data to argue so explicitly and publicly for gay and lesbian rights during the late 1940s and 1950s.

In the 1950s, promoting an ideally imagined white, middle-class, heteronormative American home was seen as a way of securing America against communism.[76] In this political and cultural climate, "homosexuality itself became a mark of potential subversive activity."[77] Because of his professional association with "homosexuality," Kinsey was accused of aiding

---

[72] Meyer, "Strange Love," 9-10; "Why Negro Women are Not in the Kinsey Report," 111.
[73] "Forecast," *Jet,* January 14, 1954, 11; "New York Beat," *Jet,* January 28, 1954, 64; "Latest Kinsey Report Has 1st Negro Data," *Jet,* January 23, 1958, 20; "New Kinsey Report Ready for Public in Mid-May," *Jet,* March 13, 1958, 22.
[74] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 37.
[75] John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, 2nd ed. (USA: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1998), 292.
[76] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (US: Basic Books, 1988), 19.
[77] May, *Homeward Bound*, 13.

communism and his reports were provided "as examples of scientific research that produced 'extremely grave' social effects" in a 1954 congressional investigation pursued by Representative B. Carroll Reece (R-TN).[78] This investigation was part of what lost Kinsey the financial support of the Rockefeller Foundation.[79] Despite the accusation that Kinsey was a communist and that his reports caused negative social effects, the Kinsey Reports influenced the thinking of Congressmen during the late 1940s and 1950s who desired to purge both political and sexual perverts from the federal government.

In response to Senator Joseph McCarthy's (R-WI) accusations that communists had infiltrated the State Department in 1950, Under Secretary John Peurifoy testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee that the State Department did not employ communists.[80] He did, however, admit that 91 persons deemed to be "homosexual" and "security risks" had been recently fired.[81] Shortly after Peurifoy's testimony, Lieutenant Roy Blick of the Washington, D.C. vice squad testified that of the 5,000 gay men and lesbians that he estimated lived in the capital, 3,750 held government positions. Both of these testimonies were reported to the public by the news media and gave homophobic Congressmen the "evidence" they needed to argue that the federal government was infiltrated with gay men and lesbians. The subsequent purges that resulted from this have become known as the Lavender Scare.[82]

Some medical professionals and scientists charged that Blick's estimates were incorrect because Kinsey's data suggested that an even higher proportion of government employees

---

[78] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 36; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 59; "REECE, Brazilla Carroll, (1889 - 1961)," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, accessed March 17, 2012, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=R000108.
[79] Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 737.
[80] David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1; "McCARTHY, Joseph Raymond, (1908 - 1957)," Biographical Director of the United States Congress, accessed March 17, 2012, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=M000315
[81] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 1.
[82] Ibid., 2, 79-80.

practiced same-sex sexual behavior. In his book on the investigations, David K. Johnson argues that the "[d]ebate over the truth and usefulness of Kinsey's findings on male homosexuality remained a central feature of the Lavender Scare."[83] While John D'Emilio has posited that these Congressmen were more directly influenced by Kinsey's statistics, Johnson contends that Lavender Scare investigators like Senator Kenneth Wherry (R-NE) accepted Blick's lower estimates and denied Kinsey's higher estimates because Wherry rejected the idea that gay men and lesbians made up a substantial minority of the population.[84] According to Johnson, such an assessment would have made the presence of gay men and lesbians in the federal government a normative occurrence which could not be remediated through purges.[85]

Regardless of whether certain proponents of the Lavender Scare agreed or disagreed with Kinsey's estimates, these investigators sought to eliminate gay men and lesbians from federal civil service positions while using arguments that were strikingly similar to those made by Kinsey. In *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault wrote:

> We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies.[86]

Kinsey used his claim that the practice of same-sex sexual behavior was far more frequent than had previously been assumed to argue for tolerance of this behavior. However, his conclusions on the frequency of same-sex sexual behavior did not contain an inherently pro-gay and lesbian rights argument. Using points similar to those that future gay and lesbian activists would employ in the 1970s, these U.S. Congressmen used estimates of gay men and lesbians "in order to argue

[83] Ibid., 88.
[84] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 42; Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 88-89; "WHERRY, Kenneth Spicer, (1892 - 1951)," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, accessed March 17, 2012, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=W000344.
[85] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 88-89.
[86] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York, NY: Random House Inc., 1978), 100.

that the problem [of homosexuality] was far more extensive and difficult to attack than they had previously thought" due to the fact "that homosexual behavior was widespread, that homosexuals came from all walks of life, and that they did not conform in appearance or mannerism to the popular stereotype."[87] The same types of arguments that Kinsey made that would later be echoed in gay and lesbian liberation slogans such as "'We are everywhere'" were also employed in order to restrict the rights of gay men and lesbians during the Lavender Scare purges.[88]

The combination of the "revelations" in the Kinsey Reports and the threat of expulsions promoted by the Lavender Scare created a complex environment for government workers who identified as gay or lesbian. In 1948, superintendent of the Massachusetts Reformatory for Women Miriam Van Waters was charged with "condon[ing] homosexual behavior in prison."[89] As a woman on the government payroll during the Cold War who was suspected of lesbianism, her response to these accusations and the Kinsey Reports were complicated. Although Waters maintained that "homosexual tendencies could be reversed with the aid of psychiatry," she also argued for tolerance, referencing Kinsey's point that same-sex sexual behavior could be "'found in all levels of society.'"[90]

Despite some calls for tolerance, Lavender Scare ideology dominated many of the articles which discussed Kinsey's same-sex data. Citing Kinsey's surprise at the percentage of same-sex sexual behavior that he found in his subjects, Ralph H. Major, Jr. wrote that Americans needed to be more aware and less apathetic about the problem of "homosexuality" in his 1950 article in

[87] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 42.
[88] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 35.
[89] Estelle Freedman, "Miriam Van Waters and the Burning of the Letters," in *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, 7th ed., ed. by Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, Cornelia Hughes Dayton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) 501.
[90] Freedman, "Miriam Van Waters," 503.

Coronet, a smaller version of the popular "Magazine for Men" known as *Esquire*.[91] Major's desire to publically discuss a topic he claimed was previously "acknowledged only in whispers" mirrored the metaphors about breaking a silence that would later be used by gay and lesbian rights activists.[92] Unlike these activists, Major sought to encourage discussion of same-sex sexual behavior in order to decrease it, writing that:

> Not since the see-no-evil-hear-no-evil attitude toward syphilis has there been such an example of public refusal to grapple with a serious problem – in this case, the problem of homosexuality.[93]

Major's syphilis metaphor was not accidental. The idea that "homosexuality" was a disease that needed to be contained was part of the Lavender Scare ideology. The association of same-sex sexual behavior with disease would persist into the 1970s when gay activists argued against a "'sick theory'" and psychologists debated about the definition of "homosexuality" as a psychiatric disorder then listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.[94] The association of "homosexuality" with disease would take on new meanings in the 1980s with the outbreak of AIDS, a deadly epidemic which would cause health officials to turn to Kinsey's data in an attempt to understand the disease's spread among gay and bisexual men.[95]

Although Kinsey's findings on same-sex sexuality were most publically employed by those who sought to curtail same-sex sexual behavior or gay and lesbian rights, the Kinsey Reports were ideologically influential to early gay and lesbian activists who called themselves "homophiles." During the late 1940s and early 1950s, both the first and the second Kinsey

---

[91] Ralph H. Major Jr., "New Moral Menace to Our Youth," *Coronet* 28, no. 5, September 1950, 101-108; "Esquire-Coronet," *Time* 30, no. 12, September 20, 1937, 76.
[92] Major, "New Moral Menace," 101.
[93] Ibid., 101.
[94] Judy Klemesrud, "The Disciples of Sappho, Updated," *New York Times,* March 28, 1971, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, SM38; "The A.P.A. Ruling on Homosexuality: The Issue Is Subtle, The Debate Still On," *New York Times*, December 23, 1973, 109.
[95] Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox, "The Contemporary Historiography of AIDS," *Journal of Social History* 23, no. 2 (Winter, 1989): 309.

Reports were known about and widely read by two homophile organizations: the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitus. Historian John D'Emilio has argued that before the gay and lesbian rights movement could take shape, "activists had not only to mobilize a constituency; first they had to create one."[96] Mattachine Society founder Henry (or Harry) Hay "was one of the first to argue that homosexual men and women constituted a minority group."[97] During Mattachine meetings, members discussed what a "homosexual" was, the concept of "homosexuals" as a minority, and whether there was or should be "homosexual culture."[98] Borrowing from Marx, the founders settled on the concept that gay men and lesbians were a substantial minority who were unaware of their collective status because of a false consciousness, which results when "the dominant ideology achieves compliance by convincing subordinate groups that the social order in which they live is natural and inevitable."[99] The Mattachine Society theorized that the first step in a homophile political movement was to change not heterosexuals' view of "homosexuals," but rather how gay men and lesbians viewed themselves.[100] The Mattachine Society's definition of "homosexuals" as a minority population was therefore at first a means of self-identification.

Two years after the publication of *SBHF*, a group of women in San Francisco decided to create a social club for lesbians.[101] However, the Daughters of Bilitus (DOB) grew to be more than a social club. DOB member Beth Ferguson wrote that, like the Mattachine Society, the organization was concerned with "'the fight for understanding of the homophile minority.'"[102]

---

[96] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 5.
[97] Marcia M. Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*, (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2006), xxxv.
[98] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics,* 58, 65, 69.
[99] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 72; D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 65-66.
[100] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 66.
[101] Gallo, *Different Daughters*, xliv.
[102] Ibid., 27.

They embraced social science and the work of Kinsey as a way of arguing that gay men and lesbians were not sick or mentally ill and that they represented a substantial minority of the population.[103] The first issue of their publication *The Ladder* paid tribute to Kinsey and encouraged other social scientists who wished "'to further knowledge of the Lesbian'" to contact the DOB so that they could assist in the project.[104] Although they wanted "'experts'" to conduct research on gay men and lesbians in order to convince the public that "gay women and men were no more abnormal than anyone else," the DOB also attempted to conduct its own surveys and listed such research as an organizational goal in their Statement of Purpose.[105] While "[m]ost of the early DOB activists enthusiastically read the 1953 Kinsey Report," they believed that "research by lesbians about their own lives would prove even more valuable."[106] According to queer historian Jennifer Terry, "'[s]cientific surveys became a strategy for visibility.'"[107]

Kinsey's most significant ideological legacy would be his claim that a substantial minority of the American population engaged in same-sex sexual behavior and that individuals who practiced this behavior could be found in every segment of society. During the 1970s, the high incidences of same-sex sexual behavior that Kinsey found were used as evidencing basis for arguments by gay and lesbian activists. Two decades after Kinsey used his findings to argue for tolerance toward same-sex sexual behavior as well as a revision of sodomy laws and military policies, gay and lesbian activists would reference his reports when discussing gay and lesbian rights, a Virginia sodomy law trial, and the U.S. Air Force's policy on gay men and lesbians.[108] Kinsey, however, "lost control of the results of his study as they lived on after" his death in

---

[103] Ibid., 46.
[104] Ibid., 28.
[105] Ibid., 46.
[106] Ibid., 47.
[107] Ibid., 46.
[108] Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Human Male*, 659-666; Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller, "Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy," *New York Times*, May 15, 1976, 20; Martin Duberman, "The Case of the Gay Sergeant," *New York Times*, November 9, 1975, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, SM5.

1956.[109] This was perhaps most explicitly demonstrated in the 1970s when gay and lesbian activists created an estimate from Kinsey that became arguably more famous than any of the statistics printed in the Kinsey Reports.

[109] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 59; Jones, *A Public/Private Life*, 766.

Part Two

During the 1970s, Kinsey's claim that a substantial portion of the population practiced same-sex sexual behavior was considered politically useful by many gay and lesbian activists. As historian John D'Emilio argues, early leaders of the Mattachine Society believed that they needed to "create" a minority of gay and lesbian people for a political movement to emerge and be successful.[110] Twenty years later, gay and lesbian activists in organizations such as the National Gay Task Force continued this line of thinking, believing that the "size of the gay population was critical for determining whether being gay constituted a normal identity."[111] Because Kinsey measured behavior instead of identity and because many prominent gay and lesbian activist organizations adopted political stances based on sexual identity, Kinsey's findings on behavior became transformed into the statistic that 10 percent of the population, or 20 million Americans, were gay and lesbian. This 10 percent figure was employed in public discourse by various activists belonging to what can be broadly understood as the gay and lesbian rights movement.

Between the first homophile organizations in the 1950s and the gay and lesbian activism of the 1970s, the African American civil rights and women's liberation movements established a new kind of identity politics. The black power philosophy "black is beautiful" argued that "natural" African American identity was something to be celebrated. The women's liberation theory "the personal is political" held that experiences which had previously been considered private and individual were actually collective, and necessitated political action. The concept that a stigmatized identity could be celebrated and that matters as personal as sexuality could be the focus of political organization was extremely influential to the development of gay and

---

[110] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, 4-5.
[111] "Task Force History," National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, accessed February 27, 2012, http://www.thetaskforce.org/about_us/history; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell,* 2.

lesbian politics in the 1970s.[112] Drawing inspiration from "black is beautiful," homophile organizer Frank Kameny coined "gay is good" in 1969.[113] Just as the civil rights and women's liberation movements were based around racial and gender identities, many gay and lesbian rights organizations began to solidify their identity politics during the 1970s by basing their activism and liberationist discourse around gay and lesbian identities rather than same-sex sexual behavior.[114]

What is known as the gay and lesbian rights movement was not a uniform body of activist thought; rather, it was multifaceted, made up of many different organizations with different political goals. One strain of thought within gay and lesbian activism was gay liberation. Organizations like the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) referred to themselves as "'revolutionary,'" writing in their statement of purpose that "'complete sexual liberation for all people cannot come about unless existing social institutions are abolished.'"[115] According to historians John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, "gay liberation borrowed heavily from the new literature of radical feminists" to argue that "the oppression of homosexuals stemmed from a rigidly enforced system of heterosexual supremacy that supported the primacy of the nuclear family and the dichotomous sex roles within it."[116] Instead of arguing for the inclusion of gay men and lesbians in the military, gay liberationists protested the Vietnam War.[117] Historian Jennifer Brier has also argued that a commitment to viewing gay and lesbian sex as healthy was central to gay liberation thought and discourse.[118]

---

[112] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 320-321.
[113] Frank Kameny, "Gay is Good." In *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, ed. Marc Blasius and Shane Phelan (New York: Routledge, 1997), 374.
[114] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 320-321.
[115] Ibid., 321.
[116] Ibid., 321.
[117] Ibid., 321.
[118] Jennifer Brier "Infectious Ideas: U.S Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis" (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 15-19.

Similar to Kinsey, many GLF members challenged the binary between "heterosexual" and "homosexual." Like Kinsey, many also suggested that everyone had the potential to engage in same-sex sexual behavior. However, this critique came during a decade when "coming out" – revealing one's same-sex sexual behavior by publicly acknowledging a gay or lesbian identity – became a central political tenet of the gay and lesbian rights movement. Gay and lesbian activists considered "coming out" to be a concrete way of establishing visibility for gay men and lesbians as a normative American minority population.[119] However, the centrality of "coming out" in the developing gay and lesbian rights movement alienated people who did not view their sexual behavior as a necessary source of identity. Furthermore, the emphasis that the ritual of "coming out" placed on the revelation of a gay or lesbian identity undermined gay liberation's critique of binary sexual orientations.[120] Although the rhetoric of gay liberation prevailed into the 1980s, it became overshadowed in the late 1970s by the carefully-structured identity politics of prominent gay and lesbian rights organizations like the NGTF.[121]

The identity politics articulated by the gay and lesbian rights movement often made women and people of color invisible. Queer historian Horacio N. Roque Ramírez has written that the essentialization of gay and lesbian identity as white and African American and Latino identities as heterosexual created false divides between these communities:

> While the social and protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s professed racial and gender inclusion and all-round liberation from all forms of oppression and exclusion, essentialist practices were the norm: the Black Power and Chicano movements were essentially male-controlled, patriarchal, and homophobic; and the feminist and gay and lesbian movements were overwhelmingly white and middle-class.[122]

Although "gay" and "lesbian" identities were subject to a number of debates in different

---

[119] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 322.
[120] Ibid., 322-323.
[121] Ibid., 323-325.
[122] Horacio N. Roque Ramírez, "Memory and Mourning: Living Oral History with Queer Latinos and Latinas in San Francisco," in *Oral History and Public Memories*, ed. Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (Philadelphia, Temple University Press: 2008), 167.

communities and organizations, organizations led by white gay men dominated what was understood as the gay and lesbian rights movement. Some of the white men in these organizations were upset that people of color and/or white women were made invisible through the "increasingly mainstream" identity politics of the movement.[123] Despite this dissent, these organizations defined who "gays" and "lesbians" were by focusing their political rhetoric on combating stereotypes about white gay men.

The political rhetoric of the mainstream gay and lesbian rights movement also ignored the differences between lesbian and gay identity. Between the founding of the Daughters of Bilitus in 1955 and Robin Morgan's "Lesbian and Feminism: Synonyms or Contradictions?" speech at the 1973 West Coast Lesbian Conference, the place of lesbians within the gay and lesbian rights movement and the women's liberation movement was a contested and divisive issue.[124] Although lesbians had participated in feminist activism from the movement's beginnings, lesbian identity had become increasingly important to feminist politics.[125] Historian Marcia M. Gallo has posited that "opinions on what constituted 'correct' lesbian feminist behavior changed rapidly and diverged widely."[126] While organizations like the DOB remained integrationist, some lesbians adopted a politics of separatism from men and/or heterosexual women.[127] The nuances of these discussions did not find their way into much of the mainstream media coverage of feminist and lesbian activism, which frequently associated feminists with lesbianism as a way of slandering them or used the public non-heterosexuality of feminist

[123] Martin Duberman, *Midlife Queer: Autobiography of a Decade, 1971-1981* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 58.
[124] Introduction to "Lesbianism and Feminism: Synonyms or Contradictions?" by Robin Morgan, in *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, ed. Mark Blasius and Shane Phelan (New York: Routledge, 1997), 424; Gallo, *Different Daughters*, 186-87.
[125] Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Durham: Duke University Press: 2007), 8.
[126] Gallo, *Different Daughters*, 186.
[127] Ibid., 187.

activists like Kate Millett as a way of discrediting them.[128]

Just as the politics of claiming “lesbian” as an identity were not the same as the politics of claiming “gay,” the politics of articulating these identities were not the same for black and white Americans. Because of the distinct symbolic meanings given to black and white sexuality, African American gays and lesbians faced a different set of raced-based stereotypes than their white counterparts. Referencing Kinsey’s claim that about one-third of American men had had at least one same-sex sexual experience, Harvard Medical School associate professor of psychiatry Alvin F. Poussaint wrote in a 1971 issue of *Ebony* that “a few writers, without presenting any proof, have claimed that blacks have a greater incidence of male homosexuality than whites.”[129] Poussaint explained that evidence given for this assumption ranged from the predominance of female-headed African American households to the idea that racism “castrates” African American men.[130] In a 1974 *Ebony* article, sociology professor Robert E. Staples argued that black gay men were more “visible” than black lesbians, commenting that “[d]espite a black male shortage, relatively few black women have joined the community of overt lesbians.”[131]

The stereotypes Poussaint made note of concerning female-headed households and “castrated” black men, as well as Staples’ comment about a “shortage” of black men, had their roots in debates about the legacy of slavery. In 1965, Labor Department Assistant Secretary Daniel Moynihan published a report in which he argued that the legacy of slavery had resulted in a non-normative family structure in which black women were dominant and black men were subordinate. According to Moynihan, this family structure resulted in “‘a tangle of

---

[128] Enke, *Finding the Movement*, 8; Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Times Books, 1994), 228-229.
[129] Alvin F. Poussaint, “Blacks and the Sexual Revolution,” *Ebony*. October 1971, 116.
[130] Poussaint, “Blacks and the Sexual Revolution,” 116.
[131] Robert Staples, “Has the Sexual Revolution Bypassed Blacks?” *Ebony*, April 1974, 112.

pathology.'"[132] The stereotype that African American same-sex sexual behavior was a "pathology" caused by slavery's effects on African American families was one difference between stereotypes about white and African American gay men and lesbians. It was not an assumption that the majority-white led gay and lesbian rights movement focused its political rhetoric on.

During the 1970s, journalists continued to reference Kinsey's study as an important source of sexual knowledge and point of comparison for contemporary studies of sexuality. A 1970 *Psychology Today* survey reported that of their more than 20,000 sex survey respondents, the percentage of men who had had "at least one homosexual experience" – 37 percent – was identical to Kinsey's findings.[133] The *Washington Post* called a 1972 Gallic Sex Report "the French equivalent" of the Kinsey Report and the *Los Angeles Times* dubbed a 1973 study of teenage sexuality "A 'Kinsey Report' on Sex and Today's Teen-ager."[134] Although the Kinsey's Institute for Sex Research continued to publish new material, Kinsey's original reports were still referenced in articles about heterosexual marriage, "sexual permissiveness," laws criminalizing sexual acts, and gay and lesbian behavior.[135] Sexologists also made use of or paid homage to Kinsey. A *Los Angeles Times* article reported that Professor A.M. Svyadoshch had used "statistics from Kinsey and other foreign experts to support his claims" in his 1974 Soviet sex

---

[132] Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985), 166; D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 298-299.
[133] Robert Athanasiou, Phillip Shaver, and Carol Tavris, "Sex," *Psychology Today* 4, no. 2, July 1970, 50.
[134] Jonathan C. Randal, "Myth Debunked in Gallic Sex Report," *Washington Post*, October 31, 1972, B4; Robert C. Sorensen and David Hendin, "A 'Kinsey Report' on Sex and Today's Teen-Ager," *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1973, H1.
[135] Carolyn Banks, "A Double Life: Marriage and the Homosexual Experience," *The Washington Post*, July 14, 1974, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, PO14; Eleanor Blau, "Vatican Reaffirms Policy In Call for Sexual Morality," *New York Times*, January 16, 1976, 61; James J. Kilpatrick, "The Decriminalizing of Some Criminals," *Los Angeles Times,* August 31, 1973 A7; John Barbour, "New Kinsey Report Detects Conservative Sex Trend," *Los Angeles Times,* June 18, 1978, 2, 32.

manual.[136] Later that year, Dr. Walter Alvarez explained that the first issue of the *Homosexual Counseling Journal* was dedicated to Kinsey because he "was a pioneer in the study of the many different forms of sexual behavior of men and women."[137]

In *Disorders of Desire,* sexology historian Janice Irvine argues that Kinsey was foundational to sexologists' quest for legitimacy and respectability in the latter half of the twentieth century. During the 1970s, many journalists considered the Institute for Sex Research (hereafter referred to as the Institute) and the research partners William Masters and Virginia Johnson to be sources of "respectable," scientific sexology. In her 1978 article "Sex Research Has Earned Respectability," medical journalist Jane E. Brody wrote that "[h]uman sexual behavior…is today being scrutinized by an increasingly sophisticated cadre of scientists."[138] Brody linked Kinsey to contemporary sexology by quoting Dr. Richard Green of the International Academy of Sex Research, who said that the work of Kinsey and Masters and Johnson was exceptionally good compared to other twentieth century sexological studies, which had "been naïve and poorly designed."[139] Though Brody wrote at the end of the decade, the "respectability" of sexology was discussed throughout the 1970s. In his 1969 *Psychology Today* article "Sex," sociology professor William Simon claimed that "our increase in knowledge about sex has won acceptance largely because…[of] the zoological commitment of Kinsey, the medical context of Masters and Johnson."[140] Although some members of the scientific community critiqued Masters and Johnson's and the Institute's methods, many journalists and scientific writers viewed them as legitimate research organizations because they studied sexuality from a

[136] "Sex and the Soviet Woman: More Fun Than the British?" *Los Angeles Times*, July 27, 1974, A1.
[137] Walter Alvarez, "Journal Deals with Homosexuals," *Los Angeles Times.* December 1, 1974, E18.
[138] "Jane Brody's Bio," Jane Brody, accessed February 27, 2012, http://www.janebrody.net/bio.html; Jane E. Brody, "Sex Research Has Earned Respectability," *New York Times*, January 8, 1978, E20.
[139] Brody, "Sex Research Has Earned Respectability," E20.
[140] William Simon, "Sex," *Psychology Today* 3, no. 2, July 1969, 23;Eric Nagourney, "William Simon, Sexuality Expert, Dies at 70," *New York Times*, July 29, 2000, http://www.nytimes.com/2000/07/29/us/william-simon-sexuality-expert-dies-at-70.html.

scientific perspective.[141]

Irvine has also contended that Kinsey was “an ideological precursor” to sexologists William Masters and Virginia Johnson. Although Kinsey presented some of his findings on biological response in his Reports, he kept his observational studies of human sexual behavior hidden for fear of losing funding. Beginning in the early 1960s, Masters and Johnson made the study of biological response the focus of their research.[142] Like Kinsey, they believed that sexology had the potential to improve people’s lives and that “good sex” could improve heterosexual marriages.[143] Unlike Kinsey, however, Masters and Johnson were less concerned with same-sex sexual behavior and those who engaged in it. Their conversion or treatment programs for those who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior reflected their belief that individuals should alter their behavior in order to conform to society’s norms – the opposite of what Kinsey had argued.[144] Unlike Masters and Johnson, the Institute for Sex Research that Kinsey founded in 1947 was ideologically consistent with Kinsey’s belief that same-sex sexual behavior was a normative form of sexual expression, and that the existence of this behavior necessitated a change in social norms and laws which stigmatized it.[145]

Irvine explains that during the 1960s, a trend of “humanistic” sexuality emerged from the “scientific” sexology practiced by Masters and Johnson. This trend came from those both inside and outside of sexology who thought that sex research could be useful for personal fulfillment and political activism.[146] Although the Institute could arguably fall within Irvine’s humanistic and scientific sexology categories, the Institute’s work stands out as humanistic in comparison to

[141] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 129, 195, 198-201, 246-249.
[142] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 59, 67.
[143] Ibid., 61.
[144] Ibid., 60-62, 253-254, 256-257.
[145] The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction, “Origin of the Institute,” 1996-2012, accessed February 13, 2012, http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/about/origins.html.
[146] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 105-107.

Masters and Johnson. During the 1970s, data from the Institute was used by people both within and outside of the Institute in order to argue for expanded rights and treatment of gay men and lesbians. In 1971, the Institute concluded that "2,000 to 3,000 servicemen" a year received dishonorable discharge for "homosexuality," and that the military should rethink its policy, which was "unwise, unjust and in essence unenforceable"[147] In 1974, NGTF director and co-founder Bruce Voeller argued against the airing of an episode of the television series *Marcus Welby, M.D.* which portrayed the sexual assault of a teenage boy by an adult man. Voeller opposed the episode because he felt that the crime was portrayed as "'homosexual'" and argued that "the most reliable studies of sex offenses against children, including those published by the Kinsey Institute…have found that child molestation is almost exclusively heterosexual."[148] One of Kinsey's contradictions was that he argued against political lobbying by sexologists while simultaneously using his data to critique sodomy laws and military policies on gay men and lesbians. Similarly, the Institute refused to take a stand on issues like pornography while making public critiques of military policies concerning same-sex sexual behavior. The Institute's humanistic sexology was therefore a continuation of Kinsey's contradictory ideology.[149]

Just as activists made use of contemporary sexology which supported gay and lesbian rights, activists also argued against aspects of sexology which they viewed as homophobic. During the 1970s, Masters and Johnson as well as other conservative sexologists maintained that sex therapy could transform a gay man or lesbian into a heterosexual.[150] These conversion programs reflected a "search for a cure for homosexuality" that had "deep roots in the history of American psychiatry." "Homosexuality" was discussed as a disorder or disease well before the

---

[147] Lawrence Van Gelder, "Armed Forces Assailed On View of Homosexual," *New York Times,* July 19, 1971, 32.
[148] Les Brown, "3 Stations Reject 'Welby' Episode: Homosexual-Rights Groups Fought Molestation Story," *New York Times*, September 28, 1974, 59.
[149] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire,* 39.
[150] Ibid., 250, 253.

American Psychiatric Association listed it as “an official category of mental illness” in its first *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* in 1953. The idea that same-sex sexual behavior was a disorder or disease led psychiatrists of the 1940s to discuss the possibility of a “‘cure.’”[151] Activist political rhetoric which framed same-sex sexual behavior as an aspect of one’s identity rather than a choice was very much influenced by and positioned against the claim that therapy could change a person’s sexual orientation. Gay activists like NGTF director Charles Brydon were aware that Kinsey believed his findings were evidence that sexuality did not reside solely in binary sexual identities. In a 1979 response to a reporter, Brydon referred to Kinsey’s conclusion that sexual response existed on a spectrum. However, he argued that that “‘doesn’t mean you can turn people into one or the other’” through therapy.[152] Brydon’s comments show that he was attuned both to the Kinsey’s findings about sexual fluidity and the trend that was emerging to use the scientific sexology of researchers like Masters and Johnson to legitimize the elimination of same-sex sexual behavior through therapy.

Like Kinsey, Masters and Johnson did not make racial and class diversity a priority in their studies. The volunteer subjects who informed their 1966 publication *Human Sexual Response* and their 1970 work *Human Sexual Inadequacy* were mostly white, upper-middle class, and highly educated.[153] According to Dr. June Dobbs Butts, the first African American to be trained as a therapist at the Masters and Johnson Institute, African Americans were included in the original research study as well as subsequent therapy groups.[154] However, the eleven African American families that Masters and Johnson studied were left out of the publication of their

[151] Ibid., 253.
[152] Laurie Johnson, “Skepticism Is Voiced on Therapy Used to ‘Reverse’ Homosexuality,” *New York Times,* April 18, 1979, A14.
[153] Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 69, 82-83.
[154] Butts, June Dobbs. “Is Homosexuality A Threat to the Black Family?: A frank discussion of that question – and others about the ‘gay’ lifestyle.” *Ebony*, April 1981. 140.

findings in *Human Sexual Response*.[155] Although Kinsey's original African American case studies were published in 1979, sexology research published during this decade continued to focus on the behavior of white Americans.[156]

The continued absence of African Americans from past and contemporary sociology was noted by black medical writers. Alvin Poussaint argued that because there had been little research conducted on African American sexual behavior by the Institute for Sex Research and Masters and Johnson, racist stereotypes still informed what many whites thought of African American sexuality.[157] In his 1973 *Ebony* article "Sex and the Black Middle Class," Robert Staples pointed to Kinsey's limited data on African American sexuality to argue that an increase in research on black sexuality (and especially *middle class* black sexuality) could be used to disprove racist stereotypes that black men and women were hypersexual compared to whites.[158] As they had in the 1950s, *Ebony* articles and editorials continued to argue that more research on black sexuality would be beneficial to combating racist stereotypes about African Americans.

Sociologist Julia A. Erickson has argued that even though contemporary sexologists and members of gay and lesbian communities had conducted studies of same-sex sexual behavior during the 1970s, gay and lesbian activists "made political use of Kinsey's data" from his 1948 and 1953 publications in their "pursuit of identity politics."[159] Although studies on same-sex sexual behavior were conducted, no surveys which presented new estimates about the proportion of same-sex sexual behavior in America were published during the 1970s. With the growth of gay and lesbian rights organizations, Kinsey's claims about the population size of individuals practicing same-sex sexual behavior remained important and frequently referenced sources of

---

[155] Poussaint, "Blacks and the Sexual Revolution," 114; See also Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 81-83.
[156] Butts "Is Homosexuality A Threat to the Black Family?" 139.
[157] Poussaint, "Blacks and the Sexual Revolution," 114, 116.
[158] Robert E. Staples, "Sex and the Black Middle Class." *Ebony*, August 1973, 106.
[159] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 160.

sexual knowledge.

Although some gay activists made arguments based on Kinsey's higher estimates of same-sex sexual behavior during the first half of the decade and some discussed these higher estimates as speculations rather than facts, gay activists like NGTF director Bruce Voeller subverted Kinsey's theory of a spectrum of sexual behavior by clinging to a new average of Kinsey's same-sex sexual data which conflated behavior with identity. This average – that 10 percent of the population was gay and lesbian – was higher than the averages of those who exhibited exclusively same-sex sexual behavior and lower than the averages of those who had had at least one same-sex sexual outlet. Although many gay and lesbian activists, especially those at the beginning of the decade, did not use this statistic, Voeller's interpretation of Kinsey would come to be employed as an easy reference point by the end of the decade.

During the 1970s, gay and lesbian activists and scholars wrote articles in which they cited Kinsey's data on same-sex sexual behavior to argue for an expansion of gay and lesbian rights. New York Mattachine president Michael Kotis asserted in a 1971 *New York Times* article that scientists like Kinsey had demonstrated that "homosexual behavior has existed throughout man's history."[160] Drawing on Kinsey's highest estimates about same-sex sexual behavior and response in men, he argued against what he saw as three fallacies: that "homosexuality" was "unnatural," "immoral," and an "illness."[161] Similar to other authors who sought to explain the existence of gay men and lesbians, Kotis cited Kinsey as an authority on the population size of gay men and lesbians. Kotis based his arguments for the validity of same-sex sexual behavior on the high incidences of this behavior reported in Kinsey's studies. Using these statistics, Kotis argued that same-sex sexual behavior was a normal "minority behavior" which should not be

---

[160] Kotis, "Homosexual Militance," 37.
[161] Ibid., 37.

discriminated against.[162]

Some gay and lesbian activists argued that they were part of a minority whose existence was substantiated by Kinsey, but that might be even larger than he had found it to be. Kotis noted that the "consequence of Kinsey's findings is that one-third to one-half of the male population is either 'sick' to some degree or that something is basically wrong with the majority's 'illness theory.'" Drawing on Kinsey's idea that social restraints prohibited an innate bisexuality, Kotis speculated that the discrepancy between the 50 percent of men who exhibited same-sex sexual response and the 37 percent who had had a same-sex sexual outlet was "the result of societal pressure favoring a heterosexual 'norm.'"[163] Aligning himself with the rhetoric of gay liberation, Kotis suggested that were it not for these norms, half of the male population might engage in same-sex sexual behavior. Similarly, New York Daughters of Bilitus member Ruth Simpson argued that the Kinsey-based estimate of 800,000 gay men and lesbians living in New York was only "'the tip of the iceberg.'"[164]

Gay and lesbian activists and writers employed Kinsey amidst competing discourses about how many Americans might be gay or lesbian. Debates about the population size of gay men and lesbians were connected to definitions of what constituted a gay or lesbian identity. Novelist Merle Miller's 1971 *New York Times* essay "What It Means to be a Homosexual" touched on debates about both the gay and lesbian population size and the supposed identity of this population. Miller identified himself in his essay as a "homosexual" man, "[a]ssuming anybody is ever totally one thing sexually"; and although he referenced the Kinsey Reports, he

[162] Ibid., 37.
[163] Ibid., 37.
[164] Klemesrud, "The Disciples of Sappho, Updated," SM38.

maintained skepticism about their accuracy.[165] In his essay, Miller wrote:

> We do not even know how prevalent [homosexuality] is. We were told in 1948 by Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey in "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male" that 37 per cent of all males have had or will have at least one homosexual experience between adolescence and old age…The National Institute of Mental Health says that between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 Americans of both sexes are predominantly homosexual, while many others display what the institute delicately calls occasional homosexual tendencies. But how do they know? Because the closets are far from emptied; there are more in hiding than out of hiding. That has been my experience anyway.[166]

Miller's doubt concerning the accuracy (or lack thereof) of Kinsey's data had little to do with the racial, class, and geographical demographics of the Kinsey Reports. Rather, Miller maintained the same stance toward all estimates about the prevalence of same-sex sexual behavior: "Nobody knows."[167] His discussion of Kinsey mirrored Kotis' analysis in that Miller implied, as Kinsey had, that many more people would exhibit same-sex sexual behavior were it not for restrictive social norms. Even more so than Kotis' article, Miller's stance complicated the idea that there were "homosexual" and "heterosexual" identity categories.

As gay and lesbian rights activists began to further define what a gay or lesbian person was, they began also to define how large the population of these individuals might be. This trend can be seen in a follow-up *New York Times* essay that Miller wrote in late 1971 after receiving more than two thousand letters in response to his earlier article. In "What it Means to be a Homosexual *(Continued)*," he asserted:

> Homosexuals make up much more than 5 per cent of the population. There may be as many as 20 million, and Craig Schoonmaker, founder of Homosexuals Intransigent at City College, has said that according to Kinsey one of every six men and one of every eight women in the United States is predominantly or exclusively homosexual. Thus, says Schoonmaker, since the United States now has a population of 210 million, some 30

[165] Merle Miller, "What It Means To Be a Homosexual," *New York Times*, January 17, 1971, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, SM9.
[166] Miller, "What It Means To Be a Homosexual," SM9.
[167] Ibid., SM9.

million people are predominantly or exclusively homosexual. Perhaps.[168]

In this article, Miller remained skeptical of all estimates of the numbers of individuals who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior. However, this time Miller did not directly quote Kinsey's claims about how many people had experienced same-sex sexual behavior; instead, he quoted a prominent gay activist's interpretation of how many Americans were gay and lesbian. As the gay and lesbian rights movement solidified its public identity politics, activists began to shift away from quoting the percentage of men and women who had told Kinsey that they had had any same-sex sexual experience and towards referencing the number of people who had exhibited predominantly or exclusively same-sex sexual behavior for a certain amount of time. For those who exhibited exclusively same-sex sexual behavior, this behavior became conflated with identity.

The rhetoric and political strategy used in Sergeant Leonard Matlovich's Air Force hearing was also indicative of the type of identity politics that were solidifying in gay and lesbian activist discourses. In 1975, Matlovich "deliberately provoke[ed] a discharge" by delivering a "coming-out letter to his superior officer" in order to legally challenge an Air Force regulation prohibiting "'[h]omosexuality'" and an article in the Uniform Code of Military Justice which forbade "'any unnatural carnal copulation.'"[169] Before prompting his discharge hearing, Matlovich convinced NGTF co-founder Franklin Kameny to aid him in his case.[170] In the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* coverage of Matlovich's preliminary discharge hearings, gay activist and historian Martin Duberman wrote that Matlovich "admits that had he the choice –

---

[168] Merle Miller, "What It Means To Be a Homosexual (*Continued*)," *New York Times*, October 10, 1971, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, SM67.
[169] "The Sergeant v. The Air Force," *Time* 106, no 10, September 8, 1975, 46; Duberman, "The Case of the Gay Sergeant," SM5.
[170] Jay Mathews, "Air Force Begins Homosexuality Case," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 1975, A3; "Task Force History."

and he is adamant that homosexuals never have the choice – he would rather be straight."[171] Matlovich told Duberman that had he not "come out" to the Air Force, he would be "living a lie"; and that although he would have rather been straight, his identity as a "homosexual" was not a "choice." In what seems a reference to the 1950s fear of security threats in the form of communists, gay men, and lesbians, Matlovich insisted that he loved his country, his Constitution, and that he would "turn in immediately any gay individual harming security."[172] Although Matlovich's hearing did not change Air Force policy, he emerged from his hearings as a conservative gay public figure in the 1970s and 80s.[173]

In his memoir *Midlife Queer*, Duberman revealed his disdain for Matlovich's politics and the "increasingly mainstream (male) tone and goals" of the Gay Academic Union, which Duberman worked with.[174] The ways in which Duberman's personal ideology deviated from the type of identity politics that Matlovich espoused are evident in his coverage of the hearings. Duberman explained that "the defense presented a considerable amount of 'expert' testimony in an effort to demonstrate the current range of scientific opinion on sexual behavior." And asked sarcastically, – "What does science currently claim to know…about the 'causes' of homosexuality?"[175] The two experts on whom Duberman focused were Johns Hopkins psychohormonal researcher John Money and Kinsey Report co-author Wardell Pomeroy.

Of special interest to Duberman was the difference in Money and Pomeroy's opinions of whether same-same sexual behavior was "'unnatural.'"[176] Money answered that "'anything that

[171] Duberman, "The Case of the Gay Sergeant," SM5.
[172] Ibid., SM5; Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 1, 6.
[173] Martin Duberman, *Midlife Queer: Autobiography of a Decade, 1971-1981* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 58-59.
[174] Duberman, *Midlife Queer*, 58.
[175] Duberman, "The Case of the Gay Sergeant," SM5.
[176] Ibid., SM5.

occurs in nature is "natural" – and homosexuality is recorded among all primates.'"[177]

Duberman made special note of how Pomeroy's testimony differed from Money's:

> Pomeroy amplified on possible definitions of "normalcy." The *statistical* norm simply means "what is common" – what more than half the people do. By that standard – using the familiar Kinsey finding that about 40 percent of all adult American males have had a homosexual experience to orgasm – male homosexuality is on the borderline of "normalcy" (although Pomeroy now thinks the 40 percent figure may have been too high, at least in 1948). If we use as our gauge, "What do we as mammals do?", then the verdict on homosexuality is "normal" – since it is "ubiquitous" among mammals.[178]

Duberman was more interested in the types of arguments that were made about gay and lesbian behavior than with trying to determine which one was "correct." Furthermore, he was skeptical about claims that explained same-sex sexuality as hormonally determined because of the way that some biologically essentialist explanations had been historically used to argue that "'differences'" constituted "'deficiencies.'"[179] However, Duberman also believed that it was a mistake to write off all "discussion of the 'causes' of homosexuality."[180]

Duberman complicated the idea that sexual identity was fixed by providing anecdotes about gay-identified men who had experienced sexual interest in women and women who had discovered sexual interests in women since becoming involved with feminism. Duberman concluded by saying that both Pomeroy and Money wanted people "to *be* whatever we are rather than to become what someone else tells us is desirable. Which is to say, both are on the side of self-acceptance – and diversity."[181] His rhetoric of diversity and encouragement for people to not adhere to constraining social norms mirrors Kinsey's perspective in his reports. However, while Duberman shied away from using the Kinsey Reports to make pronouncements about who was gay or lesbian, other activists were using the Kinsey Reports in order to support their

[177] Ibid., SM5.
[178] Ibid., SM5.
[179] Ibid., SM5.
[180] Ibid., SM5.
[181] Ibid., SM5.

conflation of behavior with identity.

Articles by journalists who did not identify themselves as gay or lesbian also used the Kinsey Reports as a source of knowledge about the gay and lesbian population. Because Kinsey presented many summaries of same-sex sexual behavior and did not label a specific portion of people who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior as "gay," "lesbian," or "bisexual," subsequent articles that referenced Kinsey often drew from the same few sets of frequently cited Kinsey statistics. While some of these articles referenced Kinsey's data on those who had engaged in exclusively same-sex sexual behavior, other articles touched upon his larger, more controversial statistics about how many people had engaged in *any* same-sex sexual behavior.[182] Many of these articles turned to Kinsey's estimates about the number of people who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior in order to explain who gay men and lesbians were to their readers. However, a new, activist-articulated interpretation of Kinsey began to appear in these articles during the 1970s.

In June of 1973, an article entitled "The American Family: Can It Hold Together?" reported that "about 10% of the population is estimated to be preferential homosexuals."[183] Later that month, the *Los Angeles Times* article "A Minority With New Visibility" claimed that, according to two unidentified young women, "the lesbian minority in American…may run as high as 10 million." Daughters of Bilitus national president Rita Laporte was also quoted as saying that "'[f]ive to 10 million lesbians daily pass as "just women" in our society.'"[184] All of

---

[182] Klemesrud, "The Disciples of Sappho, Updated," SM38; Lynn Lilliston, "A Minority With New Visibility," *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1970, 15; "Court Decides Against Homosexuality," *New York Times*, April 4, 1976, E7; Jane E. Brody, "Bisexual Life-Style Appears to Be Spreading and Not Necessarily Among 'Swingers,'" *New York Times*, March 24, 1974, 57; Peter Khiss, "A New Study Urges Homosexuals to Speak Out," *New York Times*, May 19, 1974, 49; Jonathan C. Randal, "Myth Debunked in Gallic Sex Report," *Washington Post*, October 31, 1972, B4; Boyce Rensberger, "Homosexuality Linked to Hormone Level," *New York Times*, November 18, 1971, 30; "The New Bisexuals," *Time* 103, no. 19, May 13, 1974, 95-96.
[183] Carlfred B. Broderick, "The American Family: Can It Hold Together?" *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1973, G4.
[184] Lilliston, "A Minority With New Visibility," C1; Gallo, *Different Daughters*, 156.

these articles were referencing the same new interpretation of Kinsey. Former vice president of the Gay Activists Alliance of New York Arnie Kantrowitz articulated the source of this new interpretation in a 1973 *New York Times* article:

> Homosexuals, the longest and most deeply suppressed of all groups, are similarly spread throughout society…Fortified with Kinsey's revelation that some 7 per cent of women and 13 per cent of men are primarily homosexual, we in our turn emerge with new pride…and demand equality for some 10 per cent of American's citizens: approximately twenty million people."[185]

Because the U.S. population was estimated to be 205,052,174 in the 1970 census, "10 percent of Americans" and "20 million Americans" were often used interchangeably.[186] This percentage was cited in a variety of articles about topics such as gay doctors, the gay and lesbian periodical *The Advocate*, gay and lesbian Catholics, the growth of gay and lesbian activism, and the American Psychiatric Association's 1973 decision to change its classification of "homosexuality" from a "psychiatric disorder" to a "sexual orientation disturbance."[187]

Although activists and journalists discussed Kinsey in a variety of ways in the early 1970s, the Kinsey-based estimate that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian became dominant by the end of the decade. It is not clear who initially used Kinsey's data to argue that 10 percent of the population was gay and lesbian. Sociologist Julia A. Ericksen has attributed the statistic to Bruce Voeller, claiming that he arrived at this statistic "[b]y averaging Kinsey's estimates that 13 percent of men and 7 percent of women had predominantly homosexual

---

185 Arnie Kantrowitz, "We Are Already Your Children," *New York Times*, September 1, 1973, 21.
186 Resident Population Plus Armed Forces Overseas – Estimates by Age, Sex and Race: July, 1971," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed February 27, 2012, http://www.census.gov/popest/data/national/asrh/pre-1980/tables/PE-11-1970s.pdf.
187 Dave Smith, "Gay Community's Advocate: Glass Door at Maze's End," *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1976, H1, H16-17; Robert C. Toth "Gay Doctors Urged to Come Out of Closet," *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1977, D8; Tony Ledwell, "'69 Raid Sparked Movement: Gay Rights Drive Enters 2nd Decade," *Los Angeles Times*, June 24, 1979, 2, 26; "Homosexual Priest Defends His Actions," *New York Times*, March 18, 1979, 20; "Psychiatrists Change View on Homosexual," *Los Angeles Times*, December 16, 1973, 12.

experiences for at least three years between ages 16 and 55."[188] Regardless of who first made this claim, this argument was regularly employed by activists and referenced by non-activists throughout the 1970s.

The 10 percent estimate was used by activists in order to give the public a sense of how many Americans were affected by anti-gay and lesbian laws and policies. In 1976, NGTF directors Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller published a *New York Times* article about the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Doe v. Commonwealth Attorney of Richmond* to uphold the constitutionality of a sodomy statute in Virginia's "crimes against nature" laws, thereby giving legitimacy to similar laws in thirty-four other states.[189] Although the sodomy law applied to same-sex and opposite-sex couples who engaged in anal and oral sex, this "first challenge to a sodomy law to reach the U.S. Supreme court" was pursued by gay men.[190] The National Gay Task Force had also highlighted sodomy law repeal as a gay and lesbian rights issue during its first year of existence in 1973.[191] In their article on the court's decision, O'Leary and Voeller wrote that "it is usually estimated that about 10 percent of the population (or twenty million Americans) are predominantly homosexual."[192]

Although O'Leary and Voeller did not directly attribute the 10 percent estimate to Kinsey in their article, Voeller wrote a decade and half later in a different essay that he had obtained this figure by recalculating Kinsey's data and confirming these calculations with Gebhard:

> I played with the Kinsey scale data on my calculator and was struck by the fact that for those who had *predominantly* homosexual experience (4s, 5s and 6s on the Kinsey scale),

---

[188] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 160
[189] O'Leary and Voeller, "Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy," 20; Duberman, *Midlife Queer*, 84; Arthur E. Brooks, "Doe and Dronenburg: Sodomy Statues Are Constitutional," *William and Mary Law Review* 26, no. 4 (1985): 647; "Getting Rid of Sodomy Laws; History and Strategy that Led to the Lawrence Decision," American Civil Liberties Union, June 26, 2003, http://www.aclu.org/lgbt-rights_hiv-aids/getting-rid-sodomy-laws-history-and-strategy-led-lawrence-decision
[190] "Getting Rid of Sodomy Laws"; Brooks, "Doe and Dronenburg," 647, 653.
[191] "Task Force History."
[192] O'Leary and Voeller, "Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy," 20.

> the percentages were about 7 percent for women and 13 percent for men (depending on just which data you used). As there are about equal numbers of each gender, an *average of 10% of the population could be designated as Gay*, that is, to the homosexual side of the midpoint 3 on the scale, a percentage Gebhard (1977), at the Kinsey Institute, recalculated and confirmed.[193]

Voeller explained that he found it useful to use the 10 percent figure because it made calculating how many gay men and lesbians could be expected to be in a given population relatively easy. As an example, he wrote that using the 10 percent estimate implied that there were "over 20 million gay Americans."[194]

Activists also used the 10 percent estimate to draw comparisons between the heterosexual and gay and lesbian populations. For example, in addition to stating that 10 percent of Americans were estimated to be "predominantly homosexual," O'Leary and Voeller's article presented estimates from the Kinsey Institute researchers' testimony at Matlovich's hearing that "about two-thirds of Americans engage in illegal sexual acts."[195] The directors argued that if one added the number of "predominantly homosexual" Americans to the number of heterosexual Americans who engaged in illegal acts, "some 120 million people are 'presumptive criminals.'"[196] Because the Virginia statute made same-sex and opposite-sex sodomy illegal, O'Leary and Voeller's article attempted to argue that the statute affected not just "homosexuals" but also a large number of heterosexuals. As Kinsey had, the directors argued that if a majority of Americans (and a majority of heterosexuals) practiced illegal sexual behavior, then it could not be deviant and should not be illegal. This logic suggested that practices associated with same-sex couples could not be deviant because a significant portion of opposite-sex couples also engaged in this behavior.

---

193 Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 33.
194 Ibid., 33.
195 O'Leary and Voeller, "Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy," 20.
196 Ibid., 20.

The 10 percent estimate was used in conjunction with phrases like "coming out" and other identity politics laden terminology in order to further define American gay men and lesbians as a specific minority. In another *New York Times* article, NGTF co-directors O'Leary and Voeller discussed Minute Maid spokesperson and gay rights opponent Anita Bryant's 1977 campaign to repeal an existing gay rights ordinance in Dade County, Florida. The ordinance that Bryant opposed prohibited hiring discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.[197] In this article, there was a slight shift in the terminology employed: instead of 20 million *predominantly homosexual* Americans, O'Leary and Voeller said that there were "20 million *lesbians and gay men* in America" [emphasis added].[198] As in their article on the sodomy statute, they did not say that they had drawn this figure from Kinsey; rather, they presented it as a fact without citation. O'Leary and Voeller quoted Bryant's televised statement that she would not go after the jobs of gay and lesbian Americans as long as they did not "'come out of the closet'" and argued that she was proof that gay men and lesbians were oppressed by the requirement "to pretend we don't exist."[199] Along with rhetoric about "the closet," invisibility, and visibility, O'Leary and Voeller contended that one cannot tell who is gay or lesbian based on appearance or mannerisms. This logic echoed Kinsey's claim that individuals who practice same-sex sexual behavior did not adhere to popular stereotypes and could be found at multiple levels of society.

In 1990, Voeller reflected that the 10 percent figure had been useful to "a new movement bent on uniting an invisible constituency, yet one intent on establishing itself as real."[200] One example of this was NGTF's response to an opinion given by the Federal Communications Commission in 1977. The FCC had stated that gay men and lesbians did not need to be

[197] Jean O'Learly and Bruce Voeller, "Anita Bryant's Crusade," *New York Times,* June 7, 1977, 35; D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 346.
[198] O'Learly and Voeller, "Anita Bryant," 35..
[199] Ibid., 35.
[200] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 35.

represented on TV because "gays are not a significant element in all local communities and therefore need not be included in the list of population segments which must be specifically served."[201] Earlier that year, Gebhard had written a memorandum to the National Gay Task Force stating that "13% of the male and 7% of the female population [in the Kinsey Reports] had more homosexual experience or psychological response for at least three years between the ages of 16 and 55, for a combined percentage for 10% for the total population."[202] In the summer of 1977, the lesbian-feminist periodical *Lesbian Tide* reported in "Kinsey Figure Verifies 20 Million Gays" that Gebhard's letter was part of the NGTF documentation presented to the Carter administration to petition a change in FCC Policy.[203] NGTF media director Ginny Vida argued that Gebhard's memorandum "'provides documentation and substantiation of gay movement claims to a population of 20 million predominantly gay people in the U.S.'"[204] In this instance, the 10 percent figure was used to argue that gays and lesbians made up a large enough segment of the population to be a targeted television population.

Ericksen has argued that during the 1970s, activists like Voeller "considered homosexuality an identity" and that "persons were born gay and remained so throughout their lives." According to Ericksen, Voeller used this ideology of an unchanging sexual binary to transform "Kinsey's data on sexual behavior during three years of adult life into a measure of unchanging sexual identity."[205] In actuality, Voeller and other activists had a much more complicated view of sexuality than Ericksen has given them credit for. In 1990, Voeller explained that he had consciously and purposefully transformed Kinsey's data on the prevalence

---

[201] "Kinsey Figure Verifies 20 Million Gays," *Lesbian Tide* 7, no. 1, July/August 1977, 17.
[202] Paul H. Gebhard, "Memorandom on the Incidence of Homosexuals in the United States," to National Gay Task Force, March 18, 1977, printed in "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale" by Bruce Voeller, in *Homosexuality/Heterosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation*, ed. David P. McWhirter, Stephanie A. Sanders, and June Machover Reinisch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 34.
[203] "Kinsey Figure," 17; "Lesbian Tide Ebbs," *Body Politic* 70, February 1981, 17.
[204] "Kinsey Figure," 17.
[205] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 160.

of same-sex sexual behavior into a statement about identity:

> We would simultaneously benefit from the Kinsey scale's evidence of our universal presence while ignoring it by insisting everyone was gay *or* heterosexual…Without the notion of "gay," we could not gain the support of our own people or create a gay civil rights agenda based on accessing the legitimacy of the existing civil rights movement of other minorities and women. Thus, sadly, we too became exclusive in terms of sexual orientation rather than inclusive; those of us who realized what we were creating justified it as a political necessity.[206]

Voeller was very much aware that Kinsey had argued that sexual preference could not be adequately represented by a binary consisting of same-sex or opposite-sex attraction. However, he believed that the round number of 10 percent was a useful strategic tool for arguing that gay men and lesbians constituted a substantial minority of the United States. Voeller's public politics were not evidence of a belief in binary sexual identities, but rather an argument of expediency that he consciously chose to adopt.

Although some activists like Voeller viewed the 10 percent figure derived from Kinsey's data as an estimate rather than a fact, other activists took this figure quite literally. According to Voeller, the "Kinsey data were also one of a number of bases for some crippling internal battles within the gay movement."[207] Because most mixed-gender gay and lesbian rights organizations were male-dominated, these organizations faced arguments from within about sexism and equal gender representation. In response to lesbian complaints that men and women should occupy an equal number of elective positions, some gay men argued against such measures, while others argued for "for a Kinsey-based 'power' ratio linked to the data that 7% of women are lesbians, 13% of men are gay."[208] In this instance, an estimate which was created to give the gay and lesbian rights movement a rhetorical edge was used in order to rationalize the continued dominance of men within the movement.

---

[206] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 36.
[207] Ibid., 36.
[208] Ibid., 36.

Although organizations like the National Gay Task Force frequently cited this statistic, there were still instances in which a more complicated public statement on sexual behavior and identity was given. NGTF Executive Director Charles Brydon told *The New York Times* in 1979 that "'the Kinsey Report…taught us that sexual response is on a spectrum from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual, with the majority somewhere in between.'"[209] Despite such arguments, the 10 percent estimate was promoted by gay and lesbian activists and the mainstream media into the 1980s. Furthermore, Kinsey continued to be ideologically relevant to gay and lesbian activism. Bruce Voller wrote of his NGTF activism:

> I campaigned with Gay groups and in the media across the country for the Kinsey-based finding that "We are everywhere." This slogan became a National Gay Task Force *leitmotiv*. And the issues derived from the implications in the Kinsey data became key parts of national political, educational, and legislative programs during my years at New York's Gay Activist Alliance and the National Gay Task Force.[210]

During the 1970s and into the 1980s, the Kinsey-based estimate that 10 percent of Americans were gay became "a generally accepted 'fact'" through its repetition by gay and lesbian activists.[211]

---

[209] Johnson, "Skepticism Is Voiced on Therapy Used to 'Reverse' Homosexuality," A14.
[210] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 35.
[211] Ibid., 36.

Part Three

Both the mainstream media and gay and lesbian activists continued to promote the estimate that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian into the 1980s.[212] In 1986, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) media director Urvashi Vaid told *The Washington Post* that:[213]

> "The Kinsey Institute, in its widely attributed and well-respected study on human sexuality, said at least 10 percent of the population is exclusively homosexual, another 30 percent have homosexual experiences during their lifetime…There is a body of social science research which shows that peoples' sexuality is formed quite, quite early in their lives."[214]

Vaid's statement about the prevalence of same-sex sexual behavior was directed at White House drug advisor Carlton E. Turner's estimation that forty percent of drug-treatment patients under eighteen had engaged in same-sex sexual behavior. His suggestion that that their drug use preceded their same-sex sexual behavior and that these behaviors were related had drawn fire from gay and lesbian rights activists. Vaid's response was typical of mainstream gay and lesbian political rhetoric in the late 1970s. She argued that a predisposition towards same-sex sexual behavior was lifelong, established well before teenage experimentation with drugs. However, the article pointed to a new factor with which activists like Vaid had to contend: Turner's insinuation that drug use and same-sex sexual behavior were related was paired with his suggestion that "at the very least…gays who use marijuana are risking damage to their immune system and vulnerability to AIDS."[215]

Although previous gay and lesbian activists had argued against stereotypes that same-sex sexual behavior was related to "deviancies" such as communism, mental illness, drug use, and

[212] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 1.
[213] "About," Urvashi Vaid, accessed April 2, 2012, http://urvashivaid.net/wp/?page_id=2.
[214] Elizabeth Kastor, "The Great Drug Debate," *The Washington Post,* October 22, 1986, C6.
[215] Kastor, "The Great Drug Debate," C6.

sexually-transmitted diseases, the ideological battles that 1980s activists confronted during the AIDS epidemic were unprecedented.[216] Similar to the 1970s, gay and lesbian activists in the 1980s had no contemporary data concerning how many Americans engaged in same-sex sexual behavior to promote to the mainstream media or make use of in their AIDS activism. In the absence of more recent and reliable studies, the Kinsey Reports continued to be ideologically useful to gay and lesbian activists because of his claim that a substantial minority of the population engaged in same-sex sexual behavior. The notion that Kinsey was an authority on the population size of gay men and lesbians also gave his reports new importance following the outbreak of a sexually-transmitted disease which disproportionately affected men who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior. The outbreak of AIDS among gay men and the fear that it was spreading to heterosexuals motivated scholars to publish more surveys on same-sex sexuality. Because of this renewed scrutiny, Kinsey's status as an authority on the gay and lesbian population would be challenged with AIDS projections and the publication of new studies of sexual behavior in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

On June 5, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported in their *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* that five gay men had contracted Pneumocystis carinii, a rare form of pneumonia.[217] Although gay and lesbian popular media quickly reported the cases, *The New York Times* did not mention this news until a month later when over forty gay men had contracted rare diseases.[218] The cases were not addressed on network television until a year after the CDC's first report when Tom Brokaw told NBC viewers that "'the lifestyle of some male

---

[216] Brier, *Infectious Ideas*, 15.
[217] "Task Force History."
[218] Rachel Maddow, "Identifiable Lives: AIDS and the Response to Dehumanization," Honors Program in Ethics in Society (Stanford University, March 1994), 11.

homosexuals has triggered an epidemic of a rare form of cancer.'"[219] That year, activist Bruce Voeller convinced the CDC to replace the initial disease label of Gay Related Immune Disease with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).[220] AIDS, which was later discovered to be caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), attacks an individual's immune system, making a person easily susceptible to other infections and diseases. By the end of 1981, there were 225 AIDS-related deaths; by 1987, the death toll would be 40,000.[221]

Political commentator Rachel Maddow has argued in her undergraduate thesis that both the mainstream media and the U.S. federal government were slower in their responses to AIDS compared to other public health crises. In 1976, Congress allocated $135 million to a vaccination campaign against a strain of influenza known as "swine flu." Within the first year of the AIDS crisis, Congress allocated only $200,000 to the CDC to investigate the disease. When seven Americans died after ingesting cyanide-laced Extra Strength Tylenol capsules in 1982, the *New York Times* published 179 stories on the subject in three months. But by the end of that year, the *New York Times* had published only six stories on AIDS, which by then had caused over 1,300 known deaths.[222] Maddow has argued that early AIDS victims did not receive the news coverage and federal response of the Tylenol and swine flu victims because they were not what she calls "identifiable lives." She contends that although early gay male AIDS victims were "known individuals whose suffering or flourishing and life or death exists and is recognizable…they [were] not *identified with* by policy makers and other people not part of their community or group"[223] Maddow holds that Reagan's first public mention of AIDS in November of 1987 coincided with a growing belief that AIDS was a threat to white heterosexual

[219] "Task Force History."
[220] "Task Force History."
[221] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 345.
[222] Maddow, "Identifiable Lives," 9-11.
[223] Ibid., 17.

Americans, whom policy makers could identify with.[224]

Although the federal government's response to AIDS was markedly slower than its response to other health crises, historian Jennifer Brier has emphasized "the fragility of conservative consensus" within President Ronald Reagan's administration regarding how to respond to the crisis.[225] According to Brier, "the historical record points to a more complicated, and internally contradictory, administrative reaction to AIDS after 1985."[226] While presidential advisors Gary Bauer and William Bennett believed that promoting abstinence and heterosexual marriage was the only form of appropriate AIDS education and prevention, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop thought that effective AIDS prevention should include safe sex education.[227] Although Koop did not release his special report on AIDS until 1986, in it he argued against mandatory blood testing and emphasized the need for school-age and adult education about safe-sex practices which encouraged the use of condoms.[228] Additionally, Koop noted that African Americans were disproportionately affected by AIDS and that "race and racism helped shape the epidemic."[229] Despite Koop's report, federal AIDS education initiatives were severely underfunded by other agencies in Reagan's administration.[230] Even when Congress earmarked $20 million dollars for AIDS education brochures in 1987, members of Reagan's administration resisted the initiative by leaving the money unspent.[231] The net effect of the federal government's reaction was deemed by gay and lesbian activists to be a slow, ineffectual response to AIDS.

Before the discovery that HIV led to the contraction of AIDS in 1984 and the consensus

[224] Ibid., 15-18.
[225] Brier, *Infectious Ideas*, 82.
[226] Ibid., 80.
[227] Ibid., 81, 120.
[228] Ibid., 88-91.
[229] Ibid., 88-89,
[230] Ibid., 120.
[231] Maddow, "Identifiable Lives," 11.

that condoms were the best way to prevent the virus' spread, gay men and lesbian activists were divided about how best to prevent the spread of the disease.[232] One debate concerned whether advocating fewer sexual partners and changes in sexual practices among gay men was necessary to AIDS activism and/or antithetical to gay liberation and its emphasis on sexual freedom. Some activists argued that asking gay men to reduce the number of their sexual partners or alter their sexual behavior was too close to conservative rhetoric that gay liberation and sexual freedom were inherently unhealthy.[233] In fact, not all gay men felt that advocating a reduction in the number of sexual partners or change in sexual practices among gay men was necessary to AIDS activism.

In contrast to some gay men and lesbians who feared that AIDS signaled the end point of gay liberation and sexual freedom, gay and lesbian activists like Michael Bronksi felt that the best way to fight AIDS was by using the tenets of gay liberation.[234] In October of 1982, Bronski made the case in one of his regular contributions to Boston's weekly *Gay Community News* (*GCN*) that "sexual liberation allowed people to have sex in ways that were, in fact, healthy."[235] He acknowledged that certain sexual practices were more "safe" than others, but "refused to blame individual sexual practices for the spread of the disease."[236] Bronski was supported by gay activists and academics Michael Lynch and Bill Lewis who wrote in a letter to *GCN* arguing that gay men could make their decisions about their own behavior which took into account both health safety and sexual freedom according to the ideals of gay liberation.[237]

According to Brier, the discovery that AIDS was caused by a virus whose spread was

---

[232] Brier, *Infectious Ideas,* 44.
[233] Ibid., 13-15, 23.
[234] Ibid., 26, 28.
[235] Ibid., 28-29.
[236] Ibid., 28.
[237] Ibid., 29.

most effectively prevented by condoms "derail[ed] the argument about how sexual freedom, variously defined, might provide a broader political solution to a health problem."[238] Additionally, Brier notes that "a multidisciplinary field of scholars has argued that by the 1980s gay and lesbian activism became increasingly concerned with liberal civil rights and abandoned calls for radical, liberationist political change."[239] However, the debates about whether gay liberation was the best focus for activist goals had not just been about the sexual freedom of gay men, but also the role that racial and gender liberation should play in AIDS activism. These debates would continue to play a critical role in AIDS activism, especially as AIDS began to affect a disproportionate amount of African Americans and Latinos.

The identity politics which had defined the gay and lesbian rights movement as white in the 1970s inhibited the ability of white AIDS activists to effectively work with and for communities of color. Gay and lesbian scholar Jeffrey Escoffier writes that as "AIDS spread to black and Latino communities, the limitations of gay identity politics became ever more problematic."[240] The privileging of sexual identity by white gay and lesbian AIDS activists over other identities such as race, gender, and social class drastically oversimplified the impact of AIDS.[241] Brier explains that "relying on gay identity politics – defined as the articulation of needs based on particular identity – subverted the ability to consider the intersections of identity," thereby subverting the ability of white AIDS activists to effectively help all people living with AIDS.[242]

The story of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) and its disintegration

[238] Ibid., 44.
[239] Ibid., 15.
[240] Jeffrey Escoffier, "Fabulous Politics: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Movements, 1969-1999," *The World the 60s Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, ed. Van Gosse and Richard Moser (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), 208.
[241] Maddow, "Identifiable Lives," 45-46.
[242] Brier, *Infectious Ideas*, 48.

illustrates the debates about and limitations of gay and lesbian identity politics during the 1980s and early 1990s. Formed in 1987, ACT UP's eventual dissolution in 1991 and 1992 was due to internal disputes about sexism and racism within gay, lesbian, and AIDS activism.[243] Brier writes that while "ACT Up's membership was overwhelmingly white and male, women and people of color played an important role in the group from its inception."[244] Although ACT UP was successful in its activism aimed at pharmaceutical companies, ensuring housing for people with AIDS, and lending visibility to the disease, the majority-white organization was not able to "produce[] the conditions under which all people with AIDS would receive treatment."[245] Activism by white members of ACT UP in communities of color was ineffective in part because members attempted to speak for communities that they were not a part of. In New York City, white activists had difficulty translating English educational posters into colloquial Spanish and often "referred to 'Hispanics' instead of 'Latinos,' the preferred term among the urban communities they were trying to reach."[246] Additionally, a 1990 ACT UP poster which highlighted the rates of HIV among women featured images of white women even though "the rate of HIV-infection and AIDS among African-American women and Latinas [was] many times that of white women."[247] The inability of white AIDS activists to effectively navigate these issues further contributed to the invisibility of women and/or people of color in gay and lesbian activism.

By 1981, the gay liberation critique of binary sexual identities had given way to an identity politics which asserted that a substantial minority of the population was gay or lesbian. Although AIDS was a larger risk factor for communities who embraced certain identities (Latino,

[243] Ibid., 157-59.
[244] Ibid., 160.
[245] Ibid., 157, 159.
[246] Maddow, "Identifiable Lives," 46.
[247] Ibid., 46.

African American, gay) than others (white, heterosexual), AIDS was sexually transmitted by behaviors which did not necessarily correspond with the sexual identity label that an individual claimed. Because not all men who had engaged in sex with men identified themselves with a non-heterosexual identity category, AIDS activists began to use the term "men who have sex with men" or MSM as a substitute for or an addition to the identity categories of "gay" and "bisexual."[248] However, the use of MSM within AIDS activism created neither a drastic re-conceptualization of gay and lesbian identity politics nor a simple solution to making AIDS activism inclusive. Queer historian Horacio N. Roque Ramírez argues that "[q]uestions over gay identity became quite contentious in the 1980s with the emergence of AIDS and the increasingly unavoidable debates over which segments of the Latino community were most at risk and thus required more focused attention."[249] According to Ramírez, the belief by some AIDS activists in San Francisco that Latino men were less likely to identify as gay or bisexual led to AIDS educational literature and posters which predominantly targeted MSMs. Because of this, gay and bisexual Latino men were not targeted as a group and were made invisible in AIDS activism. By not associating MSMs with a sexual identity label, community efforts to engage with Latino MSMs failed to engage with communities of gay and bisexual Latino men.[250]

Another factor that many white gay and lesbian AIDS activists did not incorporate into their activism in African American communities was the legacy of the Tuskegee syphilis study and its effect on African American's perception of the white medical community. Between 1932 and 1972, a group of 399 African American men with syphilis were misled to think that they were receiving experimental treatment for their condition. In actuality, the men were left

---

[248] Ibid., 25; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell,* 171-172.
[249] Horacio N. Roque Ramírez, "Gay Latino Cultural Citizenship: Predicaments of identity and Visibility in San Francisco in the 1990s," in *Gay Latino Studies: A Critical Reader*, ed. Michael Hames-García and Ernesto Javier Martínez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 178.
[250] Ramírez, "Gay Latino and Cultural Citizenship," 178-179.

untreated so that scientists could observe the progression of the disease.[251] In their 1989 article in the *American Journal of Public Health*, Dr. Stephen B. Thomas and Dr. Sandra Crouse Quinn of the University of Maryland Minority Health Research Laboratory explained the effect of the study on African American perceptions of AIDS activism:

> The Tuskegee study of untreated syphilis in the Negro male is the longest nontherapeutic experiment on human beings in medical history. The strategies used to recruit and retain participants were quite similar to those being advocated for HIV/AIDS prevention programs today…The AIDS epidemic has exposed the Tuskegee study as a historical marker for the legitimate discontent of Blacks with the public health system.[252]

Thomas and Quinn explained that the Tuskegee syphilis study influenced the belief that AIDS was a government-manufactured form of genocide.[253] In 1990, regular *Essence* contributor Karen Grigsby Bates discussed this belief in an article titled "Is It Genocide?"[254]

African American scholars and medical experts like Thomas and Quinn stressed the need for AIDS education and policy that acknowledged the abuse of the Tuskegee experiment.[255] In his 1989 article "AIDS in Blackface," Harlon L. Dalton wrote that the "public health establishment…*can* take account of the sociopolitical contexts in which it operates."[256] Like Thomas and Quinn, he confirmed that AIDS outreach in the African American community would only be effective if the problem was approached by acknowledging historical reasons for African American distrust of the medical establishment. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, sexologists like sex therapist June Dobbs Butts and Director June Machover Reinisch of the re-named Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction (hereafter referred to as the Kinsey Institute) began to make calls for an "updated," racially-inclusive Kinsey report in

---

[251] Stephen B. Thomas and Sandra Crouse Quinn, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Study, 1932 to 1972: Implications for HIV Education and AIDS Risk Education Programs in the Black Community," *American Journal of Public Health* 81, 11 (Nov 1991): 1499-1500.
[252] Thomas and Quinn, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Study," 1498.
[253] Ibid., 1498.
[254] Karen Grigsby Bates, "AIDS: Is It Genocide?" *Essence* 21, September 1990, 76-78, 116, 118.
[255] Thomas and Quinn, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Study," 1498.
[256] Harlon L. Dalton, "AIDS in Blackface," *Daedalus* 118, no. 3, Living with AIDS: Part 2 (Summer 1989): 207.

order to better understand AIDS.[257] However, African Americans' distrust of the white medical community could not be rectified by simply conducting "updated" versions of the Kinsey reports which were inclusive of African Americans in their measurement of sexual behavior.

During the 1980s, gay lesbian activists continued to use the 10 percent estimate in their political rhetoric. In the introduction to *One Teenager in 10,* a 1983 collection of writings released by the gay and lesbian publishing house Alyson Publications, the book's editor explained that the "title refers to the estimated gay population based on studies by the Kinsey Institute."[258] A play leading up to the 1987 Gay and Lesbian March on Washington was titled "Ten Percent Review."[259] During the march, AIDS activist groups ACT UP and the Lesbian Avengers chanted "'10 percent is not enough, Recruit! Recruit!'"[260] Although some gay men and lesbians cited the 10 percent figure without making reference to Kinsey, his conclusions that same-sex sexual behavior was wide-spread and that people who practiced this behavior could be found in every segment of society continued to be relevant to gay and lesbian activism.[261] Many journalists who did not identify themselves as gay or lesbian also continued to reference Kinsey when making estimates about the population size of gay men and lesbians.[262] Some of these journalists made use of the 10 percent estimate, while others chose to report "conservative estimates" of Kinsey's findings on same-sex sexual behavior which placed the gay and lesbian

---

[257] June Dobbs Butts, "Fighting AIDS With Sexual Honesty: A Sex Therapist Says It's Time to Recognize the Bisexual Factor," *The Washington Post,* July 19, 1992, C2; Rick Weiss, "Desperately Seeking Sexual Statistics," *Science News* 136, no. 2, July 8, 1989, 28.
[258] Ann Heron, introduction to *One Teenager in 10: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth*, ed. Ann Heron (Boston: Alyson Publications, Inc., 1983), 7.
[259] Joe Brown, "'Ten': A Gay Hurray," *The Washington Post,* October 3, 1987, G9.
[260] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 1.
[261] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 35.
[262] Jane Gross, "Campaign Stirs Conflicts Among Gay Voters," *New York Times*, April 13, 1998, A25; John Mintz, "Gay Voters an Unknown Factor in Election," *The Washington Post*, November 7, 1988, A20; Barry Horstman, "San Diego Gay Community Emerges as Powerful Political Force," *Los Angeles Times*, August 24, 1986, 5; James Rainey, "Gay Tabloid Finds New Home, But It's Quest Continues," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1985, WS1; Jane Gross, "Homosexuals Detect New Signs of Friendliness Amid Bias," *New York Times*, February 4, 1988, B14; Jane Gross, "AIDS Threat Brings New Turmoil for Gay Teenagers," *New York Times*, October 21, 1987, B5.

population around 5 percent. Although there was not a consensus among gay and lesbian activists concerning how many Americans were gay and lesbian, activists usually argued against estimates that were lower than 10 percent.[263]

Kinsey's original 1948 and 1953 reports remained the most frequently cited studies for discussing same-sex sexual behavior in a variety of periodicals, including *Ebony*. Although the African American data that Kinsey chose not to include in his original reports was published in 1979, Butts and Psychiatry Professor Alvin F. Poussaint did not use this data in their *Ebony* articles on African American same-sex sexuality during the 1980s. In her 1981 article titled "Is Homosexuality A Threat To the Black Family?" Butts mentioned this 1979 data, but cited instead statistics from Kinsey's original volume on male sexual behavior which left out this data.[264] In his 1990 "An Honest Look at Black Gays and Lesbians," Poussaint wrote that the "data on White homosexuality that Dr. Alfred Kinsey reported more than 35 years ago may apply to Blacks as well" without mentioning the 1979 African American data.[265] Although Sociology Professor Robert Staples made use of Kinsey's African American data in his 1983 *Ebony* article "Black Male Sexuality: Has It Changed?" when discussing black male heterosexuality, he too referenced only Kinsey's original reports in his discussion of African American same-sex sexual behavior.[266]

The focus on the number of infected white heterosexuals had an impact on the amount or type of public and federal attention that AIDS education and prevention received.[267] Sociology Professor Andrea J. Baker has argued in her analysis of the *New York Times* coverage of AIDS

[263] Michael Norman, "Homosexuals Confronting a Time of Change," *New York Times*, June 16, 1983, B8; Maureen Dowd, "For Victims of AIDS, Support in a Lonely Siege," *New York Times*, December 5, 1983, B1; Georgia Dullea; Gina Kolata, "Lesbian Partners Find The Means to Be Parents," *New York Times*, January 30, 1989, A13. "Homosexual Couples Find a Quiet Pride," *New York Times*, December 10, 1984, C12.

[264] Butts, "Is Homosexuality a Threat to the Black Family?" 139-140.

[265] Alvin F. Poussaint, "An Honest Look at Black Gays and Lesbians," *Ebony*, September 1990, 126.

[266] Robert Staples, "Black Male Sexuality: Has It Changed?" *Ebony*, August 1983, 106-108.

[267] Maddow, *Infectious Ideas*, 15.

that the "general public, the media, and federal, state and local governments failed to evaluate AIDS as a social problem until nonstigmatized populations began to worry about their own susceptibility."[268] Both Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and sexology researchers William Masters and Virginia Johnson argued in the late 1980s that heterosexuals were at risk for contracting AIDS. Although Koop drew attention to the fact that a disproportionate number of African Americans and Latinos were infected with AIDS, Masters and Johnson were more concerned about infections among the white, non-intravenous drug using population.[269] Sociologist Ericksen has written that in "spite of these dire warnings, there was little actual evidence that AIDS was expanding into the general population, at least in the United States."[270]

As the media increasingly reported that heterosexuals were at risk for contracting AIDS, Bruce Voeller referred to the rhetoric he had publicized as NGTF co-director in the 1970s by suggesting in 1987 that the number of heterosexual women who engaged in anal intercourse was roughly 10 percent, thus implying that a comparable amount of gay men and heterosexual women were at risk for contracting AIDS.[271] Voeller had suggested as early as 1983 that heterosexuals who engaged in anal intercourse were at risk for contracting AIDS.[272] This type of argument mirrored the one that Voeller and fellow NGTF director Jean O'Leary had made in 1976 concerning the Supreme Court's decision to uphold Virginia's sodomy statute: that sodomy

[268] Andrea J. Baker, "Chapter Ten: The Portrayal of AIDS in the Media: An Analysis of Articles in the *New York Times*," *The Social Dimensions of AIDS: Method and Theory* (1986): 183; "Andrea J. Baker," Macmillan, accessed April 2, 2012, http://us.macmillan.com/authordetails.aspx?authorname=andreajbaker.
[269] Susan Okie, "Heterosexual AIDS May Surge, Koop Says: Estimate of U.S. Infection Rate Seen Too Low," *The Washington Post*, April 21, 1987, A4; William H. Masters, Virginia E. Johnson, and Robert C. Kolodny, "On the Numbers of AIDS-Infected Heterosexuals," *The New York Times*, April 2, 1988, 22.
[270] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 179.
[271] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale," 37; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 179.
[272] Bruce Voeller, "Heterosexual Anal Intercourse: An AIDS Risk Factor," in *AIDS and Sex: An Integrated Biomedical and Biobehavioral Approach*, ed. Bruce Voeller, June Machover Reinisch, and Michael Gottlieb (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 276.

"laws pertain to far more heterosexual women and men than to lesbians and gay men."[273] Despite Voeller's claims about the number of women who engaged in heterosexual anal intercourse, sociologist Julia A. Ericksen has emphasized that at the time that Voeller made these claims, there "were practically no data on the proportion of women who engaged in anal intercourse, the frequency with which they did so, or who their partners were."[274] However, Voeller's suggestion that comparable numbers of gay men and heterosexual women were at risk for contracting AIDS was a politically savvy move, since by "the end of the 1980s the focus of society's concern about HIV had shifted from gay men to the sexual transmission of HIV among the heterosexual majority."[275]

Male bisexuality played a central role in the fear that AIDS was spreading to the heterosexual population. Some articles reported that bisexual men who kept their "'dual lives'" of same-sex sexual behavior a secret from their female sexual partners were responsible for infecting heterosexual women.[276] These women represented "innocent" victims of AIDS in that unlike gay and bisexual men, intravenous drug users, and prostitutes, they had not acquired the disease through socially deviant acts.[277] The 1987 *New York Times* article "AIDS Specter for Women: The Bisexual Man" cast an imagined bisexual man as "the bogyman of the late 1980's" who was "secretive" about his same-sex sexual behavior.[278] The article quoted "experts" on the subject who ranged from a Cornell professor of psychiatry who stated that "'[m]ost bisexuals are just married men who are gay'" to Kinsey Institute director June Reinisch and activist Bruce Voeller's thoughts on what the Kinsey Reports said about bisexuality.[279] The assertion that "no

[273] O'Leary and Voeller, "Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy," 20.
[274] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 179-180.
[275] Ibid., 175.
[276] Judy Glass, "L.I. Cases of AIDS Reported on Rise," *New York Times*, June 3, 1984, LI1, 4.
[277] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 176-177.
[278] Jon Nordheimer, "AIDS Specter for Women: The Bisexual Man," *New York Times*, April 3, 1987, A1, D18.
[279] Nordheimer, "AIDS Specter for Women," D18.

reliable national survey exists to update the 40-year-old Kinsey data" on bisexuals who might spread the disease to women became more of an issue as AIDS appeared to spread to the heterosexual population.[280]

Sex therapist June Dobbs Butts, contributed to the discussion of male bisexuality and the need to update the Kinsey Reports. In a 1992 *Washington Post* article, Butts wrote that "[w]e need a national effort at updating Kinsey criteria in the AIDS era. And we need black demographers to bring their perspective."[281] Butts made note of how Kinsey had excluded African Americans from his studies, and that his data on African American sexual behavior was not published by his Institute until 1979. Butts argued that male bisexuality – specifically, male bisexuality within the African American community – was little understood and that this was a "'blind spot'" which needed to be remedied through new studies of sexual behavior which accounted for bisexuality *and* racial diversity.[282]

The outbreak of AIDS created renewed interest in the Kinsey Reports because the nature of the sexually-transmitted epidemic highlighted the fact that there had been no comprehensive studies of sexual behavior since the Kinsey Report.[283] However, this point was not frequently articulated in the mainstream press until the mid-1980s, when heterosexuals began to worry about their susceptibility to AIDS. Harvard University Professor and child psychiatrist Leon Eisenberg told the *New York Times* in 1986 that "the Kinsey Report of the 1950's was still a key source on the extent of homosexuality."[284] At a 1987 luncheon with *Washington Post* staff members, Koop said that little was known about contemporary American sexual behavior, and

[280] Ibid., D18;Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 179-180.
[281] Butts, "Fighting AIDS With Sexual Honesty: A Sex Therapist Says It's Time to Recognize the Bisexual Factor," C2.
[282] Butts, "Fighting AIDS With Sexual Honesty," C2.
[283] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 179-180; Irvine, *Disorders of Desire*, 43.
[284] Erik Eckholm, "AIDS: Scientists Voice Concern Over Research," *New York Times*, November 4, 1986, C1; "Leon Eisenberg, Pioneering Child Psychiatrist, Dies at 87," *Harvard Gazette*, October 1, 2009, http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/10/leon-eisenberg/.

that the "most thorough research on the subject dates back to the 1940s, in the studies done by Alfred C. Kinsey."[285] When the World Health Organization (WHO) distributed sexual behavior surveys to obtain information on the spread of AIDS in multiple countries in 1988, WHO representative Dr. Manuel Carbello told the *New York Times* that "there had been no systematic study of human sexual behavior since the 1948 and 1953 Kinsey reports on male and female sexuality."[286]

Many journalists, scholars, and medical experts reported that lack of funding was the reason that social scientists were not able to conduct new or "updated" versions of the Kinsey Reports. Kinsey Institute director June Machover Reinisch told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1986 that she could only speculate about contemporary American sexual behavior. She argued that because it was "'very hard to get money to study anything sexual,'" there had been "no comprehensive studies."[287] Reinisch also commented that if more funding was given to sex research, "there could be studies on how AIDS is affecting people's sex lives."[288] In an interview with *Science News*, Reinisch elaborated on the problems of racial representation in sex surveys like Kinsey's: "'What little data we have are only on white middle-class people; we have even less information on the many subcultures that make up very important parts of U.S. society.'"[289] *Washington Post* staff writer Victor Cohn made a similar observation about the representativeness of the Kinsey Reports when he lamented in a 1989 public health column that "[b]oth the Reagan and Bush administrations have blocked efforts to update and improve on the Kinsey reports of the 1950s, which themselves failed to represent many Americans."[290]

---

[285] Okie, "Heterosexual AIDS May Surge, Koop Says," A4.
[286] "World Health Group Plans Survey To Help Understand AIDS Spread," *New York Times*, March 12, 1988, 36.
[287] Beverly Beyette, "For Kinsey Director, It's Same Old Story," *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 1986, 12;
[288] Beyette, "For Kinsey Director, It's Same Old Story," 12.
[289] Rick Weiss, "Desperately Seeking Sexual Statistics," *Science News* 136, no. 2, July 8, 1989, 28.
[290] Victor Cohn, "A Message From the War on AIDS," *The Washington Post*, July 11, 1989, 6.

Although Kinsey's studies were reported as dated and "unreliable" they were simultaneously referred to as "the most reliable guides to incidence" of same-sex sexual behavior due to the lack of contemporary studies.[291] Because of this, Kinsey received renewed attention in the mid-1980s as both federal and state public health officials used the Kinsey Reports in order to make projections about how many gay men had AIDS. *The Washington Post* reported that:

> The first government projection – made in 1986, when about 20,000 cases had been reported – was based on extremely shaky data. It used estimates of homosexual activity from the Kinsey survey of 1948, fragmentary studies of drug use by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and statistics on hemophiliacs.[292]

This 1986 Public Health Service projection – known as "the Coolfront estimates" – projected that 1.5 million Americans were infected with AIDS based on Kinsey's finding that 4 percent of his male interviewees practiced exclusively same-sex sexual behavior.[293] Even though Kinsey's data was considered the most reliable data available, many journalists reported that the estimates based on Kinsey's data amounted to "Guesses Based on Guesses."[294] CDC official Meade Morgan told *The Washington Post* in 1987 that when he explained to people how the figures were compiled, they often asked him: "'Gee, how can you believe any of this?'"[295] Articles which exposed the government's use of Kinsey to make projections about AIDS characterized the studies as outdated and unreliable. Framed in this way, the government's use of these studies seemed irresponsible.

The belief that the government had been using unreliable data in order to evaluate a

---

[291] Robert W. Glasgow, "An Orientation Course in Sexual Orientation," *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1980, N6.
[292] Abigail Trafford, "The AIDS Numbers Game," *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1988, HE6.
[293] Don Colburn, "The Projections: Guesses Based on Guesses," *The Washington Post (Health)*, June 2, 1987, 14; Robert E. Fay et al., "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," *Science* 243, 4889, January 20, 1989, 338; Michael Specter, "Data on Sex Is Found Lacking: AIDS Forecasts Still Based on Kinsey," *Washington Post*, June 21, 1988, HE11.
[294] Colburn, "The Projections: Guesses Based on Guesses," 14.
[295] Ibid., 14.

health crisis was further promoted by the media when New York City health officials released projections of AIDS infections that were drastically lower than the previous projections that they had made based on Kinsey's data. On July 19, 1988, *New York Times* staff writer Bruce Lambert reported that the New York City Health Department had changed its projection of NYC residents infected with AIDS from 400,000 to 200,000.[296] The projection of infected residents was based on three main calculations: infected "Gay and bisexual men," infected "Intravenous drug abusers," and "All other" infected people.[297] The projections for intravenous drug users and all others did not change in 1988. Rather, it was a drop in the number of infected gay and bisexual men from 250,000 to 50,000 that caused the total number of projected infections to be cut in half.[298] While the projection that the health department had used for the previous four years had been extrapolated using data on male same-sex sexual behavior from the Kinsey Reports, New York City's new 1988 projection was made by adjusting San Francisco's estimated number of infected gay men to NYC's population.[299]

The drop in New York City's estimate of infected gay men was controversial for several reasons. The 1988 change spurred further articles which reported U.S. public health officials' reliance on outdated, unreliable data and articulated a need to conduct contemporary research on sexual behavior in order to make accurate projections about AIDS.[300] Additionally, AIDS activists became concerned that funding for AIDS research and medical care would decline as a result of the drastic drop in projected infections. As a way of addressing these concerns, NYC's

---

[296] Bruce Lambert, "New York Estimate For AIDS Infection Cut Almost in Half," *New York Times,* July 19, 1988, A1.
[297] "Infection Projection: How It Changed," *New York Times,* July 20, 1988, B4.
[298] "Infection Projection," B4; Bruce Lambert, "Joseph's Estimate on AIDS Is Supported by Review Panel," *New York Times,* February 22, 1989, B3.
[299] Lambert, "AIDS Estimate Is Refined For New York," B1; Bruce Lambert, "AIDS Forecasts Are Grim – And Disparate," *New York Times*, October 25, 1987, E24; Bruce Lambert, "AIDS Estimate Is Refined For New York," *New York Times,* August 11, 1998, B5.
[300] Bruce Lambert, "Puzzling Questions Are Raised on Statistics on AIDS Epidemic," *New York Times,* July 19, 1988, B4; Trafford, "The AIDS Numbers Game," HE6.

Health Commissioner Dr. Stephen C. Joseph stated that the "'lowered estimate in no way implies there will be fewer AIDS cases in the near term though 1991'" due to the fact that these 1991 "projections were based on trends from existing diagnosed cases, not on estimated infection."[301] Because projections for those who would need services in the next three years had not changed, he argued that these services would not decline. However, many activists remained skeptical in light of the trouble that they had faced in gaining funding and support for their cause throughout the 1980s.[302]

The change in projections was also controversial because it constituted one of the first major challenges to the 10 percent estimate and Kinsey's status as an authority regarding same-sex sexual behavior. The earlier projection based on Kinsey suggested that the gay men in New York City made up roughly 7 percent of the population. Because the New York City Health Department estimated that 50 percent of gay men were infected with AIDS, the 1988 projection that 50,000 gay men were infected with AIDS suggested that there were only 100,000 gay men in New York City. At a time when New York City's population was estimated to be 7.2 million, the new AIDS projection implied that the number of gay men in New York City was closer to 1 percent.[303]

Many AIDS activists were skeptical of and angered by the new projection which placed gay men and lesbians at less than 10 percent of the population. Executive Director of the Gay Men's Health Crisis Richard Dunne told Lambert that he was "'really astonished'" by new figures, and that he still believed the number of gay men living in New York City was

---

[301] Bruce Lambert, "Halving of Estimate On AIDS Is Raising Doubts in New York," *New York Times*, July 20, 1988, A1.
[302] Lambert, "Halving of Estimate On AIDS Is Raising Doubts in New York," B4.
[303] Ibid., A1, B4; Lambert, "New York Estimate For AIDS Infection Cut Almost in Half," B5; Lambert, "AIDS Estimate Is Refined For New York," B5; Bruce Lambert, "AIDS Count: Is the Quest for Precision on the Right Track?" *New York Times*, July 24, 1988, E6.

"substantially higher than 100,000."[304] Deputy Director of the Gay Men's Health Crisis Timothy Sweeny said that the 1988 estimate was too low, arguing that the population must be higher for New York City, which he called a "'magnet'" for the "'migration of gays.'"[305] Executive Director of Body Positive Michael Hirsch criticized the new figures as "'an estimate based on an estimate based on an estimate.'"[306] President of the Doctors Council Dr. Barry Liebowitz sarcastically called the new projection the "'the statistical cure of AIDS'" at a time when more funds and services were needed.[307]

The suggestion that there were only 100,000 gay men in a city which was thought to have a higher concentration of gay men than other cities was a challenge to the gay and lesbian rights movement's assertion that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian. Referencing this change in projections, the conservative social science journal *Society* would later report that "the 10 percent stuck and was not revealed as a fallacy until the mid-1980s when health statisticians began tracking AIDS cases."[308] Like the New York City Health Department's 1988 change in Health Projections, a 1993 Battelle Research Center study of sexual behavior would also prove controversial in its suggestion that 1 percent of men were gay. Ironically, this 1993 study would be the result of a years-long struggle by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to sponsor a survey on sexual behavior. The opposition that NICHD faced in gaining funding for a survey came from conservatives who feared that such a survey would only serve to legitimize same-sex sexual behavior by confirming or inflating activists' estimates that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian.

---

[304] Lambert, "Halving of Estimate On AIDS Is Raising Doubts in New York," B4.
[305] Lambert, "New York Estimate For AIDS Infection Cut Almost in Half," B5.
[306] Lambert, "Halving of Estimate On AIDS Is Raising Doubts in New York," B4.
[307] Ibid., B4.
[308] "Social Science and the Citizen: Realities and Fallacies of Homosexuality," *Society* 30, no. 5, July/August 1993, 3; Douglas Martin, "Irving Louis Horowitz, Sociologist and Ideological Critic, Dies at 82," March 26, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/nyregion/irving-louis-horowitz-sociologist-dies-at-82.html.

By the end of the 1980s, the lack of available data on American sexual behavior with which to make projections about AIDS led to attempts by scientists and sociologists to publish new studies of American sexuality. The desire for national surveys was very much related to the belief which began in the mid-1980s that AIDS was spreading to the heterosexual population. Ericksen writes that as "long as gay men were the ones who became HIV-positive, experts had not recommended large-scale national surveys."[309] Fear that heterosexuals would become infected "increased as researchers began promoting the idea that behaviors, not groups, were very risky."[310] Additionally, public resentment over the use of the Kinsey Reports by federal and state governments to make projections about AIDS fueled calls by journalists, scholars, and medical experts for a new version of the Kinsey Reports which was representative of the contemporary American population. Although there were many small, often informal surveys conducted during the late 1980s, the first study which promised to "update" Kinsey was a proposed National Opinion Research Center (NORC) survey, which sought to surpass the size of Kinsey's sample.[311]

The popular press discussed the NORC survey, which was proposed by University of Chicago Dean Edward Laumann and Director of Chicago's NORC chapter Robert Michael in 1986 and sponsored by the NICHD in 1987, as a necessary update of Kinsey's data which was needed to properly understand and fight AIDS.[312] *Washington Post* staff writer Michael Specter called the NORC survey "the first large-scale representative sex survey taken in the United States since the 1948 Kinsey Report," noting also that it was "essential to gauge the scope of the

[309] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 177.
[310] Ibid., 177.
[311] Bruce Bower, "Sex Survey Provides Data on Homosexuals," *Science News* 135, 4, January 28, 1989, 54.
[312] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 180; Edward O. Laumann, Robert T. Michael, and John H. Gagnon, "A Political History of the National Sex Survey of Adults," *Family Planning Perspectives* 26, 1 (Jan – Feb 1994): 34.

AIDS epidemic."[313] This new survey was surrounded by a discourse that the Kinsey Reports were not representative of the contemporary American population and that public health officials needed new data so that they did not need to rely on the outdated reports. The *New York Times* reported that the NORC survey had been designed to "supplant" Kinsey's data, which was "flawed both by its age and by the methods used in gathering it."[314] *Science* journalist William Booth reported that the NORC survey had hoped to improve on Kinsey by using random sampling, noting that the "need for such a large and representative sampling is intense particularly in light of the AIDS epidemic."[315]

Arguments about funding for studies of sexual behavior were very much about whether gay men and lesbians constituted a substantial minority of the American population – and that their "lifestyles" were therefore normative, or "legitimate." The fear that studies of same-sex sexual behavior legitimized this behavior led conservative members of Congress to deny funding to the NORC survey in 1989 and ban it indefinitely in 1992.[316] Some conservatives feared that studies of sexual behavior sought to legitimize gay and lesbian identity by inflating the numbers of individuals who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior. Representative William Dannemeyer (R-CA) described the NORC study "as attempting to indoctrinate Americans into 'the Kinsey mindset,'" speculating in a letter: "'Imagine the political landscape if any one demographic grouping were to increase their rank from 10% of the population to 15% or 20%.'"[317] Family Research Council member Bob Knight opposed funding for the NORC survey on similar grounds, arguing that the 10 percent estimate was "a gross exaggeration" – "'Exhibit A in any

[313] Michael Specter, "Funds for Sex Survey Blocked by House Panel," *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1989, A3.
[314] "Sex Survey Is Dealt a Setback." *New York Times.* July 26, 1989. B6.
[315] Booth, William. "Asking America About Its Sex Life." *Science* 243, 4889, January 20, 1989. 304.
[316] Laumann, Michael, and Gagnon, "A Political History of the National Sex Survey of Adults," 36; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 182; Specter, "Funds for Sex Survey Blocked by House Panel," A3.
[317] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 185, 188; "DANNEMEYER, William Edwin, (1929-)," Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, accessed April 1, 2012, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000044.

discussion of media myths created by scientific research.'"[318] Ericksen writes that "Knight and other conservatives…described this proposal as the result of pressure by 'the homosexual activist community' to 'gather evidence to buttress up the old claim; if not 10 percent, something close to it.'"[319] Ironically, the same year that the House Appropriations Committee voted to deny funding to the contemporary NORC survey because conservative senators did not want to legitimize same-sex sexuality, a nineteen-year-old study for which NORC had helped collect data on same-sex sexual behavior was finally published.[320]

Although American media frequently proclaimed that a survey of same-sex sexual behavior had not been conducted since the Kinsey Reports, such a survey had in fact been conducted in 1970 by Kinsey's Institute for Sex Research. In January of 1989, *Science* magazine published "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men" by Robert E. Ray, Charles F. Turner, Albert D. Klassen, and John H. Gagnon.[321] The study had remained unpublished for nearly two decades because of "disagreement over who should be credited as the leading author."[322] The authors derived their estimates from a sample of 1,450 men who were twenty-one years or older.[323] Although the authors had also interviewed women, they "focused on sex between men because of the need to project the growth of the AIDS epidemic."[324] However, they also mentioned that the use of Kinsey's data to estimate in 1986 that 1.5 million men were infected with AIDS was inappropriate and that "[e]ven 40 years ago, Kinsey's data were regarded as unsuitable for making such estimates."[325] The study's focus on male same-sex

---

[318] Ibid., 1, 182-83.
[319] Ibid., 1.
[320] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 181; Jane E. Brody, "Who's Having Sex? Data Are Obsolete, Experts Say," *New York Times*, February 28, 1989, C1.
[321] Fay et al., "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," 338.
[322] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 181; Nicholas Wade, "The Vanity of Scholars," *New York Times*, July 9, 1989, E26.
[323] Fay et al., "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," 340.
[324] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 184.
[325] Fay et al., "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," 338.

sexual behavior in relation to AIDS was therefore heavily related to the U.S. government's use of Kinsey to make projections about the disease and the perceived need for more accurate information with which to make these estimates.

The survey authors compared their findings on same-sex sexual behavior to those of Kinsey in his original reports. The authors concluded in their study that 1.4 percent of men had practiced same-sex sexual behavior "'fairly often,'" 1.9 percent had practiced this behavior "'occasionally,'" and that the combination of these groups was 3.3 percent:

> Overall, these numbers appear similar to the 1948 Kinsey estimate used by the Public Health Service in its projections (that is, that 4 percent of U.S. men are "exclusively homosexual" throughout their lives). In fact, the interpretation of our estimates is different. Most of the men included in our 3.3 percent estimate could not be classified as "exclusively homosexual" throughout their lives.[326]

Rather than elaborating on the fact that they interpreted their statistics as lower than Kinsey's findings, the authors avoided this issue by mentioning their presumption that men underreport their same-sex sexual behavior.[327] They concluded that "the problems of analysis and interpretation that we have encountered suggest the need for continuing research."[328]

Although the authors of the 1970 study skirted the fact that their findings were lower than Kinsey's, the *New York Times* proclaimed in a headline that "A New Study of Gay Males Supports the Kinsey Reports." The article incorrectly labeled the study's 3.3 percent of men as "actively gay" and compared them to Kinsey's estimate that "4 percent of American men were 'exclusively homosexual'" in order to claim that the study supported Kinsey's original data. However, the article also challenged the 10 percent estimate derived from the reports:[329]

The study, the first to update the 1948 Kinsey report on human sexuality, does not

---

[326] Ibid., 347.
[327] Ibid., 346.
[328] Ibid., 347.
[329] Larry Thompson, "A New Study of Gay Males Supports the Kinsey Reports," *Washington Post*, January 24, 1989, 10.

> dramatically alter the estimate of how many American men are homosexual. It does, however, challenge statistics frequently used by gay advocacy groups that often say that 10 percent of U.S. men are gay.[330]

When asked to weigh in, NGLTF media director Urvashi Vaid said that the new report added to rather than replaced the original report. Therefore, although the new report "slightly lower[ed] the estimates in the older Kinsey Report," Vaid maintained that it did not "contradict the Kinsey data."[331] In her response, Vaid avoided having to label the new 1970 study as inaccurate while reinforcing the validity of the 10 percent estimate and Kinsey's status as an authority.

Despite authors' attempts to relate the 1970 survey results to the AIDS crisis, the survey was not the type of updated Kinsey report that the media proclaimed was necessary to understand and fight AIDS. Although the authors of the survey noted that "the Kinsey sample was not a probability sample," Ericksen argues that their survey sample "was not truly random" either.[332] The authors claimed that their survey was an improvement on Kinsey's in terms of racial representation, noting that they their survey had "a substantial overrepresentation of black men"; and in his analysis of surveys of self-identified gay men and their implications for the spread of AIDS, University of Maryland professor Christopher Hewitt called the survey the "first nationally representative survey" of gay men.[333] But despite this improvement on the Kinsey Reports in terms of racial representation, the survey results were still two decades old. In a January 1989 interview about the release of the 1970 study, survey author John Gagnon – who had been invited to assist with the proposed 1987 NORC survey – told *Science News* that the survey results were "far from conclusive" and that the "'real dilemma is the scandalous lack of

---

[330] Thompson, "A New Study of Gay Males Supports the Kinsey Reports," 10.
[331] Ibid., 10.
[332] Fay et al.,"Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," 338; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 184.
[333] Fay et al.,"Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," 339; Christopher Hewitt, "Homosexual Demography: Implications for the Spread of AIDS," *The Journal of Sex Research*, 35, 4 (Nov 1998): 390.

knowledge about sexual behavior.'"[334]

Although Congressman Dannemeyer and Knight of the Family Research Council had opposed federal funding for the NORC survey because of fears that it would exaggerate the population of American gay men and lesbians, the 1993 Battelle survey that NICHD ultimately provided funding for did the opposite of what Dannemeyer and Knight had feared a sex survey might do.[335] The National Survey of Men (NSM-I) was conducted by the Battelle Research Center in 1991 and published in *Family Planning Perspectives* in April 1993.[336] Similar to the 1970 Kinsey Institute study, the Battelle survey cited the Kinsey Reports as foundational to sexology while highlighting the reports' "lack of probability sampling and the disproportionate recruitment of respondents from college campuses and the Midwest."[337] In contrast, the Battelle survey was self-described as "one of the few national surveys based on a probability sample that have focused on the sexual behavior of men."[338] Similar to the 1970 survey and the proposed NORC survey, the Battelle study discussed the need for studies of sexual behavior in order to understand the spread of AIDS and "the social processes involved in behavioral change."[339]

Like the 1970 study, the Battelle survey reported incidences of same-sex sexual behavior among men that were lower than those found in the Kinsey Reports. The survey reported that of the three thousand men interviewed, "[o]nly 2% of sexually active men aged 20-39 have had any same-gender sexual activity during the last 10 years, and only 1% reported being exclusively homosexual during this interval."[340] Sociologist Julia A. Ericksen argues that the sample size of

---

[334] Bower, "Sex Survey Provides Data on Homosexuals," 54; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 180.
[335] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 211.
[336] Koray Tanfer, "National Survey of Men: Design and Execution," *Family Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 2 (March-April 1993): 83; Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 211.
[337] Tanfer, "National Survey of Men: Design and Execution," 86.
[338] Ibid., 86.
[339] Ibid., 86.
[340] John O.G. Billy, Koray Tanfer, William R. Grady, and Daniel H. Klepinger, "The Sexual Behavior of Men in the United States," *Family Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 2 (March-April 1993): 52, 54.

the Battelle survey was too small to accurately measure such rare incidence of same-sex sexual behavior among the respondents. Additionally, Koray Tanfer, who led the Battelle research team in Seattle, told *The Washington Post* that the study's findings on same-sex sexual behavior were "'probably…an underestimate.'"[341] Even so, many anti-gay advocates championed this finding while gay and lesbian activists challenged this finding as too low.[342]

Many journalists reported the Battelle study as a challenge to the Kinsey Reports and the 10 percent estimate. The *New York Times* reported the survey results in a front page story titled "Sex Survey of American Men Finds 1% Are Gay." The survey was described as "the most thorough published since the Kinsey Report"; the findings were reported as "significantly lower than the 10 percent figure that was published in the Kinsey report in 1948 and that then became a part of conventional wisdom."[343] Citing similarly low findings in the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center's annual surveys, *Newsweek* reporters Melinda Beck and Howard Fineman reported that "Kinsey's 10 percent figure has actually been in dispute for years."[344] The authors also quoted Chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition Reverend Lou Sheldon's statement that the Battelle study had "'[t]remendous political impact!'"[345] In an interview with Ericksen, Knight said that he "took credit for the attention paid to the [Battelle] survey, since whenever a newspaper had cited the Kinsey 10 percent he had pointed out problems with Kinsey's data."[346]

Reactions from gay and lesbian activists to the Battelle survey were mixed. Beck and

[341] Rensberger, "How Many Men in U.S. Are Gay?" A1.
[342] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 1-2, 212.
[343] Felicity Barringer, "Sex Survey of American Men Finds 1% Are Gay," *New York Times*, April 15, 1993, A18.
[344] Melinda Beck, and Howard Fineman, "The Impact on Gay Political Power," *Newsweek* 121, no. 17, April 26, 1993, 57.
[345] Beck and Fineman, "The Impact on Gay Political Power," 57.
[346] Ericksen, *Kiss and Tell*, 258, footnote 6.

Fineman reported that "many gay leaders insisted that the 1 percent figure was just as flawed."[347] Some activists countered that the percentage of gay men and lesbians was irrelevant. Co-founder of the Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York Robert MacFarlane told *Newsweek*: "'I don't care if there are only 10 of us in the whole country. Do we have equal rights or not?'"[348] A *New York Times* letter to the editor by reader Edward H. Miessner echoed this sentiment when he remarked that 1 percent of the population was still "a lot of people."[349] Although Beck and Fineman reported that both the Kinsey Reports and the Battelle study were disputed, they concluded by reinforcing the importance of numbers in political debates.[350]

The results of the Battelle survey were reported by *Washington Post* staff writer Boyce Rensberger in the context of a larger debate about the population size of American gay men and lesbians, providing a more complicated view about what estimates of same-sex sexual behavior meant for gay and lesbian politics. In response to the Battelle study, Rensberger wrote that gay and lesbian activists "immediately challenged the numbers, insisting that the true figures must be higher" and that some activists "cited the widely repeated 10 percent estimate" as a more accurate figure.[351] Rensberger pointed out that the 10 percent figure was an *interpretation* of Kinsey's methodologically flawed findings, which left out "large socioeconomic elements of the populace."[352] Rensberger reported that gay and lesbian activists used this figure not necessarily because they believed in its accuracy, but because it was "a way of illustrating to the straight world that homosexuals are not such a tiny minority":[353]

> "We don't really know how many gay and lesbian people there are," said Robert Bray of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Bray discounted the 10 percent figure as

[347] Beck and Fineman, "The Impact on Gay Political Power," 57.
[348] Ibid., 57.
[349] Edward H. Miessner, "The Number of Gay Men Doesn't Matter," *The New York Times*, April 29, 1993, A22.
[350] Beck and Fineman, "The Impact on Gay Political Power," 57.
[351] Rensberger, "How Many Men in U.S. Are Gay?" A1.
[352] Ibid., A1, A13.
[353] Ibid., A13.

> unreliable, but said it is not inconceivable that the number of exclusive gay males could be as low as Battelle's lowest estimates of 1.1 percent (which works out to be 1.4 million).[354]

Rensberger quoted other gay and lesbian activists from the Campaign for Military Service and the Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York City, who expressed the sentiment that "'[p]olitics is very much a matter of numbers, whether money or humans'" and that "'[c]ivil rights shouldn't be a matter of numbers, but…they are.'"[355]

The Battelle study's challenge to Kinsey came at a time when mainstream gay and lesbian politics were in transition. In his *New York Times* letter to the editor concerning the Battelle study, Edward H. Miessner wrote:

> It is time to stop bickering over the size of the nation's gay community and start seriously discussing the issues of anti-gay prejudice, discrimination, and violence in order to bring this country together. We do not want to be granted 'special status,' but rather left alone and given an equal chance.[356]

Miessner's claim that the *population* of gay men and lesbians was unimportant and that gay men and lesbians just wanted to be "left alone" and "given an equal chance" signaled a significant shift in the rhetoric and approach of gay and lesbian activists. When activists began to cite the Kinsey Reports in the 1970s, they did so at a time when other groups made arguments within the framework of identity politics and minority status. However, by 1993, there had been significant changes in U.S. politics.

Miessner's rhetoric mirrored a type of gay and lesbian politics which queer scholar Lisa Duggan argues grew out of neoliberal policies about privatization in the 1980s and 1990s. Duggan writes that the "new neoliberal sexual politics…might be termed the *new*

---

[354] Ibid., A13.
[355] Ibid., A13.
[356] H. Miessner, "The Number of Gay Men Doesn't Matter," *The New York Times*, April 29, 1993, A22.

homonormativity”:[357]

> [I]t is a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption.[358]

Activists who embraced neoliberal politics based their claims for equal rights not in the argument that gay men and lesbians were a substantial minority of the U.S. population but rather in an argument about privacy, especially the “right to privacy of couples at home.”[359] Duggan argues that the 1990s “marked a decisive break from the centrist liberal/progressive to the radical Left continuum generally invoked by the phrase ‘the gay movement.’”[360] Arguments for gay and lesbian rights based in a concept of privacy were also an abandonment of the idea that gay men and lesbians were in any way different or distinct from the heterosexual majority in their public lives. In the neoliberal nineties, gays and lesbians were not a minority, because they were just like everyone else.

Between 1981 and 1993, Kinsey’s reports were invoked as the only comprehensive study of American sexual behavior which “updated” studies of sexuality should model themselves after. At the same time, his status as an authority on the proportion of men and women who engaged in same-sex sexual behavior was challenged as journalists, activists, scholars, and medical experts grew increasingly concerned with the absence of contemporary data on same-sex sexual behavior and the federal and state government’s use of Kinsey’s data to make projections about the number of Americans infected with AIDS. Kinsey’s unwillingness to use random sampling and his lack of racial representation made the reports an unreliable tool with which to assess a disease

---

[357] Lisa Duggan, “The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism,” in *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, ed. Russ Castronova and Dana D. Nelson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 179.
[358] Duggan, “The New Homonormativity,” 179.
[359] Ibid., 181.
[360] Ibid., 190.

which affected a disproportionate number of African Americans and Latinos. The need for data on American sexual behavior in order to fight AIDS led to projections of infected Americans and studies of sexual behavior which challenged the 10 percent estimate that gay and lesbian activists had employed in their political rhetoric since the 1970s. The challenge to the Kinsey Reports and the 10 percent estimate came at a time when AIDS and gay and lesbian activism was experiencing a change in terms of its identity politics and rhetoric of minority status. For gay and lesbian activists in the 1990s who argued that gay and lesbians were not a minority but rather part of a normative majority of modern Americans, citing the Kinsey Reports was no longer a valid or politically relevant argument.

Conclusion

During the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, gay and lesbian activists cited Alfred C. Kinsey's 1948 and 1953 reports on American sexual behavior as a critical source of knowledge concerning the population size of gay men and lesbians. Activists employed his statistics on same-sex sexual behavior in their political rhetoric to argue that they were a substantial minority of the U.S. population. During the 1970s, some gay and lesbian activists conflated his findings on same-sex sexual behavior with gay and lesbian identity to argue that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian. In the mid-to-late 1980s and early 1990s, Kinsey's status as an authority on sexual knowledge as well as the validity of the estimate that 10 percent of people were gay or lesbian was challenged by journalists, scholars, and medical experts who called for and proposed "updated" versions of the Kinsey Reports in order to better understand the spread of AIDS. When a 1993 Battelle Research Center study suggested that 1 percent of the population was gay or lesbian, many journalists reported this as a challenge to the 10 percent estimate. Shifts in the gay and lesbian rights movement away from arguments based in identity politics and minority status and towards a politics of privacy coincided with the Kinsey Reports' loss of authority as a source of knowledge about sexual behavior.

When gay and lesbian activists began to cite Kinsey's data to argue that gay men and lesbians constituted a substantial portion of the population in the 1970s, most journalists, scholars, and medical experts viewed the Kinsey Reports as legitimate sources of sexual knowledge. Some gay and lesbian activists argued based on Kinsey that many people had the potential to engage in same-sex sexual behavior, or questioned the assumption that sexual identity was binary. Kinsey's claim that same-sex sexual behavior was a normative behavior practiced by a substantial portion of the population was ideologically useful to activists who sought to abolish laws and change policies created under the assumption that same-sex sexual behavior was deviant and criminal. Kinsey Report co-author Wardell Pomeroy's testimony at Leonard Matlovitch's Air Force discharge hearings was one of a series of explicit attempts by activists to use the Kinsey Reports to legitimize same-sex sexual behavior and rewrite or abolish discriminatory laws and policies.

As gay and lesbian politics in the 1970s solidified around a discourse of "homosexuality" as an identity rather than a "choice," activists associated with organizations such as the National Gay Task Force conflated incidences of same-sex sexual behavior in the Kinsey Reports with identity. Specifically, activists like NGTF directors Jean O'Leary and Bruce Voeller began to argue based on the Kinsey Reports that 10 percent of the population – or 20 million Americans – were gay and lesbian. The strategic creation of this estimate was concurrent with the formation of what Voeller later described as "the notion of 'gay.'"[361] Within this framework, gay and lesbian identity was not a chosen behavior that could be altered through therapy. Rather than being a "choice," gay or lesbian identity was constructed as something that 20 million Americans were born with.

During the 1980s, gay and lesbian activists as well as journalists continued to use the Kinsey Reports to support the assertion that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian. Although journalists also continued to reference the Kinsey Reports as a legitimate source of sexual knowledge through the 1970s, news coverage during the late 1980s more frequently characterized the Kinsey Reports as outdated, unreliable, and not adequately representative of the contemporary American population. While AIDS activists as well as some medical experts and journalists argued during the early 1980s that there were no contemporary studies of same-sex sexual behavior and that such studies would be helpful to understanding AIDS, medical experts

[361] Voeller, "Some Uses and Abuses," 36.

and journalists did not begin to call for these studies in earnest until the late 1980s. During this period, journalists reported that federal and state health officials had used the Kinsey Reports to make projections about AIDS infections. The disproportionate spread of AIDS among African Americans and Latinos highlighted that the Kinsey Reports, which drew conclusions based on data from white Americans, were not an accurate tool with which to evaluate the epidemic. This revelation that the reports had been used to make AIDS projections also came at a time when the media increasingly warned white heterosexuals that they too were at risk for contracting AIDS. Although AIDS did not dramatically increase among white heterosexuals during the 1980s, the fear that it was increasing or that it would increase among this segment of the population heightened awareness about the lack of contemporary research on sexual behavior and the possible consequences of this absence. The media's assertion that the Kinsey Reports were an unreliable source coincided with AIDS projections and studies of sexual behavior which challenged the 10 percent estimate.

Although gay and lesbian activists no longer make the Kinsey Reports a central feature of their political rhetoric, the Kinsey-based 10 percent estimate still surfaces occasionally in current news articles. During Representative Michele Bachmann's (R-MN) campaign to be the 2012 Republican presidential candidate, Iowa resident Kathy Schnell asked Bachmann whether she was "'aware that 10% of the population is gay.'"[362] Similarly to Bob Knight, Bachmann and her husband voiced their opposition to gay and lesbian rights by refuting the accuracy of the Kinsey Reports and the 10 percent estimate:

> "Well, that's according to the Kinsey Report," the candidate replied…Bachmann's husband, who runs a clinic in their district in Minnesota that has long been accused of

[362] Chris Welch, "Bachmann Pauses in Iowa Tour to Talk 'Myth' of Kinsey Report," CNN, December 18, 2011, http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2011/12/18/bachmann-pauses-in-iowa-tour-to-talk-myth-of-kinsey-report/; "Directory of Representative," United States House of Representatives, accessed March 18, 2012, http://www.house.gov/representatives/.

> conducting "reparative therapy" by trying to help gay individuals become straight, then chimed in. "Your facts are wrong," he said. "That's not valid?" Schnell asked back. "No it isn't," Michele Bachmann said. Her husband added, "No, it's not at all. It's been a myth for many years."[363]

The Bachmanns' response illustrates the legacy of the identity politics that developed during the 1970s when activists first deemed it useful to claim based on Kinsey that 10 percent of the population was gay or lesbian. Conservatives today like Representative Bachmann and her "reparative therapist" husband often articulate their politics by positioning themselves against a still-current activist argument that same-sex behavior is not a "choice," but rather indicative of a natural identity that one is born with.

Although activists no longer cite his reports to argue that gay men and lesbians are a substantial minority of the population, Kinsey's greatest ideological contribution to past and current activists is the notion that individuals who practice same-sex behavior constitute a substantial portion of the population. Representative Bachman and her husband may contest certain estimates of how large this population is, but the current visibility of gay and lesbian activism has made it impossible for them to argue that same-sex sexual behavior is only practiced among a small, fringe segment of the United States. Activists no longer argue that gay men and lesbians are a substantial minority because they do not need to; rather, debates about gay and lesbian rights take this assumption for granted. Though Kinsey seems to have lost his credibility in the late 1980s and early 1990s, his claim that same-sex sexual behavior is widely practiced among many segments of the American population has become an implicit assumption in current politics.

---

[363] Welch, "Bachmann Pauses in Iowa Tour to Talk 'Myth' of Kinsey Report."

Bibliography

"About." Urvashi Vaid. Accessed April 2, 2012. http://urvashivaid.net/wp/?page_id=2.

Alvarez, Walter. "Journal Deals with Homosexuals." *Los Angeles Times.* December 1, 1974. E18.

"Andrea J. Baker." Macmillan. Accessed April 2, 2012, http://us.macmillan.com/authordetails.aspx?authorname=andreajbaker.

Athanasiou, Robert, Phillip Shaver, and Carol Tavris. "Sex." *Psychology Today* 4, no. 2, July 1970. 39-52.

Baker, Andrea J. "Chapter Ten: The Portrayal of AIDS in the Media: An Analysis of Articles in the *New York Times*." *The Social Dimensions of AIDS: Method and Theory* (1986): 179-194.

Bancroft, John. Introduction to *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, by Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, and Paul H. Gebhard, a-p. Boomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1953, 1998.

Banks, Carolyn. "A Double Life: Marriage and the Homosexual Experience." *The Washington Post,* July 14, 1974. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. PO14.

Barbour, John. "New Kinsey Report Detects Conservative Sex Trend." *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1978. 2, 32.

Barringer, Felicity. "Sex Survey of American Men Finds 1% Are Gay." *New York Times*, April 15, 1993. A1, A18.

Bates, Karen Grigsby. "AIDS: Is It Genocide?" *Essence* 21, September 1990. 76-78, 116, 118.

Beck, Melinda, and Howard Fineman. "The Impact on Gay Political Power." *Newsweek* 121, no. 17, April 26, 1993. 57.

Beyette, Beverly. "For Kinsey Director, It's Same Old Story." *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 1986.

D1, 12-13.

Billy, John O.G., Koray Tanfer, William R. Grady, and Daniel H. Klepinger. "The Sexual Behavior of Men in the United States." *Family Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 2 (March-April 1993): 52-60.

Blau, Elanor. "Vatican Reaffirms Policy In Call for Sexual Morality." *New York Times,* January 16, 1976. 1, 10.

Booth, William. "Asking America About Its Sex Life." *Science* 243, 4889, January 20, 1989. 304.

Bower, Bruce "Sex Survey Provides Data on Homosexuals." *Science News* 135, 4, January 28, 1989. 54.

Brier, Jennifer. "Infectious Ideas: U.S Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis." Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Broderick, Carlfred B. "The American Family: Can It Hold Together?" *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1973. G4.

Brody, Jane E. "Bisexual Life-Style Appears to Be Spreading and Not Necessarily Among 'Swingers.'" *New York Times*, March 24, 1974. 57.

Brody, Jane E. "Sex Research Has Earned Respectability." *New York Times,* January 8, 1978. E20.

Brody, Jane E. "Who's Having Sex? Data Are Obsolete, Experts Say." *New York Times*, February 28, 1989. C1, C10.

Brooks, Arthur E. "Doe and Dronenburg: Sodomy Statues Are Constitutional." *William and Mary Law Review* 26, no. 4 (1985): 647.

Brown, Joe. "'Ten': A Gay Hurray." *The Washington Post*, October 3, 1987. G9.

Brown, Les. "3 Stations Reject 'Welby' Episode: Homosexual-Rights Groups Fought Molestation Story." *New York Times*, September 28, 1974. 59.

Butts, June Dobbs. "Fighting AIDS With Sexual Honesty: A Sex Therapist Says It's Time to Recognize the Bisexual Factor." *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1992. C2.

Butts, June Dobbs. "Is Homosexuality A Threat to the Black Family?: A frank discussion of that question – and others about the 'gay' lifestyle." *Ebony*, April 1981. 138-144.

Cohn, Victor. "A Message From the War on AIDS." *The Washington Post*, July 11, 1989. 6.

Colburn, Don. "The Projections: Guesses Based on Guesses." *The Washington Post (Health)*, June 2, 1987. 14.

"Court Decides Against Homosexuality." *New York Times*, April 4, 1976. E7.

Dalton, Harlon L. "AIDS in Blackface." *Daedalus* 118, no. 3, Living with AIDS: Part 2 (Summer 1989): 205-227.

"DANNEMEYER, William Edwin, (1929-)." Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. Accessed April 1, 2012. http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000044.

Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species: A Facsimilie of the First Edition,* 6th printing. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1964, 1981.

D'Emilio, John. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*, 2nd ed. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

D'Emilio, John and Estelle B. Freedman. *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, 2nd ed. USA: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1998.

"Directory of Representative." United States House of Representatives. Accessed March 18, 2012. http://www.house.gov/representatives/.

"Display Ad 32." *Los Angeles Times*, August 23, 1953. 33.

"Display Ad 43." *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1948. D4.

Douglas, Susan J. *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media.* New York: Times Books, 1994.

Dowd, Maureen. "For Victims of AIDS, Support in a Lonely Siege." *New York Times*, December 5, 1983. B1, B6.

Duberman, Martin. *Midlife Queer: Autobiography of a Decade, 1971-1981*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

Duberman, Martin. "The Case of the Gay Sergeant." *New York Times.* November 9, 1975. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. SM5.

Duggan, Lisa. "The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism." In *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, edited by Russ Castronova and Dana D. Nelson, 175-194. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.

Dullea, Georgia. "Homosexual Couples Find a Quiet Pride." *New York Times*, December 10, 1984. C12.

Eckholm, Erik. "AIDS: Scientists Voice Concern Over Research." *New York Times*, November 4, 1986. C1, C7.

Enke, Anne. *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism*. Durham: Duke University Press: 2007.

Ericksen, Julia A. with Sally A. Steffen. *Kiss and Tell: Surveying Sex in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Escoffier, Jeffrey. "Fabulous Politics: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Movements, 1969-1999." *The World the 60s Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, edited by Van Gosse and Richard Moser, 191-218. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003.

"Esquire-Coronet." *Time* 30, no. 12, September 20, 1937. 76.

Fee, Elizabeth and Daniel M. Fox. "The Contemporary Historiography of AIDS." *Journal of Social History* 23, no. 2 (Winter, 1989): 303-314.

Fay, Robert E., Charles F. Turner, and Albert D. Klassen, John H. Gagnon. "Prevalence and Patterns of Same-Gender Sexual Contact Among Men," *Science* 243, 4889, January 20, 1989: 338-348.

"Forecast." *Jet*, January 14, 1954. 11.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction* New York, NY: Random House Inc., 1978.

Freedman, Estelle. "Miriam Van Waters and the Burning of the Letters." In *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, 7th ed., edited by Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, Cornelia Hughes Dayton, 591-598. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Gallo, Marcia M. *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement.* New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2006.

Gathorne-Hardy, Jonathan. *Alfred C. Kinsey: Sex the Measure of All Things: A Biography.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1998.

Gebhard, Paul H. "Memorandom on the Incidence of Homosexuals in the United States." To National Gay Task Force. March 18, 1977. Printed in "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale" by Bruce Voeller. In *Homosexuality/Heterosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation*, edited by David P. McWhirter, Stephanie A. Sanders, and June Machover

Reinisch, 34. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Gelder, Lawrence Van. "Armed Forces Assailed On View of Homosexual." *New York Times*, July 19, 1971. 32.

"Getting Rid of Sodomy Laws; History and Strategy that Led to the Lawrence Decision." American Civil Liberties Union. June 26, 2003. http://www.aclu.org/lgbt-rights_hiv-aids/getting-rid-sodomy-laws-history-and-strategy-led-lawrence-decision.

Glasgow, Robert W. "An Orientation Course in Sexual Orientation." *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1980. N6.

Glass, Judy. "L.I. Cases of AIDS Reported on Rise." *New York Times*, June 3, 1984. LI1, 4.

Gross, Jane. "AIDS Threat Brings New Turmoil for Gay Teenagers." *New York Times*, October 21, 1987. B1, B5.

Gross, Jane. "Campaign Stirs Conflicts Among Gay Voters." *New York Times*, April 13, 1998. A25.

Gross, Jane. "Homosexuals Detect New Signs of Friendliness Amid Bias." *New York Times*, February 4, 1988. B1, B14.

Heron, Ann. Introduction to *One Teenager in 10: Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth*, edited by Ann Heron, 7. Boston: Alyson Publications, Inc., 1983.

Hewitt, Christopher. "Homosexual Demography: Implications for the Spread of AIDS." *The Journal of Sex Research*, 35, 4 (Nov 1998): 390-396.

"Homosexual Priest Defends His Actions." *New York Times*, March 18, 1979. 20.

Horstman, Barry. "San Diego Gay Community Emerges as Powerful Political Force." *Los Angeles Times*, August 24, 1986. A1, 5, 16.

"Infection Projection: How It Changed," *New York Times*, July 20, 1988, B4.

Introduction to "Lesbianism and Feminism: Synonyms or Contradictions?" by Robin Morgan. In *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, edited by Mark Blasius and Shane Phelan, 424. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Irvine, Janice M. *Disorders of Desire: Sex and Gender in Modern American Sexology.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990.

"Jane Brody's Bio." Jane Brody. Accessed February 27, 2012. http://www.janebrody.net/bio.html.

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

Johnson, Laurie. "Skepticism Is Voiced on Therapy Used to 'Reverse' Homosexuality." *New York Times*, April 18, 1979. A14.

Jones, James. *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Public/Private Life.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997.

Kameny, Franklin. "Gay is Good." In *We Are Everywhere: A Historical Sourcebook of Gay and Lesbian Politics,* edited by Marc Blasius and Shane Phelan, 366-376. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Kantrowitz, Arnie. "We Are Already Your Children." *New York Times,* September 1, 1973. 21.

Kastor, Elizabeth. "The Great Drug Debate." *The Washington Post*, October 22, 1986. C1, C6.

Khiss, Peter. "A New Study Urges Homosexuals to Speak Out." *New York Times*, May 19, 1974. 49.

Kilpatrick, James J. "The Decriminalizing of Some Criminals." *Los Angeles Times,* August 31, 1973. A7.

Kinsey. Dir. and prod. by Barak Goodman and John Maggio. Twin Cities Public Television/TPT and Ark Media in association with the BBC, 2005. 90 mins.

Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, and Paul H. Gebhard. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*. Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders Company, 1953.

Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders Company, 1948.

"Kinsey Figure Verifies 20 Million Gays." *Lesbian Tide* 7, no. 1. July/August 1977. 17, 39.

Klemesrud, Judy. "The Disciples of Sappho, Updated." *New York Times*, March 28, 1971. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. SM38.

Kolata, Gina. "Lesbian Partners Find The Means to Be Parents." *New York Times*, January 30, 1989. A13.

Kotis, Michael. "Homosexual Militance." *New York Times*, February 19, 1971. 37.

Lambert, Bruce. "AIDS Count: Is the Quest for Precision on the Right Track?" *New York Times*, July 24, 1988. E6.

Lambert, Bruce. "AIDS Estimate Is Refined For New York." *New York Times*, August 11, 1998. B1, B5.

Lambert, Bruce. "AIDS Forecasts Are Grim – And Disparate." *New York Times*, October 25, 1987. E24.

Lambert, Bruce. "Halving of Estimate On AIDS Is Raising Doubts in New York." *New York Times*, July 20, 1988. A1, B4.

Lambert, Bruce. "Joseph's Estimate on AIDS Is Supported by Review Panel." *New York Times*, February 22, 1989. B3.

Lambert, Bruce. "New York Estimate For AIDS Infection Cut Almost in Half." *New York Times*, July 19, 1988. A1, B5.

Lambert, Bruce. "Puzzling Questions Are Raised on Statistics on AIDS Epidemic." *New York Times*, July 19, 1988. B4.

"Latest Kinsey Report Has 1st Negro Data." *Jet,* January 23, 1958, 20.

Laumann, Edward O., Robert T. Michael, and John H. Gagnon. "A Political History of the National Sex Survey of Adults." *Family Planning Perspectives* 26, 1 (Jan – Feb 1994): 34-38.

Ledwell, Tony. "'69 Raid Sparked Movement: Gay Rights Drive Enters 2nd Decade." *Los Angeles Times*, June 24, 1979. 2, 26.

"Leon Eisenberg, Pioneering Child Psychiatrist, Dies at 87." *Harvard Gazette*, October 1, 2009. http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/10/leon-eisenberg/.

"Lesbian Tide Ebbs." *Body Politic* 70, February 1981. 17.

Lilliston, Lynn. "A Minority With New Visibility." *Los Angeles Times,* June 21, 1970. C1, 15.

Maddow, Rachel. "Identifiable Lives: AIDS and the Response to Dehumanization." Honors Program in Ethics in Society, Stanford University, March 1994.

Major, Ralph H. Jr. "New Moral Menace to Our Youth." *Coronet* 28, no. 5, September 1950. 101-108.

Martin, Douglas. "Irving Louis Horowitz, Sociologist and Ideological Critic, Dies at 82." March 26, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/nyregion/irving-louis-horowitz-sociologist-dies-at-82.html.

Masters, William H. Virginia E. Johnson, and Robert C. Kolodny, "On the Numbers of AIDS-Infected Heterosexuals," *The New York Times,* April 2, 1988, 22.

Matthews, Jay. "Air Force Begins Homosexuality Case." *Washington Post,* September 16, 1975. A3.

May, Elaine Tyler. *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era.* US: Basic Books, 1988.

"McCARTHY, Joseph Raymond, (1908 - 1957)." Biographical Director of the United States Congress. Accessed March 17, 2012, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=M000315.

Meyer, Leisa D. "Forward: Sexual Revolutions." *OAH Magazine of History* 20, no. 2 (March 2006): 5-6.

Meyer, Leisa D. "Strange Love": Searching for Sexual Subjectivities in Black Print Popular Culture during the 1950s." Unpublished paper cited with permission of author. 1-38.

Miessner, Edward H. "The Number of Gay Men Doesn't Matter." *The New York Times*, April 29, 1993. A22.

Miller, Merle. "What It Means To Be a Homosexual." *New York Times*, January 17, 1971. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. SM9.

Miller, Merle. "What It Means To Be a Homosexual (Continued)." *New York Times*, October 10, 1971. ProQuest Historical Newspapers. SM67.

Mintz, John. "Gay Voters an Unknown Factor in Election." *The Washington Post*, November 7, 1988. A20.

Nagourney, Eric. "William Simon, Sexuality Expert, Dies at 70." *New York Times*, July 29, 2000. http://www.nytimes.com/2000/07/29/us/william-simon-sexuality-expert-dies-at-70.html.

"New Kinsey Report Ready for Public in Mid-May." *Jet*, March 13, 1958. 22.

"New York Beat." *Jet*. January 28, 1954. 63-65.

Nordheimer, Jon. "AIDS Specter for Women: The Bisexual Man." *New York Times*, April 3,

1987. A1, D18.

Norman, Michael. “Homosexuals Confronting a Time of Change.” *New York Times*, June 16, 1983. A1, B8.

Okie, Susan. “Heterosexual AIDS May Surge, Koop Says: Estimate of U.S. Infection Rate Seen Too Low.” *The Washington Post*, April 21, 1987. A4.

O’Leary, Jean and Bruce Voeller. “Implications of the Supreme Court Decision on Sodomy.” *New York Times*, May 15, 1976. 20.

O’Leary, Jean and Bruce Voeller. “Anita Bryant’s Crusade.” *New York Times*, June 7, 1977. 35.

“Psychiatrists Change View on Homosexuals.” *Los Angeles Times* December 16, 1973. 12.

Poussaint, Alvin F. “An Honest Look at Black Gays and Lesbians.” *Ebony*, September 1990. 124-131.

Poussaint, Alvin F. “Blacks and the Sexual Revolution.” *Ebony*, October 1971. 112-14, 116, 118, 120.

Public Broadcasting Service. “American Experience: Kinsey.” Accessed February 29, 2012. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kinsey/.

Rainey, James. “Gay Tabloid Finds New Home, But It’s Quest Continues.” *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1985. WS1, 8.

Ramírez, Horacio N. Roque. “Gay Latino Cultural Citizenship: Predicaments of identity and Visibility in San Francisco in the 1990s.” In *Gay Latino Studies: A Critical Reader*, edited by Michael Hames-García and Ernesto Javier Martínez, 175-197. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Ramírez, Horacio N. Roque. “Memory and Mourning: Living Oral History with Queer Latinos and Latinas in San Francisco.” In *Oral History and Public Memories*, edited by Paula

Hamilton and Linda Shopes, 165-186. Philadelphia, Temple University Press: 2008.

Randal, Jonathan C. “Myth Debunked in Gallic Sex Report.” *Washington Post*, October 31, 1972. B4.

“REECE, Brazilla Carroll, (1889 - 1961).” Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. Accessed March 17, 2012. http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=R000108.

Rensberger, Boyce. “Homosexuality Linked to Hormone Level.” *New York Times*, November 18, 1971. 30.

Rensberger, Boyce. “How Many Men in U.S. Are Gay?” *Washington Post*, April 17, 1993. A1, A13.

“Resident Population Plus Armed Forces Overseas – Estimates by Age, Sex and Race: July, 1971.” U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed February 27, 2012. http://www.census.gov/popest/data/national/asrh/pre-1980/tables/PE-11-1970s.pdf.

Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. 72.

“Sex and the Soviet Woman: More Fun Than the British?” *Los Angeles Times*, July 27, 1974. A1, A15.

“Sex Habits of Negro Women.” *Jet*, January 10, 1952. 18-21.

“Sex Survey Is Dealt a Setback.” *New York Times.* July 26, 1989. B6.

Simon, William. “Sex.” *Psychology Today* 3, no. 2, July 1969. 23-27.

Smith, Dave. “Gay Community’s Advocate: Glass Door at Maze’s End.” *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1976. H1, H16-17.

“Social Science and the Citizen: Realities and Fallacies of Homosexuality.” *Society* 30, no. 5, July/August 1993. 2-3.

Sorensen, Robert C. and David Hendin. “A ‘Kinsey Report’ on Sex and Today’s Teen-Ager.” *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1973. H1, H6.

Specter, Michael. “Data on Sex Is Found Lacking: AIDS Forecasts Still Based on Kinsey.” *Washington Post*, June 21, 1988. HE11.

Specter, Michael. “Funds for Sex Survey Blocked by House Panel.” *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1989. A3.

Staples, Robert. “Black Male Sexuality: Has It Changed?” *Ebony*, August 1983. 106-110.

Staples, Robert. “Has the Sexual Revolution Bypassed Blacks?” *Ebony*, April 1974. 111-114.

Staples, Robert E. “Sex and the Black Middle Class.” *Ebony*, August 1973. 106-112. 106-08, 110, 112.

Tanfer, Koray. “National Survey of Men: Design and Execution.” *Family Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 2 (March-April 1993): 83-86.

“Task Force History.” National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Accessed February 27, 2012. http://www.thetaskforce.org/about_us/history.

Toth, Robert C. “Gay Doctors Urged to Come Out of Closet.” *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1977. D8.

“The A.P.A. Ruling on Homosexuality: The Issue Is Subtle, The Debate Still On.” *New York Times*, December 23, 1973. 109.

The Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction. “Origin of the Institute.” 1996-2012. Accessed February 13, 2012. http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/about/origins.html.

“The New Bisexuals,” *Time* 103, no. 19, May 13, 1974, 95-96.

"The Sergeant v. The Air Force." *Time* 106, no 10, September 8, 1975. 46.

Thomas, Stephen B. and Sandra Crouse Quinn. "The Tuskegee Syphilis Study, 1932 to 1972: Implications for HIV Education and AIDS Risk Education Programs in the Black Community." *American Journal of Public Health* 81, 11 (Nov 1991): 1498-1504.

Thompson, Larry. "A New Study of Gay Males Supports the Kinsey Reports." *Washington Post*, January 24, 1989. 10.

Trafford, Abigail. "The AIDS Numbers Game." *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1988. HE6.

Voeller, Bruce. "Heterosexual Anal Intercourse: An AIDS Risk Factor." In *AIDS and Sex: An Integrated Biomedical and Biobehavioral Approach*, edited by Bruce Voeller, June Machover Reinisch, and Michael Gottlieb, 276-310. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Voeller, Bruce. "Some Uses and Abuses of the Kinsey Scale." In *Homosexuality/Heterosexuality: Concepts of Sexual Orientation*, edited by David P. McWhirter, Stephanie A. Sanders, and June Machover Reinisch, 32-38. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Wade, Nicholas. "The Vanity of Scholars." *New York Times*, July 9, 1989. E26.

Weiss, Rick. "Desperately Seeking Sexual Statistics." *Science News* 136, no. 2, July 8, 1989, 28.

Welch, Chris. "Bachmann Pauses in Iowa Tour to Talk 'Myth' of Kinsey Report." CNN, December 18, 2011. http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2011/12/18/bachmann-pauses-in-iowa-tour-to-talk-myth-of-kinsey-report/.

"WHERRY, Kenneth Spicer, (1892 - 1951)." Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. Accessed March 17, 2012. http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=W000344.

White, Deborah Gray. *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation Sout*h, New York:

W.W. Norton & Company, 1985.

"Why Negro Women are Not in the Kinsey Report." *Ebony* 8, October 1953. 109-115.

"World Health Group Plans Survey To Help Understand AIDS Spread." *New York Times*, March 12, 1988. 36.