

WHERE IS THE T IN LGBT?  
EXPLORING THE LINKS BETWEEN THE GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT  
AND THE TRANSGENDER RIGHTS MOVEMENT

by

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## **Abstract**

Using a historical comparative analysis, this thesis explores the convergence and divergence of the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement. Historically, these movements have been closely related to each other. In the 1960s, the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement had very similar beginnings. However, the organizations that advocated for gay and lesbian rights marginalized the rights of transgender people, even though both movements were working against similar forms of oppression. While the gay and lesbian rights movement began to include transgender rights into organizations in the 1990s there were still indications that the needs of transgender people are not always met in the LGBT movement. The current steps in the LGBT movement have suggested an attempt to be more inclusive of the transgender rights movement, however there are still signs that the needs of more marginalized members of the LGBT movement are not being met. The thesis suggests an importance of coalition building in social movements to be more able to address intersecting forms of discrimination. It also explores how with diverging interests there is conflict in coalition building.

# Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Literature Review .....	2
Social Movement Literature .....	3
Political Opportunities .....	3
Resource Mobilization.....	5
Framing.....	6
Collective Identity.....	8
History of the Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement .....	9
The Transgender Rights Movements- Divergence from LGBT Movement.....	12
Convergence with LGBT Movement.....	17
Feminism and the Transgender Rights Movement .....	17
Research Questions.....	19
Research Methods.....	20
Significance of Study.....	21
Chapter 2 - Struggles After Stonewall.....	23
Structural Opportunities.....	25
Resource Mobilization.....	27
Framings .....	32
Divergences in Gay and Lesbian Movement from Transgender Rights Movement .....	37
Conclusion .....	39
Chapter 3 - LGB+T: The 1990s and the Changes in the LGBT Movement.....	41
Structural Opportunities.....	41
Frames.....	47
Identity .....	48
Divergences and Convergences .....	49
Conclusion .....	53
Chapter 4 - Current Context: The LGBT Movement Today .....	54

Structural Opportunities.....	54
Framing.....	58
Divergence and Convergence.....	63
Conclusion.....	66
Chapter 5 - Stages of Social Movements.....	68
Chapter 6 - Conclusion.....	78
References.....	85

## **List of Tables**

Table 5.1 Social Movement Theories and the LGBT Movement.....	75
Table 5.2 Divergences of the LGBT Movement and the Transgender Rights Movement .....	76

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction

The gay and lesbian rights movement is argued to have started in the late 1960s with a heated conflict between police and residents at the Stonewall Inn (D'Emilio 2003). That night a police raid on the Stonewall Inn resulted in a riot later sparking the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movements. Since then, the gay and lesbian rights movement has set goals to create safer environments for people who are marginalized based on their sexual orientation and their gender identity. However, there have been some criticisms that transgender people have been marginalized in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community's mission for equality (Stone 2009). One example of this is explored in Bender-Baird's (2011) discussion regarding the process of passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). The ENDA bill, which had been first brought to congress in 1974, was created initially to protect the rights in regards to housing, work, public assistance and accommodations regardless of sex, sexual orientation and marital status. By the time it gained more backing in the early 1990s these protections began to focus primarily on gay civil rights and had been whittled down to only cover employment. In 1993 the lawyers drafting the bill focused only on protecting people based on sexual orientation, dropping the previous groups that the bill had initially protected and excluding gender identity altogether. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) indicated an unawareness of the needs that transgender people have for legal protection in their justification of why gender identity was left out. The HRC argued that the reason for their exclusion was that they were already protected under Title VII, which "prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin" (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). However, there are difficulties in this assumption. As Dishman (2005) states, transgender people are not necessarily protected under Title VII laws because courts interpret



them differently leading to different outcomes. For transgender people, laws protecting against discrimination are less clear and vary depending on the court. The HRC seemed not to recognize the problems due to their assumption and failed to be inclusive of the needs of transgender people. Bender-Baird (2011) also states there were growing arguments that the reason for the exclusion came from the gay and lesbian rights movement's attempt to be more easily accepted by the general public, which they attempted by relying on a "gender-normative model" (31). In presenting a "gender-normative" image, gender nonconformity was discouraged. It was not until 2007 that ENDA was amended to address the need to protect people based on gender identity. This action was met with controversy as the bill was split into two bills, which in turn caused several national LGBT organizations to demand an inclusive bill. The HRC was the only organization that did not support an inclusive bill. While the ENDA bill currently is inclusive of transgender people, it has not made it beyond both branches of congress.

The reason for the controversy regarding the inclusion of transgender people in the ENDA bill is debated. However, it is known that the Human Rights Campaign, the largest LGBT organization in the United States, did not meet the needs of protection for transgender people. This leaves the questions: How has the LGBT movement aided the transgender rights movement? Is there still need for improvement when attempting to be more aware of the rights of transgender people? In other words, "Where is the T in LGBT?"

## **Literature Review**

This section traces the theoretical literature around social movements, which are "conscious, concerted and sustained efforts by ordinary people to change some aspect of society by using extra institutional means" (Goodwin and Jasper 2003:3). My theoretical focus is on political processes and opportunities, resource mobilization, framing, and collective identity. I

also will explore how the LGBT movement emerged and progressed using these theories; and finally, I will explore how the transgender rights movement collaborates with and diverges from the LGBT movement.

### ***Social Movement Literature***

#### ***Political Opportunities***

Theorists have speculated that political opportunities play a significant role in social movements. According to Goodwin and Jasper (2003), the political process starts when there is a shift in the political climate. Theorists argue that social movements typically begin in instances of political opportunity (Goodwin and Jasper 2003). Tarrow (2011) gives the example that the social movements emerging in the 1960s (e.g. the women's rights movement, and the peace movement) started at a time of political opportunity. While the initial inclusion of transgender rights in the LGBT movement is argued to still have been neglecting the needs to transgender people, it also set the stage for the rights of transgender people to advance.

Tarrow (2011) uses Tocqueville's observations to argue that people use opportunities to gain rights. He also argues that groups act on opportunities and threats. Groups are encouraged to mobilize when institutions start to offer opportunities that grant more freedoms to people. He further argues that group dissension occurs when people feel they have been allowed access to resources, and when the success of actions seems to be positive. At the same time, he discusses the threats that he deems to be the "costs of action or inaction" (Tarrow 2011:160). Tarrow states that when groups mobilize, they attempt to assess the likelihood of success of their actions and the consequences of action or inaction. This is reflected in Tarrow's assessment that social movements are less likely to occur in extremely repressive political environments. The possibilities that authorities will stop collective actions are significantly higher in more

restrictive political climates. This could lead to the understanding that mobilizing would be more likely to end in failure, which would prevent groups' attempts to do so.

Increased access to political rights is the first factor Tarrow identifies as an indicator of groups using opportunities to gain rights. While collective actions are less likely to take place in more oppressive governments, they are also less likely to take place in completely open ones as well. Tarrow states this is because in the first, fear of failure is the reason why actions are less likely to occur; in the second, protesters are able to turn to the government systems. As a result, collective actions are most likely to occur in systems that offer intermediate opportunities (Tarrow 2011).

The second factor Tarrow discusses is political instability. He explains how this is seen in democratic societies through "electoral instability" (Tarrow 2011:165). Tarrow argues that political instability creates doubt for supporters and empowers marginalized groups to use that doubt as competition for politicians (Tarrow 2011). Similarly, divisions between elites also act as an indicator of how well a collective action will work.

Finally Tarrow (2011) holds that influential allies that can be actors working in favor of the collective actions. These actors can play a significant role in acting as a negotiator for the protesting groups.

When observing how political opportunity affected the LGBT movement and, one can see that the beginning of the movement was influenced by changing structures. D'Emilio (2003) states that the civil rights movement, the women's rights movement, and the peace movement all aided many of the actions taking place in the LGBT movement. Stryker (2008) adds to this by illustrating that not only were there several other social movements occurring at the same time, but medical research was also beginning to change, arguing against the commonly held belief

that LGBT people were perverse. Changing medicine resulted in the emergence of organizations to support transgender people. “As an institutional structure emerged, transsexuals confronted a legal system that had...not redrawn the borders of sex, gender, and sexuality” (Meyerowitz 2002, 207). With more notable support from authorities, rights needed for transgender people could become more noticed.

### ***Resource Mobilization***

Freeman (1979) agrees that environment is important, but also argues that so are the resources allowed to social movement organizations. Not only must opportunities be considered for social movement success, so must be the availability of resources.

Resources are both tangible and intangible. Examples of tangible resources are money and public spaces, and the most important intangible resource is people (Freeman 1979). She argues that the success of social movement organizations rely heavily on social networks. While tangible resources are more easily used to create political pressure, people can be considered more valuable as resources partially because some goals of a movement are related to rights that could not be purchased.

When taking a closer look at the intangible resources people have to offer, Freeman (1979) identifies three important players in social movement organizations. The first considered a more specialized resource because only a few actors within the organization have them; is expertise and status. These traits allow for more access to key decision makers, which can benefit the movement. Other intangible resources given by people for social movement organizations are time and commitment, which Freeman defines as the willingness to take risks and encounter inconveniences.

Resource mobilization can be an important theory when looking at the changes in the LGBT movement. Stryker discusses some of the specialized resources that aided in the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement. One such example is Reed Erikson, who inherited his family's fortune. With it, he was able to fund research about transgender people in major medical universities such as Stanford. Perhaps another instance in resource mobilization is that transgender people are argued to need the LGBT movement because without the gay and lesbian rights movement, the population size of transgender people is small.

### ***Framing***

However, it also can be argued that while political processes are important, there is also a need for framing. It is argued that in focusing on political process and opportunity structures one overlooks the subjective meanings and alignment with a social movement's ideologies (Snow et al. 1986). Snow (1986) argues that implementing the rational choice theory, which is often applied in the more structural analyses of social movements, social movements appear mechanical. Snow (1986) also states that this analysis fails to address much more than the expected outcomes of the movement. In addition, it does not clearly define what is more or less risky in social movements for collective actions to mobilize effectively. He argues that there is a need to address grievance interpretation. In his attempt to link the social psychological to the more structural theories of social movements, Snow explores the idea of frame alignment—the way a social movement and an individual are linked in terms of congruent interests, goals and ideologies. Borrowing from Goffman, he conceptualizes framing as ways of giving meaning to events through interpretations. In observing Goffman's theories, he brings out the importance of an injustice frame, interpreting authority's actions as unjust. He states the importance of how this relates to social movements by legitimating defiance against authorities.

Snow argues that frames are necessary to encourage people to participate in movements. He identifies four framing alignment processes: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. Snow starts with frame bridging, which is "the linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem" (Snow 1986:467). He gives the example of social movement organizations connecting with groups of individuals who share similar ideologies to the social movement organization, which he refers to as "sentiment pools" (Snow 1986:467). The frame bridging is implemented by diffusing information to people through forms of media. Snow presents the example of peace groups creating mailing lists based on the subscriptions to left leaning magazines. The next framing process explored is frame amplification. Frame amplification is "clarification and reinvigoration of an interpretive frame" (Snow 1986: 469). There are two types of frame amplification: 1) value amplifications, which is conceptualized as behaviors and realities that are important and need to be protected and, 2) belief amplification, which are elements "that support or impede actions in pursuit of desired values" (Snow 1986:470). Belief amplification is seen in people who resist granting rights to LGBT people by presenting values of keeping the family as narrowly defined by the nuclear family, and arguing that allowing marriage equality would put the institution of marriage at risk. Frame extensions involve a social movement organization extending the portrayal of its interests as similar to related values in order to extend its primary interests to other goals. The last process Snow discusses is frame transformation, which is explained as the reframing of old frames or changing of erroneous frames in order to gain more support. One example of this is illustrated by Michael Schulman in a 2013 *New York Times* article. Schulman discusses the changing title of the gay and lesbian rights movement. He explores how the movement is now going from LGBT to LGBTQIA,

which indicates the acknowledgement of queer, intersex, and asexual people into the social movement. He states that doing this creates awareness that many still do not fit into the commonly accepted gender binary.

Snow argues that a social movement organization's ability to amplify the movement's framing in appropriate ways contributes to the successes or failures of a social movement. Amplifying a movement's frame requires content and substance. Snow suggests the need for the framing of a social movement organization is to state a believable problem and to offer solutions. One example is creating awareness of the discriminations of the LGBT community, and the solutions offered is to pass laws that discourage discrimination and encourage equal rights.

While political processes have influenced the emergence of the transgender rights movement, despite their smaller numbers, there has become an increased awareness of transgender people in the public. Originally, the gay and lesbian rights movement was more adverse to the idea of including transgender people because it was considered a challenge to the normalized image of gay people (Stone 2006). This is an attempt to show that there are minimal differences when compared to the general population. Spade argues against this attempt to appear in a way that adheres to the images of what normal is in society. He argues that in doing so it reaffirms the ideologies of heteronormative and racist values that continue to exist in our society. More recently, there has been a shift within the LGBT movement to be more inclusive.

### ***Collective Identity***

Collective identity has become more important in the research of new social movement theorists who have argued that identity has become more significant to the social movement of today than previous social movements. Collective identity has been another way in which theorists have been exploring social movements in order to find explanations that tended to be

overlooked by resource mobilization. It is explained as perceived communities that are more fluid depending on interactions (Jasper & Polletta 2001). Collective identity “provides categories by which individuals divide up and make sense of the social world” (Jasper & Polletta 2001: 298). Gameson (2003) argues that collective identity and how it changes plays an important role in social movements. He illustrates how this is seen in the boundary construction of political identities by establishing differences between the group and the mainstream society. Gameson (2003) illustrates this as he explored queer theory, which resists the idea of “normal behavior”, and how it has affected gay and lesbian politics (339). He illustrates the concern created within gay and lesbian community regarding queer theory and argues that much of the controversy relates to identity and who creates these identities. Gameson argues that while these identities are important in establishing boundaries for political gains, they also simplify challenges and perpetuate the system that creates oppressions.

When tracing the theories of social movements, one can begin to map out how structural opportunities and resource mobilization allowed the gay and lesbian rights movement to emerge and expand. Applying framing and collective identities allows for seeing how the LGBT movement has changed over time.

### ***History of the Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement***

New York City in 1969 is argued to be the where the initial sparks of the gay and lesbian rights movement began. Dubbed as “The Hairpin Drop Heard Round the World” by New York Mattachine Society, it is said that this statement was “scarcely exaggerated” (D’Emilio 2003:33). The catalyst that started the LGBT movement was a police raid on the Stonewall Inn used a political maneuver for police and the incumbent mayor (D’Emilio 2003). While it was expected that the patrons of Stonewall were to behave in a usual manner, the results instead were that of a



struggle that grew into a riot (D'Emilio 2003). By the end of the following month, the Gay Liberation Front was formed and the following year various other gay liberation groups became noticeable throughout the country (D'Emilio 2003).

The Gay Liberation Front was a radical activist group. While they were a group founded with the intention of promoting gay and lesbian rights, they also were considered a leftist radical group with the goal of changing the system (Kissack 1995). Although there had been previous organizations with the goals of promoting gay and lesbian rights, e.g. the Mattachine Society, Kissack (1995) states that these groups had been less aware of their privileged status neglecting how race, class, and sex may also play into oppressions. The Gay Liberation Front's beliefs supported overthrowing the structures of capitalism, white supremacy, and patriarchy believing all of these to be sources of oppression to the gay community. Despite their attempts to fight the hegemonic system, the Gay Liberation Front was still divided by a variety of factors. One issue that created these divisions in the Gay Liberation Front was its treatment of lesbians. Many women who participated in the Gay Liberation Front argued that at times the male members were more violent toward women than were heterosexual men. At one protest, Shulasmith Firestone states that "a football crowd would have been...less blatantly hostile toward women" (Kissack 1995: 125). The Gay Liberation Front also was divided about whether or not to support the Black Panthers, which had received criticism for frequently using homophobic terms (Kissack 1995). With this conflict, the Gay Activist Alliance formed. The Gay Activist Alliance opposed working with people who were not trying to advance gay and lesbian rights. Kissack (1995) speculates that part of the reason for dissolving the Gay Liberation Front was because of many activists noted the success of the less radical actions being taken by the Gay Activist Alliance and became more heavily involved with them.

D'Emilio (1998) argues that the events that had sparked grassroots organizing of gay liberation had been the result of a political opportunity. He states that much of the reason the gay and lesbian rights movement was able to take off was because of the many movements that were occurring around the same time, such as the civil rights, women's rights, and anti-war movements. The mobilization of the gay and lesbian rights movement relied heavily on the political opportunities that emerged from political events that were already the source of demonstrations.

Moving forward from the beginning of the gay and lesbian rights movement to events that are more current, there is much debate regarding the reasons for the change. In the 1970s and 1980s the gay and lesbian rights movement changed from being more radical to being more liberal (Stone 2006). There has been some argument that this was the result of the changing culture—from more liberal values to more conservative values (Erikson-Schroth 2014). Others have argued that this was related to a shift that encouraged social movements to embrace neoliberal ideologies (Spade 2011). As these shifts occurred so did the image of the LGBT movement, which shifted toward a more normalized image that emphasized similarities with the general population (Erikson-Schroth 2014). Tadlock (2014) cites Spade in showing how normalizing led to oppression within the LGBT movement, and noting the irony that transgender people were not only involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement from the beginning they were extremely important actors:

When our lesbian and gay leaders call for unity, quite often it's really a call for conformity...the movement is relegating them to crazy-uncle status in effort to convince mainstream America that homosexuals are as straight as heterosexuals. It's an ironic twist given that transvestites started the gay rights movement... (28)

At this point, there is criticism of the LGBT movement focusing primarily on legal changes that risk the marginalization of people. Erikson-Schroth (2014) cites a series of interviews in which transgender people express feeling left out with LGBT organizations focusing on legal changes involving don't ask don't tell (DADT) policies in the military and equal marriage rights. It is argued that these focuses alienate transgender people in the LGBT movement. Erikson-Schroth (2014) presents a quote illustrating the feelings of transgender people within the LGBT movement”

When the term ‘LGBT rights’ is used, these days that seems to mean gay marriage, ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell’ abolishment, and fights that prioritize the needs of the most privileged LGBT people instead of those who are most marginalized...(571)

In her interviews, Erikson-Schroth uncovers many similar messages that transgender people feel marginalized within the LGBT movement. Much of the needs are focused on gay and lesbian rights with the needs of transgender people being less prioritized.

### ***The Transgender Rights Movements- Divergence from LGBT Movement***

Stryker identifies the beginning of the transgender rights movement as starting within the same period as the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement. Shortly before Stonewall on the other side of the United States, there was a spark of similar resistance in San Francisco. This incident was referred to as Compton’s Cafeteria Riot of 1966 (Stryker 2008). This incident took place in what was referred to as the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, an area containing populations that had no means to afford other places to live (Stryker 2008). With overt discrimination of LGBT populations being more prevalent and acceptable, many LGBT individuals were forced to live in this area and work in informal economies with no other options.

The skirmish arose from a series of events when activists in the neighborhood attempted to organize antipoverty campaigns and encourage the mobilization of people within the neighborhood. Emerging from the campaign was another grassroots movement, Vanguard. This group was focused on youth issues and cleaning up the neighborhood in attempt to acknowledge it as part of their home (Stryker 2008). While this was their goal, they also wished to address the increasing hostility that they were facing at the Compton Cafeteria. Initially the place was a meeting spot for the member of Vanguard; however, its members started colliding with significant resistance from other patrons (Stryker 2008).

The restaurant began assigning service charges that were enforced discriminately, singling out individuals perceived to be queer. The restaurant also began calling the police to have people arrested. The incident referred to as the Compton's Cafeteria Riot started when the group resisted being arrested, and a fight broke out among the officers and the patrons in the restaurant.

While there was influence from the already occurring movements such as the African American civil rights movement, early gay and transgender activism was not borrowed from already occurring movements (Stryker 2008). Stryker points out that many of the protesters involved were racial and ethnic minorities. She argues that in assuming early activism movements were borrowing from the Civil Rights movement assumes those experiencing discrimination for their sexual orientation were primarily white.

Stryker (2008) argues that the changing social structure of the time influenced growing resistance to the mistreatment of LGBT people. She points out that around the time that resistance started, there had been developments in medical science that were arguing for the rights of transgender people (Stryker 2008). Medical science had started presenting a different

argument around the 1960s with many doctors and research stating that gender identity could not be changed, and that it was best to simply ensure that transgender people were able to live full and happy lives.

Stryker explores political opportunity theories when she examines some of the reasons the LGBT community began to fight against their mistreatments. She argues that prior to the medical research arguing in their favor, the LGBT community was simply trying to survive. However shortly before Compton's Cafeteria riot, Dr. Harry Benjamin published the work, "*The Transsexual Phenomenon*." This work was published after research conducted with transgender patients and argued that a gender identity could not be changed. He further argued that the best course of action for doctors was to help transgender people have a fulfilling life. Shortly after Benjamin's publication, John Hopkins established a "sex change" program (Stryker 2008:73). Following growing arguments leaning in favor of the rights of transgender people in research, Stryker (2008) states there was something to fight for because there was indication that attitudes towards the LGBT community were starting to change and were becoming more accepting. With changes in structures indicating a more progressive view, there were signs of a possibility for change in how the LGBT community was treated. At this point in history, transgender people were pathologized (Schilt 2010). Discussions addressed it as either a biological occurrence or psychological ailment and aimed to correct it (Meyerowitz 2002). At this time, several prestigious colleges established programs for the research of transgender people including Harry Benjamin's International Gender Dysphoria Association. Today this organization is called World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) (Schilt 2010). Other medical professionals at the time also claimed it was a psychological ailment that could be prevented

with psychological therapy and reinforcement of gender. The Gender Identity Research Clinic (GIRC) was one such organization (Meyerowitz 2002).

When analyzing these moments of contention, one can see how Tarrow's discussion of opportunities and threats apply. With the emergence of research such as Dr. Benjamin's work arguing more in favor of the rights of LGBT people, changes in how institutions should treat LGBT people were emerging. Meyerowitz (2002) also states that it was at that time doctors began to organize clinics and associations to support transgender rights. With scientists beginning to argue in favor of the LGBT community, Stryker argues this allowed for the community to begin fighting back against oppressive structures, knowing there was a possibility for success. However, Tarrow also notes that groups assess threats that result from activity or inactivity. One could argue that perpetual mistreatment and marginalization of the community was the clear threat that was occurring and would continue if collective action not occurred in an attempt to change these threats.

Despite the opportunities opened for transgender people, there was room for more progress. Often, doctors adhered to cultural gender norms to diagnose someone as transgender. One doctor mentioned that he identified transgender women by bullying them (Schilt 2010). One transgender man was rejected for hormones because he said he felt like he was a gay man (Schilt 2010).

While transgender people were involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement, it has been argued that there has always been some exclusion from within the LGBT movement. Nownes (2014) points out historically that within the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activists Alliance transgender people and gender nonconforming people were kicked out. He argues this is related to intersectional disadvantages in which people who have more advantages in a

movement are given higher priority than more disadvantaged subgroups. He seems to argue the reason groups focus on the more privileged members of a social movement is fewer resources need to be directed toward areas that are more likely to be successful. This is similar to what is argued by Spade (2011) as he explores how neoliberalization affects social movements. Spade states funding often comes from business-oriented donors. As a result, resources are used to produce tangible outcomes in a short time, which meets the requirements of donors. Many times, social movement organizations make sacrifices to meet these outcomes.

In the 1990s, queer theory started to become more acknowledged. Current works that assumed gender was fixed were criticized. Many theorists began to argue gender was more of a continuum or having many possibilities (Schilt 2010).

Inclusion of transgender people in the movement also became formally considered in the mid-1990s (Stone 2006). This arose when a discussion was brought to light about the exclusion of transgender people in the March on Washington for Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Rights (Stone 2006). However, there is criticism that despite the recent inclusion of transgender people in the LGBT movement, the inclusion is more for conveniences. Some of this criticism is seen with Bender-Baird (2011) when elaborating on the inconsistency for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would provide legal protection from workplace discrimination. While offering these protections, there was much controversy over whether or not to extend protections for gender identity and gender expression with the protections based on sexual orientation. This led the protections of transgender people being dropped and added multiple times (Bender-Baird 2011). This illustrates some of what Stone (2006) refers to as secondary marginalization, in which subgroups within a social movement are marginalized and disadvantaged in a sense because they are lower in a hierarchy. Spade (2011) makes a similar

claim when examining the progress of gay and lesbian rights movements, stating that in recent years the needs of marginalized groups within the LGBT community have become more neglected as the movement changed from a movement focusing on deep transformation to the focus of political inclusion. He argues this to be the result of neoliberalization of social movements.

### ***Convergence with LGBT Movement***

Despite the critique that the needs of transgender people are ignored in the LGBT movement, it is also argued that historically the gay and lesbian rights movement allowed for awareness of transgender people. Kissack (1995) states that one editorial published in a gay positive magazine asserted that transgender people needed to organize and link themselves with the African American civil rights, women's rights, and gay and lesbian rights movements that were active at the time. Additionally, there are arguments that transgender people were not only there from the beginning, but also that they started the gay and lesbian rights movement (Tadlock 2014). Literature that is more recent argues that there is still a need for the LGBT movement to aid in changing the way transgender people are treated because the number of transgender people is so small (Stone 2009). With the inclusion of transgender people in the LGBT movement, there has been more visibility and acceptance. Schilt points out that the quality of media representation has changed to more respectable representation on commonly known talk shows. With this visibility, there is acknowledgment of gender diversity instead of the portrayal that transgender people are perverse (Schilt 2010).

### ***Feminism and the Transgender Rights Movement***

There is need to address the relationship between the women's rights and transgender rights movements because both are similar in challenging sexist ideologies as well as the rigid



structure of gender. While there is an argument that transgender rights are equally important as a feminist issue, the feminist literature is divided about where transgender rights fit into feminist issues. Janice Raymond (2006) presents an extreme stance arguing against the inclusion of transgender rights in the women's rights movement. She essentially argues that transgender women are deceptive and attempting to possess and rape women under the guise of challenging patriarchy. She argues that this gains more acceptance from men because they are able to see and control women in spaces that only women are allowed. While she presented this argument in the late 1970s, when revisiting it in the 1990s, she indicates that her views had not changed despite the criticisms that her work had received (Stryker and Whittle 2006). Furthermore, according to Connell (2012), Raymond's work is still used in some feminist literature today.

Carol Riddell (2006) critiques Raymond's argument heavily, observing it to be borderline dogmatic, which led to the distortion of facts such as completely omitting experiences of transgender men and observing very select cases. Riddell further argues that transgender women involved in the women's right movement are often accepted by those who know them. The question of whether transgender women should be accepted in the movement is often raised by people who have minimal interactions with them. Riddell also refutes Raymond's claim that transgender women advance in the patriarchal system by gaining access to women's spaces by pointing out that transgender women are rejected within the patriarchal systems, enough so that surgeries are met with resistance and discomfort. Catherine Connell (2010) has found, contrary to the claims of some radical feminists, many transgender people notice gender discrimination and use this awareness in attempts to decrease gender inequality. She argues that this indicates that transgender people are not attempting to oppress cisgender women.

While there has been debate, there is also discussion showing the transgender rights are important for women's rights. Whittle (2006) argues that feminism and transgender critiques on gender are similar in questioning the assumptions of sex-roles. He also makes the argument that both question the binary structure of gender. Connell (2012) addresses the relationship of transgender rights and feminism, pointing out that both are pursuing similar goals in resisting sexism, and both affect the rigid ideals of gender. She argues that transgender people should not be considered the enemy nor the agents of change and that political alignments will likely affect which direction they can go.

### **Research Questions**

The current research indicated that the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement have been closely related historically. However, there are some differences between these movements. This research sets to answer the following questions:

1. Historically, how has the gay and lesbian rights movement set the stage for transgender rights movements to advance?
2. Where does the gay and lesbian rights movement converge and diverge with the transgender rights movement?
3. What is the current relationship between the gay and lesbian rights movement and transgender rights movement and to what extent does it help the transgender rights movement to succeed?

I would like to acknowledge that I consider the gay and lesbian rights movement as separate movements. Historically, issues addressed by lesbians are not necessarily the same as issues addressed by gay men. However, I treat the gay and lesbian rights movement as a coalition

for the purposes of this thesis. These movements have sought and achieved significant changes in society and have worked on similar issues.

## **Research Methods**

The research will be conducted using a historical comparative analysis. The purpose of historical comparative analysis is to explore macro-level questions and social change on a large scale (Neuman 1997). According to Neuman (1997), there are multiple ways to conduct historical comparative analyses. For this research, I will be using a qualitative approach comparing the present events of a single nation (Neuman 1997). I have chosen to compare the LGBT movement to the transgender rights movement because of they are closely related having similar foundations presenting a critique of heteronormativity. These movements also so closely related that transgender rights have been openly included as part of the gay and lesbian rights movement, as indicated by the title LGBT. For the purpose of this research, I intend on using Schilt's (2010) definition of transgender. She states, "transgender is an umbrella term for a wide variety of "differently gendered" identities (14). She also points out that this definition should be approached with caution as it can be contested and that the definition is purely for academic reasons. In examining these movements, I intend on further exploring the histories and developments of the movements and how these developments relate to social movement theories. I would like to explore how collective identity and frames play a role in the progress and changes in these social movements as well as looking at the structural approaches that have also led to changes of these movements in the United States history.

I intend on focusing on three timeframes. The first period that I intend on examining closer is the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement. The next period I wish to explore is the 1990-2000. In this period, transgender people

were formally included in the gay and lesbian rights movement and many organizations began adding the T to the LGBT movement. Finally, I would like to examine most recent occurrences of the LGBT movement.

I aim to continue with a more extensive review of the literature as well as using media analysis and internet searches. I would like to focus on website work to provide information on the state of transgender rights such as:

- The Nation Center for Transgender Equality- <http://transequality.org/>
- Transgender Law Center- <http://transgenderlawcenter.org/>
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project- <http://srlp.org/>
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force- <http://www.thetaskforce.org/>
- The Human Rights Campaign (The reason for examining HRC is because of their historical controversy regarding the ENDA)- <http://www.hrc.org/>

### **Significance of Study**

The significance of this study is to explore where the transgender rights movement diverges from LGBT movements and to find what climate allows for the success in the development for transgender rights movements. The literature on the transgender rights movement through a sociological lens has been limited. There have been contributions to the literature about changes in the transgender rights movement such as work by Kristen Schilt, historical literature by Susan Stryker, and critical examinations by Dean Spade. However, there are still topics to be explored. An examination of the historical trajectory that links the transgender rights movement to the gay and lesbian rights movement is scarce. The information on how the movements have used coalition building also remains to be expanded on. This creates a need to examine where these movements have converged and diverged. This also explores how social movements can form alliances through extensions of framing and coalition building as identities differ but hold similar ideologies. This research also can lead to better information as to how to create more inclusive policies when lobbying for legislative and policy changes. This can

also create more information when organizations are attempting to create institutional environments that are better suited for diverse populations.

## Chapter 2 - Struggles After Stonewall

The gay and lesbian rights movement, which had been closely related to the transgender rights movement exploded June 28, 1969. “Limp wrists were forgotten. Beer cans and bottles were heaved at windows and a rain of coins descended on the cops” (D’Emilio 1998: 232).

D’Emilio describes it as a scene that ended in anything but the usual way. At the time gay and transgender people were targets of police raids and harassments. In this instance, it was also a political move on the incumbent mayor during an election and a new commanding officer who had encouraged the raids of gay bars (D’Emilio 1998). These police raids were often uneventful and the bar would reopen as soon as the cops conducting the raid were bribed into letting the business stay open (Stryker 2008). However, as police attempted to force a lesbian in to the police car, the scene became more volatile. As more people gathered to join against the officers’ abuse, the police became outnumbered. For their safety, they locked themselves inside the bar and called for backup. Attempting to force the police out, the door of the bar was beaten in with a parking meter being used a battering ram and then the bar was set on fire (D’Emilio 1998). Back up did arrive to rescue the officers, but the revolt continued until the next morning.

The next night protestors and officers rejoined in conflict against each other with a similar amount of resistance from about 400 officers and 2000 protestors (D’Emilio 1998). Stryker (2008) notes that there were several much smaller skirmishes in the following nights, however the motivation to start a political discussion had followed closely.

Most of the time the events at the Stonewall Inn are referred to as riots. However, Bronski (2011) argues that this is not the case. Not only does he not use the word riot when discussing Stonewall’s events, he also explicitly states that they were not riots. Instead, he argues they were “sustained street altercations or raucous, sometimes violent resistance” (2011:209). He

argues that political aggressiveness was intended and displayed in the slogans used, such as the one written on the Stonewall Inn “They want us to fight for our country [but] they invade our rights” (Bronski 2011:209).

Shortly before the events at Stonewall Inn, San Francisco experienced a similar event in its Tenderloin district known as Compton’s Cafeteria riot. Compton’s Cafeteria riot became marked as beginnings of the transgender rights movement (Stryker 2008). Followed by a week of picketing, the incident started when a police officer assaulted a drag queen and she threw hot coffee on him (Irving 2008). More people who were opposed to the state policing their sexual orientation and gender identity began to participate in the resistance against police officers who regularly harassed people in the Tenderloin district (Stryker 2008).

While the events at the Stonewall Inn set off the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement and Compton’s Cafeteria Riots is recorded to be the beginnings of the transgender rights movement. It is important to study the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement because it is so closely related to the beginnings of the transgender rights movement. In fact, there is discussion that transgender people were heavily involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement and actually started it (Tadlock 2014). When researching the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement, one can see how structural opportunities allowed it to emerge, how resources became important, and how it was affected by framing. Finally, in exploring the gay and lesbian rights movement, one can see how the needs of transgender people were not completely met in the gay and lesbian rights movement. While transgender people were involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement, because of marginalization (within that group) other groups focusing on the needs of transgender people were already being formed.

## **Structural Opportunities**

Some social movement theorists argue that structural changes presented opportunities for gay liberation to begin. Tarrow argues that much of the structural changes are seen in instances where there is more access to political rights, political instability and support from influential actors. In discussing how access to political rights affects social movements, Tarrow states that collective actions are most likely to occur when there is intermediate access to rights. He also states that political instability is also likely to increase the chances of political action by indicating instability in power structures and divisions among elite actors. Finally, Tarrow states that influential actors play a key role in the collective actions because they act as negotiators on behalf of activists. When exploring the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights and the transgender rights movements one can see how structural opportunities allowed collective actions to emerge.

Zald argues that the “cascade of social movements” was started by the civil rights movement (Buechler 2011:110). Buechler (2011) states that students influenced by these movement formed organizations with other ideals, such as free speech movements, which then lead to the creation of the anti-war movements. This spurred the creation of various other counterculture movements. The gay and lesbian rights movement was one of the counterculture movements that arose.

D’Emilio also argues that political structures also influenced the emergence of the gay and lesbian rights movement. He states that much of the reason that it continued to spread was the result of other social movements that advocated similar values. D’Emilio and Freedman (1988) examine how the beginning of the gay and lesbian rights movement came from movements already advocating sexual liberation. This was only part of the ongoing criticisms of the existing structures. He states that inspired by the civil rights movement, “...white American



college students were rousing themselves from a generation-long political stupor” (D’Emilio and Freedman 1988: 306). Questioning some of the contradictions in political and social spheres led to various social movements. D’Emilio and Freedman (1988) argue that the women’s rights movement paved the way for the gay and lesbian rights movement. Similar to other social movements occurring at the time, the women’s rights movement questioned both the ideal that sex was only appropriate in marriage, and the institution of marriage in itself. Furthermore, the women’s rights movement cleared the path to question heterosexuality as natural and any other form of sexuality as deviant.

The women’s rights movement connects to the gay and lesbian rights movement and how it relates to opportunity structures because as Tarrow argues, there was the impression that current structures were becoming less oppressive but still were not completely open. At the time, sexual liberation movements and women’s rights movements, created an atmosphere for people to begin questioning gender roles and sexual freedoms. This atmosphere allowed opportunities for people to challenge the idea that heterosexuality was normal. At the time a small gay and lesbian rights movement already existed. One organization in the movement was the Mattachine society, which promoted homosexuality as a distinct but morally equal sexual orientation when compared to heterosexuality (Engel 2001). Despite promoting homosexuality as morally equal, it still argued that the best way for safety was to be discreet and private. In contrast, many of those involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement argued that it was more important to change the public sphere in order to lead safe lives (Bronski 2011).

That the current power structure was already receiving growing criticism indicated opportunities were opening for collective action. Many ideas current of the time were beginning to change. The earlier movements that promoted gay and lesbian rights looked extremely

different from the gay and lesbian rights movement that started after Stonewall. Earlier movements promoted privacy whereas after Stonewall, the gay liberation movement promoted being public.

Support from positions of power is apparent when one sees the changes in laws that were occurring in the 1960s. Engel (2001) states that many legal writers had started to advocate for the decriminalization of homosexuality. One also starts to see similar changes in laws that reflected similar beliefs. Illinois and Connecticut repealed their anti-sodomy law in the 1960s, which also reflected the changing values of society. While it was only the two states, it did indicate changes in the system moving toward being more inclusive of diverse sexualities.

### **Resource Mobilization**

Closely relating to the theory of structural opportunities are the theories regarding resource mobilization. While Tarrow states that support from people in positions of power is important for influencing structural opportunities for collective action. Freeman (1979) makes a similar statement considering them able to give “specialized resources”. Freeman (1979) makes note the importance of resources in general when discussing social movements. Not only must one consider the availability of tangible resources, like money and space, one must also think intangible resources, which are people involved in the movement. While anyone can give time and dedication to a social movement, only a few people have the ability to give resources that are more specialized.

When examining the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movements there are a few key players that were able to give resources that are more specialized. These resources are argued to have helped in the advancements of the movement by not only aiding in changing some of the structures which helped to give people

hope, but also helped in gaining more resources for people needing them. One major actor in the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights and the transgender rights movements was millionaire Reed Erickson (Stryker 2008). Erickson became a millionaire by inheriting his family's business and successfully managing it throughout the 1960s. Erickson used his fortune to advance research he perceived to be an investment to "the future of human society" (Devor and Matte 2007: 49). Shortly after his father's death, Erickson met Dr. Harry Benjamin. Dr. Benjamin had been known for working with Magnus Hirschfeld, a doctor who had done much of his work on sexual diversity in Germany until Hitler came into power (Stryker 2008). At a time when most doctors opted to institutionalize transgender patients, Dr. Benjamin was one of very few doctors willing to administer hormones for transgender people or perform sexual reassignment surgery (Devor and Matter 2007). Erickson and Benjamin both had the resources to begin changing the way transgender people were viewed in society.

Reed Erickson began to fund research for Dr. Benjamin, which led to the publication of "*The Transsexual Phenomenon*." In this publication, Benjamin argued that one could not change someone's gender identity and that it was a doctor's responsibility to let people live as the gender that they identified to ensure the most fulfilled lives (Stryker 2008). Shortly after the publication of this work, John Hopkins University Medical School established a sex-change program (Stryker 2008). Erickson also was involved to some extent in this program. When he learned from Dr. Benjamin that John Hopkins was going to perform the first sex-change surgery he gave money toward it and continued to fund the program from that point forward (Meyerowitz 2002).

More people with specialized resources were used in this area of the movement as well. Because transsexual surgeries were still not widely accepted, John Hopkins University did not want much attention for their work (Meyerowitz 2002). They had funding and staff necessary to

run the program and preferred to stay quiet about it, but about a year after the first surgery the media found out (Meyerowitz 2002).

The staff within the program used social networks to change how the media would present the information to the public. When the media first discovered this information via a gossip columnist, the doctors contacted Thomas Buckley, who was a reporter for *New York Times* (Meyerowitz 2002). Buckley had interviewed Dr. Benjamin in the past, which the doctors hoped would help in their favor. The doctors also hoped that his publication in the *New York Times* would affect how other news reporters wrote the story (Meyerowitz 2002). This approach did work. Many of the media reports after the interview spoke favorably of the research being done at the college (Meyerowitz 2002). The interview also changed the overall tone of the media coverage in regards to surgeries for transgender patients months later as seen with the University of Minnesota. When the University of Minnesota started its program, it hoped to avoid the media attention that John Hopkins had received and used a pseudonym and a false procedure for their first patient (Meyerowitz 2002). Despite this effort, the media learned about the procedure and wanted to write a story on it. The media's reaction to the research at John Hopkins University allowed the doctors to be less resistant to the publicity, and after its coverage, the negative responses were minimal (Meyerowitz 2002). Much of the responses that were critical of performing surgeries were from psychologists. At the time, even religious leaders did not protest against transsexual surgeries (Meyerowitz 2002). According to Meyerowitz (2002), John Hopkins research program started to open doors for the rights of transgender people by acting as a medical authority to offer support.

These instances can all be considered specialized resources. Erickson was able to use his wealth to encourage research that supported the needs of transgender people. With the

connections made in the progress of the research there was a change in how the media wrote about it. Stryker (2008) states that Erikson was able to work with the available resources he had; he was able to use his resources to gain support for transgender people from medical authorities. Stryker (2008) argues this climate, in part, had contributed to the beginnings of the transgender rights movement. The resources that were becoming available had given people hope for change instead of just struggling to survive. While the resources made transgender people hopeful for change, this research still reinforced the gender binary, moreover it allowed for the medicalization of gender.

The medical field debated whether gender dysphoria was a biological or psychological occurrence (Meyerowitz 2002). However, both approaches adhered to the more conservative ideology of a gender binary. Some medical professionals at the time claimed gender dysphoria a psychological ailment that could be prevented with psychological therapy. The Gender Identity Research Clinic (GIRC) was one such organization that attempted to make “sissy boys” and “tomboy girls” to act in accordance to traditional gender roles (Meyerowitz 2002: 126). These physicians acknowledged that sex and gender were not the same, and that gender required “training” (Meyerowitz 2002: 125). They argued that the changes in gender roles were causing a disruption in gender. In order to ensure that people held the culturally accepted gender role, parents needed to adhere to the gender roles within the relationship (Meyerowitz 2002). They encouraged rigorous monitoring of gender roles stating that any behavior that was out of the norms was a “malignant” symptom that needed to be fixed early in childhood (Meyerowitz 2002: 126).

At the same time, several prestigious colleges established programs for the research of transgender people, one such example was Harry Benjamin’s International Gender Dysphoria

Association. Today this organization is called World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) (Schilt 2010). This organization established the criteria that were required for transsexuals to receive care (Schilt 2010). In order to receive hormonal treatments people had to be diagnosed as having gender dysphoria (Schilt 2010).

The ways that doctors would diagnose gender dysphoria further adhered to the beliefs of the gender binary. For example, the physical appearance of a person before surgery affected qualifications. Meyerowitz (2002) stated that if a transwoman had a more masculine appearance, they were more likely to be rejected. Furthermore, in diagnosing transwomen, one therapist would bully patients. He stated, “the girls [that is, transwomen] cry, the gays get aggressive” (Schilt 2010: 23). In this statement the medical professional is adhering to the belief of a gender binary and the belief that women are weaker and will react in a passive way when being bullied, whereas men will react in a more violent and assertive manner. They also rejected candidates that engaged in heterosexual activity before the surgery (Meyerowitz 2002). The rigidity of the gender binary adhered to, and so was the assumption that sexual orientation was related to gender identity, thus rejecting anyone who would have been deemed gay by the public after surgery.

Another significant factor was that in order to qualify for surgery the person was expected to feel like they were “trapped” in the “wrong body” and experience self-loathing. Sullivan (2003) states that there was the assumption that self-loathing also directly involved the way one felt towards their own genitals. As a result, many people who wanted to qualify for the surgery would not admit that they had ever enjoyed sex or masturbated because it was considered to be “role inappropriateness” and they would be rejected from the program as a result (Sullivan 2003: 105). This illustrates the belief of a gender binary because it adhered to the

idea that gender was in line with sexuality. Someone that enjoyed their sexuality prior to surgery did not fit the requirements for any transsexual operations. They no longer fit the role that was deemed appropriate for the expectations of what it means to be male or female.

While those who argued for the biological explanation for transgender people seemed to have a less restrictive attitude for gender, they still adhered to the rigidity of a gender binary. Through the methods they used to determine whether a person should be allowed to transition, medical doctors still upheld the belief that gender was neatly categorized into one of two categories. They also seemed to indicate that if one did not fit into the category that they were currently in, they could still be fit into the other. However, given the structures at the time, it was still an indicator of progress compared to the years prior. The research conducted with the funding of Reed Erickson may have adhered to the assumption of dichotomous genders, but it still opened the door for more opportunity than what had been experienced in the past. At the same time, Meyerowitz (2002) argues that the strictness of the gender binary became more enforced with this research through medical enforcement of gender.

The social actors who were able offer specialized resources worked within the structures that were accessible to them, but there were still some shortcomings. They were able to make resources more available than they had been in the past. This may have allowed for more willingness from others to take risks for advancements in the rights of transgender people, but at this point, the gender binary had become pathologized.

### **Framings**

Freeman (1979) notes the importance of people in resource mobilization, explaining that the resources they invest into a movement are essential to its progress and success. However, there are other factors equally important to the success of a movement as noted by Snow. Snow

(1986) addresses the concept of framing in social movements, which involves exploring how people are linked through congruent ideologies. Different types of framing are addressed in his work—bridging, amplification, extension, and transformation.

Frame bridging involves linking one or more frames that share similar ideologies but are structurally different. When examining the progression of the gay and lesbian rights movement from when it first emerged, one can see how frame bridging played into the development of gay and lesbian rights groups when looking at its complicated relationship with other radical groups at the time.

The intense uprising at the Stonewall Inn did reflect the change that had occurred in the culture. The previous gay and lesbian rights organizations were much more limited in number and they encouraged inclusion into society. The organizations that emerged after Stonewall took a more radical approach that was seen in various other social movements at the time. The Gay Liberation Front was an example of this image. The Gay Liberation Front had taken its name from the Women's Liberation Front, which had been inspired by the Vietcong National Liberation Front (Bronski 2011).

The Gay Liberation Front believed homophobia was not separate from other forms of oppression (Bronski 2011). The Gay Liberation Front supported overthrowing of capitalism, white supremacy, and patriarchy, believing all of these to be sources of oppression to the gay community (Kissack 1995). There were attempts to bridge frames with other organization that held similar beliefs. Lesbians in the Gay Liberation Front's participated in the Congress to Unite Women, in protests against the war, and in vocalizing support for Black Panther leaders that had been imprisoned (D'Emilio 1998). Despite attempts to ally themselves with other organizations, many times there was minimal success. Much of this was because many other groups either did



not accept homosexuality or were afraid of it (Bronski 2011). For example, in order to avoid having the stigma of being associated with the gay and lesbian rights movements there were women's rights organization that deliberately kicked lesbians out (Kissack 1995).

Despite the lack of success in attempting to work with other organizations that were also attempting to change current powers structures at the time, the organization that seemed to cause a divide in the Gay Liberation Front was the Black Panthers. While both organizations shared similar disdain for the current power structures, the Black Panthers had been criticized for their homophobic attitudes (Kissack 1995). When the Gay Liberation Front proposed giving financial contributions to the Black Panthers, disagreements arose because the Black Panthers had used homophobic slurs in their speeches. However, the chairman of the Black Panthers did give a speech arguing that there was need to work with gay liberation and women's liberations groups. Bronski (2011) states that this was possibly the first and only time that a social movement organization advocated for working with the gay and lesbian rights movement. However, there did not seem to be much coalition building as a result. Some members of The Gay Liberation Front took the stance that in order to change this lack of coalition building, they needed to become active in the other movements occurring (Kissack 1995). Others felt that it was more important to work specifically for advancing the rights of gay people. Those members broke away and formed the Gay Activists Alliance (Kissack 1995). The Gay Activist Alliance was accused by members of the Gay Liberation Front of supporting the power structure that the various social movements were trying to overthrow because it worked with people in power (in the establishment power structure) to make changes (Kissack 1995). However both worked together until the Gay Liberation Front ended in the early 1970s (Bronski 2011).

When examining the gay and lesbian rights movement and applying Snow's (1986) theory on frame bridging one can see how people in the gay and lesbian rights movement did attempt to bridge frames to rally support. While there were no other groups committed to the cause of promoting gay and lesbian rights, many of the groups at the time were aimed at overthrowing current structures that perpetuated various forms of oppression. The Gay Liberation Front acknowledged the various forms of oppressions, in doing so attempted to work with other causes. Unfortunately, these attempts did not work as well as hoped.

In the 1970s, there was a shift in values that can present an illustration of Snow's description of frame amplifications. With frame amplification, Snow explains that there are value amplifications, which are realities that need protection, and belief amplifications, which are anything that supports or denies the protections of these realities. The shift in the 1970s is seen with the beginnings of the Save Our Children group led by Anita Bryant, but the culture had been shifting for some time prior. While the American Psychological Association had dropped homosexuality out of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, others argued homosexuality was going to harm society. One such article was published in *Time* magazine that stated it would cause "unstable friendships" and make children question their sexual orientation (Bronski 2011). At the time there became a value frame that homosexuality would destroy society by "wrecking family life" or by "recruiting children into it" because they could not reproduce (Bronski 2011). With these beliefs, repeals of anti-sodomy laws were reversed.

In attempts to respond to this backlash toward the gay and lesbian rights movement, the people within the gay and lesbian rights movement began to emphasize adherence to gender roles. As a way to resist the value and belief frames that presented gay people as a threat

(focusing primarily on them as a threat to children), people in the gay and lesbian rights movement attempted to minimize differences between gay and straight people.

This did affect the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement as illustrated with Christine Jorgenson. Jorgenson was a transwoman who had been historically sensationalized by the media when she received surgery in Europe during the early 1950s. When speaking out against the anti-gay laws and campaigns that were gaining a lot more media attention she told people supporting the gay and lesbian rights movement to not be “way out and weird... anyone who wants to be one of those is hindering the movement” (Meyerowitz 2002: 281). This reflected the idea that in order for the gay and lesbian rights movement to succeed there was need to adhere to the social conventions of gender roles.

Jorgenson’s speech seemed to reflect the opinions of the greater population in the gay and lesbian rights movement. According to Erikson-Schroth (2014), the nonconventional styles of clothing and haircuts had started to change to more conformist looking styles. There also became an increasing preference to not distinguish differences, but rather to emphasize that the only difference between gay people and heterosexual people were their private lives (Erikson-Schroth 2014). At this time transgender people, who had already been marginalized within the gay and lesbian rights movement, were even more marginalized. This was because there was the perception that being a transgender person was not a private matter but a public display of difference (Erikson-Schroth 2014).

These events relate to frame amplification as described by Snow because as part of the changing values that were occurring in the greater society there was a need to amplify belief frames. The conservative backlash began to amplify the value that heterosexuality as something that needed to be protected because homosexuality posed a threat to children and society. There

was also belief amplification that in order to help protect this value there needed to be changes in laws that promoted gay and lesbian rights. As an attempt to respond to this type of framing, the movement emphasized that the differences between gay and straight people were minimal.

### **Divergences in Gay and Lesbian Movement from Transgender Rights Movement**

While at first it seems like the resistance of the gay and lesbian rights movement influenced the marginalization of transgender people within the gay and lesbian rights movement, it is not necessarily the case. Although transgender people were active in the gay and lesbian rights movement, and while the movement presented itself as an opportunity to be heard, the needs of transgender people were not always met within the movement.

Transgender people have been involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement since its beginnings. In fact, according to Stryker (2008), Sylvia Rivera reports participating in the Stonewall incident. Stryker (2008) states that Rivera was the one who threw the bottle that changed the mood of the crowd from jeering to violent resistance. Rivera states that at Stonewall she saw “the world change for [her] and [her] people” but acknowledged that there was still need for continued progress (Rivera: 41). The Stonewall incident, for Rivera, indicated a landmark in which the system would change, but the changes would not be immediate nor would the changes be easy.

After the Gay Liberation Front was formed, the marginalization was evident fairly quickly. While transgender people were able to use the movement as a way to unite and find each other they were marginalized within the gay and lesbian rights movement. Kissack (1995) states that one editorial published in a gay positive magazine argued for transgender people to organize and to link themselves with the African American civil rights, women’s rights and gay

and lesbian rights movements that were active at the time. This article illustrated that there was a need for transgender people to break off and mobilize their own organizations in order to have their needs met. At the same time, it was acknowledged that there would be need to work with other movements.

The marginalization of transgender people is seen shortly after the formation of the Gay Liberation Front. Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, who were transgender activists at the time, left the Gay Liberation Front and became involved with the Gay Activists Alliance. However, in the Gay Activist Alliance, issues of gender identity were still excluded; by 1970, they had started the Street Transvestite Action Revolution (Bronski 2011). Rivera addresses the issues that transgender people encountered at the beginnings of the movements in the early 1970s. She states:

My half sisters and brothers are being raped and murdered by pigs, straights, and even sometimes by other uptight homosexuals who consider us the scum of the gay community. They do this because they are not liberated...as far back as I can remember, my half sisters and brothers liberated themselves from this fucked up system that has been oppressing our gay sisters and brothers... (Rivera 1971: 19)

In her message, she addresses some of the most severe issues encountered by gender non-conforming people. She indicates that not only do they risk violence against them by the general population but also they at times they encounter violence from people in the gay and lesbian rights movement. In the same message, she also seems to try to remind people participating in the gay and lesbian rights movement that it was transgender people who initially started the Stonewall Riots. Furthermore, they had continued to work toward the advancements of gay and lesbian rights. In alienating them, the gay and lesbian rights movement was ignoring their efforts.

Similarly, in 1970 the Queen's Liberation Front was also founded. Its founder Lee Brewster stated that the major reason for the founding of Queen's Liberation Front was that they felt separated from the gay and lesbian rights movement (Meyerowitz 2002). The Queen's Liberation Front spoke out against the "'uptight professional' gay men who 'make it a point in the media to say that they are not...mad screaming drag queens'" (Meyerowitz 2002:235). The Queen's Liberation Front had success in changing the laws that had previously banned cross-dressing. It also seemed to discourage sex change surgeries referring to it as out-of-date. However, they had a lot of support from transsexuals who considered themselves to be part of the movement (Meyerowitz 2002). This indicates that gender nonconformity was discouraged from the beginning of the gay and lesbian rights movement, and was discussed in the media. This alienation of transgender people within the movement could have influenced a break between the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement.

## **Conclusion**

From the beginnings of Stonewall, there were divisions within the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement. While the gay and lesbian rights movement allowed for their voices to be heard, it also alienated them. As the history of the gay and lesbian rights movement continued into an era that aimed for normalization of gay people, the rights of transgender people became even more marginalized because they were considered to be too public with their identity.

The gay and lesbian rights movement did set the stage for transgender people to organize and gain more visibility themselves. When reviewing the structural changes that were going on in the 1960s, one can see the rise in political and social criticisms could have influenced the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movements. One can also see how the resources that

were available such as finances, medicine and media, may have also affected the advancements in the gay and lesbian rights movement and also the transgender rights movement. Medical authorities were considered legitimate authorities, which allowed for discussion about the rights of transgender people. However, they did so in a way that reinforced the cultural beliefs about gender at the time. There were also attempts to mobilize other resources by reaching out to other groups that also wanted to change the structures in place, which caused some tension with the gay liberation movement itself.

As society changed, there was a change in the framing of gay and lesbian rights. While originally they wanted to change the system, that goal transformed into trying to conform to better fit into the existing system. The change in framing occurred because society that grown more conservative. Those against the gay and lesbian rights movement used frame amplification to justify their stance. Using the value frames such as family values and children's safety and the belief frame that the gay and lesbian rights movement was going to harm these values, those against the gay and lesbian rights movement did affect it. In doing so, it affected the gay and lesbian rights movement and further marginalized transgender people in the movement.

## **Chapter 3 - LGB+T: The 1990s and the Changes in the LGBT Movement**

The 1990s are considered another significant era in the gay and lesbian rights movement, as well as for the transgender rights movement. It does not seem to have the same image of being as revolutionary as the 1960s were for the gay and lesbian rights movement, but there were changes in the movement that are argued to have allowed for the expansion of the transgender rights movement. The reason for this shift in the LGBT movement is credited to some of the changes occurring in academia that heavily criticized the way gender and sexuality were written about and discussed.

### **Structural Opportunities**

According to Stryker (2008), there was an expansion in the transgender rights movement in the 1990s. She states that it occurred around the time that an increase in literature occurred promoting transgender activism and transgender studies. One such example is Sandy Stone's (1991) *The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto*, which criticized the current transphobic discussion in second wave feminism and the medical field.

Named in response to Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire*, Stone (1991) criticizes the feminist theorist that had been comparing transgender people to rapists. Stone attempts to determine where some of the second wave feminists gained their suspicions, and then relate it to the literature on the topic at the time. She turns some of her discussion toward the flaws in the medical research that not only had been portraying transgender people at the time to be mentally ill, but also indicating that they were controlling and manipulative. She also pointed out that much of the literature reinforces the gender binary. This occurs not only in the medical literature



but also in the biographies of people who had received sex changes. She noted that part of the problem in the literature was that it was primarily the researchers writing it.

Transsexuals were treated as irrational research subjects. They were also treated as homogenous objects rather than subjects, with the literature guiding the generalizations. For example, the medical research stated that all transsexual people acted in specific ways or reported the same feelings about their body. In response, transsexual patients would use the same medical book that doctors were using to diagnose people in order to fit the diagnosis. Which was often necessary to qualify for hormones or surgeries.

At the same time, researchers were treated as objective rational entities that contained more knowledge on the matter of transgender people's bodies than the subjects themselves. Stone also explores why the transgender community has not spoken out against this common discourse. The major cause, she states, was related to the goal to disappear; this involved rewriting their own history to better fit in the constraints of the gender binary. Stone states that there is a need for more transgender people to talk about their histories. Their biographies contain challenges to the gender binary, which is necessary in order to challenge the theories and research being published at the time.

Much like the queer theory that also emerged in the 1990s, Stone's article challenged the common belief that research was unbiased and unattached. Similar arguments criticizing the treatments of transgender people as well as the overall structure of the gender binary began to emerge at this time. This created an environment in which transgender studies would be able to emerge (Stryker 2006).

When analyzing these changes using social movement theories that examine opportunity structures, it is important to look at some of the changes that were occurring around the same

time. Some of the changes occurring were in global relations and the AIDs crisis. Discussion about AIDs was initially framed in a way that blamed gay people for its spread. With changes in political structure, and in response to being the center of accusation, queer theory emerged in academia, as did the queer movement. While criticized for its own shortcomings, it is argued that queer theory also opened the door for transgender studies.

Stryker (2006) points to the end of the cold war as an influencing factor for queer studies to begin its emergence. She argues that with the idea of east versus west binary being deconstructed, there was a window of opportunity to deconstruct other socially constructed binaries including the gender binary. She also looks other structural changes in that decade, which she argues could have influenced the expansion of the transgender movement. The first factor she points to is the emergence of queer studies, which she relates to a much bigger picture, arguing that it emerged during the era of the AIDs crisis. Queer theory, she argues, contested the homophobic discussion that framed AIDs as a “gay disease”. She further argues that while queer theory was not ready to address the complexities of gender issues, it did open the door for transgender people to address how the heteronormative structures had oppressed them. In return, transgender people encourage queer theory to question the way “bodies, identities and desires can be interwoven” (p. 8).

Queer theory is called a “discipline that refuses to be disciplined” (Sullivan 2003: v). Turner (2000) comments that queer theory is celebrated for its more unfocused character. He explains that queer theory was critical of the current political and academic institutions, considering them unable to meet the needs of those who identify as queer. The theory also focused on problems in then-current academia and politics but admits to being uncertain as to how to replace the modes at hand.

Turner (2000) states that queer theory emerged in the early 1990s. In tracing it back, he credits Teresa de Lauretis who described her work as queer. He argues that queer theory is rooted in feminist scholarship as well as gay and lesbian scholarship. Initially it was motivated by lesbian experiences being erased when they were included under categories of feminist literature or gay and lesbian literature.

Queer theory also presented a significant criticism to academia. While much of academic literature attempted to present itself as unattached, and therefore unbiased to the research conducted, queer theorists argued that this attitude simply avoids the fact that culture does play a role in writings and thoughts. When writing on identities such as gender and sexuality, the unbiased and indifferent attitude was criticized by queer theorists. They instead chose to question how identities were formed, how these identities have the meanings they do and how institutions affect these identities (Turner 2000). According to Turner (2000), queer theory not only explores and opposes the predominant definitions of sexual identity but also the definitions of gender identity. This also created an opportunity for scholarship on transgender identity.

According to Gameson (2003), the development of Queer Nation paralleled with the emergence of queer theory in academia. Queer Nation was an organization that is argued to have emerged from a militant anti-AIDS prejudice organization that handed out fliers at a Gay Rights Parade (Stryker 2008). Anonymously authored, the fliers were titled “Queers Read This!” Also referred to as the Queer Nation Manifesto, it began by drawing attention to the systems that oppressed the gay and lesbian community and called out the privileges of straight people:

Don't be fooled, straight people own the world and the only reason you have been spared is you're smart, lucky or a fighter. Straight people have a privilege that allows them to do

whatever they please and fuck without fear. But not only do they live a life free of fear; they flaunt their freedom in my face (Queers Read This! 1990)

The article addressed not only the freedoms that were allowed to straight people but denied for gay people, it also addressed how this privilege influenced the common argument from many straight people. It articulates this shared belief that the gay community should be quiet and private about their sexual orientation. The article also points out these are not the requirements of straight people. Public displays of affection for straight people were (and still are) common and accepted by the public with minimal controversy. It points to structures that have encouraged gay men and lesbians to not only remain private about their sexuality but also to hate their sexuality. The article points not only to education and media which treated gay people as though they were not part of the general population but as “the other” people; it also points to politicians and medicine, which had more or less paid little attention to the AIDS virus until there was an awareness that heterosexual populations were also affected by it.

To respond to these oppressions the article encouraged the gay and lesbian community to be public. The Manifesto called for an “army of lovers” to fight the oppressions of not only homophobia, but also racism, misogyny, and overall bigotry. The article called for people to fight back for very serious reasons stating:

“Be proud. Do whatever you need to do to tear yourself away from your customary state of acceptance. Be free. Shout. In 1969, Queers fought back. In 1990, Queers say ok. **Next year, will we be here?**”

Queer Nation acknowledged the need for a revolution in the 1960s, during which the movement for gay and lesbian rights began. It also expressed concern for where the gay and lesbian rights movement was going. The Manifesto seems to argue that the discretion of gays and lesbians

could lead to the death, not just of the movement itself, but also of gays and lesbians. It further addresses the concern, illustrating the lack of mobilization when examining the response to hate crimes against gay people. When addressing a scenario in which a gay man was killed because of his sexual orientation there was only one small protest organized. The author then compares the situation to one in which a black man had been killed because of his race and there had been a large response from the black community. The author argues that the difference in reaction was due to recognition that the hate crime had been directed at the community and not just the victim. The article also points out that similar knowledge and passion needs to be in the gay and lesbian community or the violence against them will continue.

The Manifesto becomes a call to action. “How come I only see you on Gay Pride Day? We're OUT, Where the fuck are YOU?” It points out that being out was a risk, but it was a risk taken for the benefit of all gay men and lesbians; in contrast, remaining invisible only perpetuated the oppressions and alienated gay men and lesbians.

Chapters of Queer Nation emerged shortly after “Queers Read This!” was distributed at a gay pride parade in New York. Stryker (2008) argues that Queer Nation transformed the gay and lesbian rights movement, which helped in bringing awareness about some of the needs of transgender people. Structural opportunity theories can explain some of the reason Queer Nation emerged in the 1990s. One could see the semi-open system which Tarrow (2011) argues increases the chances for social movements to occur. There was progress occurring in awareness for gay and lesbian rights. This could be indicated by the fact that gay rights parades occurred. There had been advances in the 1990s, especially when compared to the beginnings of the gay and lesbian rights movement thirty years earlier, when police raided bars and arrested people because of their sexual orientation and gender expression. However, the systems were still more

closed due to a more conservative climate. This is indicated by the fact that much of the discussion by media and politicians had demonized gay people and indicated they were the cause of the AIDs virus. This included accusations that gay people knew that they were spreading it.

## **Frames**

When examining the changes in the LGBT movement in the 1990s, one can see that the injustice frame discussed by Snow (1986) applies. Snow (1986) states that the injustice frame allows a social movement to be considered more legitimate because it displays actions from particular authorities to be unjust. Such unjust actions give a group reason to protest against authorities.

In the 1990s much of what influenced the injustice frame was the response to the AIDs crisis. Even though AIDs was a concern for the entire population, much of the government's response stigmatized gay men and lesbians. In doing so, much of the discussion surrounding the topic of AIDs blamed gay men and lesbians for its spread. This allowed for Gould (2009) the genocide frame. The genocide frame referred to the fact that many gay and lesbian rights organizations made comparisons between the AIDs crisis and the public's response to it and the holocaust (Gould 2009). While there was focus on gay men and lesbians for the spread, it affected those who used drugs by injection, hemophiliacs, and Haitian immigrants (Gould 2009). With the genocide frame being used to oppose how the public was responding to AIDs, there was argument that it was part of "a malevolent conspiracy to eliminate undesirables" (Gould 2009:170). Many of the activist's writings at the time indicated concern of becoming targets of genocide as indicated by the article *Queers Read This* asking "**Next year, will we be here?**" if there were no actions taken in the 1990s.

## Identity

Transgender came to be a uniting identity in the 1990s as well. While it had already appeared historically, it started to gain the definition that it holds today, which is as an umbrella term for “non-normative forms of gender expression or identity (Stryker 2006:123). Stryker argues that the transgender movement took this meaning after being released in a pamphlet by Leslie Feinberg, *The Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time has Come*.

Feinberg examines the harassment endured by transgender people as an unnamed form of oppression at the time. Feinberg argues in part for a name that is a self-identifying. This is significant because much of the literature discussing transgender people uses identifiers that were created by someone else. In *Transgender Liberation*, Feinberg states “We didn’t choose these words. They don’t fit all of us. It’s hard to fight an oppression without a name connoting pride, a language that honors us” (Feinberg 2006:206). Stryker (2006) makes note of other ways that Feinberg’s work has influenced language to further help with self-identification such as influencing the usage of gender non-specific pronouns.

When examining the social movement theories, one could apply the collective identity theories here. In this aspect, Feinberg begins to illustrate that transgender people do encounter a different form of oppression compared to other groups facing oppressions. Feinberg argues that while transgender people are lumped in as part of the gay and lesbian rights movement, they still have to appeal to the gay and lesbian rights movement in order to have a set of separate needs met.

Perhaps this is an illustration of how boundaries are drawn in social movements. Feinberg states that transgender people are fighting the same problems in the social structures as the gay and lesbian community. She refers to this problem as gender-phobia in the *Transgender Liberation* pamphlet. Feinberg illustrated the dynamics of boundaries and the fluidity of the

identities: “Transgendered people are mistakenly viewed as the cusp of the lesbian and gay community. In reality the two huge communities are like circles that only partially overlap” (206). Feinberg illustrates that while both communities are resisting a greater structure of gender-phobia, they are still separate from each other. This shows how the boundaries are drawn in separation from the general population, but at the same time are drawn in a way that separates the two communities. By comparing the communities to two circles that overlap, Feinberg illustrates the relationship of the two communities as very close because they are resisting similar structural oppression, yet still distinct from each other in the sense that different needs are required in order to address their human rights.

### **Divergences and Convergences**

The 1990s still showed to be a time of difficulty for transgender people within the gay and lesbian rights movement. Some instances that were noted as significant for the transgender rights movement and outlined where the gay and lesbian rights movement had neglected to meet the needs of transgender people. Sullivan (2003) notes the protest of the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival and the Brandon Teena case as two instances in which transgender activism spoke against gay and lesbian organization that had ignored the needs of transgender people.

In the early 1990s there were forms of overt discrimination such as transgender women being banned from the National Lesbian Conference (Erikson-Schroth 2014). Transgender women were also banned from the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival that same year. In 1991, the music festival stipulated that attendees must be “womyn-born womyn” (Erikson-Schroth 2014).

There were noticeable differences in reactions compared to those of the past that showed progress in the rights of transgender people. In response to the exclusion, several organizers



handed out buttons that protested the removal of transgender people from the festival. This act was in stark contrast to the attacks that transgender people had encountered in the past because previously very few people spoke out against the violence they faced. At the music festival, there were a significant number of people united in protesting their oppression.

The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival continued to exclude transgender people in the following years. Camp Trans was organized in response to this ongoing oppression. According to Erikson-Schroth (2014), one of the main organizers of the event, Riki Wilchins, notes its significance for the transgender rights movement:

Camp Trans was the first time trans-people ever coordinated and pulled off a national event. Not only that, it was the first time that significant numbers of the hard-core lesbian-feminist community backed us (523).

As noted by Freeman (1979) an important resource necessary in order for a social movement to succeed is that of gaining supporters from outside the cause. At this point, there is indication of a growing number of people supporting the transgender rights movement, which would allow for better resource mobilization to continue the social movement. There was a growing pressure for the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival to change their policy, however it was not until 1999 that the policy was no longer enforced (Erikson-Schroth 2014). While the policy is no longer enforced, the festival still requested that those in attendance be "womyn-born womyn" (Erikson-Schroth 2014).

The murder of Brandon Teena also was a point that illustrated the marginalization of transgender people within the gay and lesbian rights movement. Brandon was raped and murdered by four men who had done so because of his gender identity. The coverage from the *Village Voice* wrote an article about Brandon titled "Love Hurts: Brandon Teena Was a Woman

Who Lived and Loved as a Man: She Was Killed for Carrying It Off” (Sullivan 2003). In the article, the *Village Voice* portrayed Brandon as a butch lesbian and used feminine pronouns throughout the entire article (Erikson-Schroth 2014). Furthermore, most gay and lesbian media did not even cover the death of Brandon because they did not consider him to be gay or lesbian (Erikson-Schroth 2014).

In response to the coverage that the *Village Voice* had given, a contributor to *TNT: The Transsexual News Telegraph* protested the way the news reports discussed Brandon Teena. It stated “It is Brandon Teena (never, not ever Teena Brandon)...He (not Her, not ever Her because We decide who We are)” (Sullivan 2003: 114). It further argued that Brandon Teena was a victim of transphobia, not a victim of misogyny (Sullivan 2003).

Discussion about the exclusion of transgender people in the gay and lesbian rights movement was brought up when transgender people and allies asked for inclusion in the “March on Washington for Lesbian Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation” (Erikson-Schroth 2014). Several organizers voted to include transgender people in the title but failed to do so in the end when the national committee decided to leave the title as is (Stryker 2008). Erikson-Schroth (2014) argues that this exclusion influenced more political activity from transgender people who were already starting to become more active on a national level.

By 1994 transgender people were more active in the March on Washington. However, transgender people were still expected to march in an alternative parade instead of the major one. It was not until 1995 that many of the lesbian and gay rights organizations began to include the ‘T’ in their titles. In fact, in adding the T to their names, organizations demonstrated that they were more in line with the queer movement than they were with the previous gay and lesbian rights movement (Stryker 2008). One could recognize how in part this is related to frame

extension because Stryker (2008) notes that this inclusion represented the unity of different groups against the same structures that lead to their oppression.

Despite the inclusion, transgender people did encounter problems with LGBT organizations that were attempting to include them. Stryker (2008) reports that many LGBT organizations did not always understand how sexual orientation was different from gender identity. There were organizations that recognized the differences and attempted to meet the needs for the LGBT community. However, there were also some instances in which organizations added the T to their name only as a gesture with minimal action attached to it. Stryker (2008) states that many gay and lesbian rights organizations held to gender normative ideas by often using transgender as a noun rather than as a descriptive quality for people. Within the LGBT movement, many cisgender gay men and lesbians did not distinguish sexual orientation from gender identity. This action not only held to mainstream society's dichotomous idea about gender but also marginalized transgender people within the LGBT movement by treating gender identity the same as sexual orientation.

Nownes (2014) seems to argue that in adding the T to LGBT organizations, many were attempting to attract more members and therefore receive more funding. He argues that in the 1990s there was an increase in transgender rights organizations and that many gay and lesbian rights organizations began to include transgender rights to their mission at that time. He argues that this is an example of "boundary expansion" (Nownes 2014: 93). Nownes argues that boundary expansion is used to attract more members to an organization and to lower competition for funding. While transgender activist groups can work together with LGBT organizations, they should continue to be part of groups that focus solely on activism for transgender rights to "avoid becoming...another letter in the alphabet" (Nownes 2014, 102).

## **Conclusion**

While there was a point in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s that gay men and lesbians aimed to fit in better with mainstream society, there were changes in the 1990s that challenged the ideal to conform to the system. Some of the structural changes that are argued to have influenced that shift were the changes in political climate that challenged a global binary of east and west, which could have led to the challenge of other socially constructed binaries. Around the same time influence of academic arguments started to not only grow in favor of LGBT people but also challenged the current literature that had previously been published on the topics. From a more grassroots approach, there was a shift within the gay and lesbian rights movement from being more conservative and striving for privacy to focusing on wanting to be more public. The AIDs crisis at the time not only influenced more discussion in academia, it also influenced some of the changes in the LGBT movement. Discussion in academia influenced people to express their concerns about how the public addressed AIDs by using the LGBT community as scapegoats for its spread.

Despite the shifts in the gay and lesbian movement allowing transgender people to have their voices heard better, there were still points in which transgender people were alienated from the LGBT movement. This is seen in the organized events that continued to exclude transgender people. There also were convergences in the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement, which can be seen in the growing support of transgender people from gay men and lesbians. While there were changes that allowed for transgender people to be more included in the gay and lesbian rights movement, there was still a necessity to acknowledge that transgender people had different needs within the movement.

## **Chapter 4 - Current Context: The LGBT Movement Today**

In current day context one can see the progress that has been made in the transgender rights movement. While Stryker (2008) has argued that it has lulled, it is also arguable that the movement has continued and gained support. There are changes in structural opportunities and resources that have allowed the transgender rights movement to progress. As it continues to progress, different frames have been implemented to advance or hinder the cause. At the same time, there has been more support from LGBT organizations but there is evidence of a need for these LGBT organizations to be more directly inclusive and aware of the needs of transgender people.

### **Structural Opportunities**

When examining some of the structural opportunities that have indicated progress for the transgender rights movement one can look at the changes in laws and legal decisions. It is also notable how the LGBT population has been represented in the media. Tarrow (2011) argues that political opportunity affects the chances of social movements. When looking at the LGBT movement, one sees many of the opportunities that he discusses. The LGBT movement sees a semi-open system that Tarrow (2011) argues influences the decisions for groups to mobilize to promote a cause.

When examining the changes in more current events, one sees an opening of opportunities for the LGBT movement to progress. One can see this with many of the changes in laws and legal decisions that have been occurring. This can also be seen in the current discussion of LGBT populations in the media and popular culture.

There does seem to be an indicator of legal rights being obtained in the workforce. For the LGBT community in general, there has been more publicity about how inclusive corporations

are of the LGBT community in the workplace. While heavily criticized for its problems with neglecting the needs of transgender people, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) does attempt to bring awareness to corporations' treatment of the LGBT community by annually producing a Corporate Equality Index (CEI) that attempts to measure how well corporations give rights to LGBT workers. To do so, the HRC looks at Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, and Harassment policies as well as health care benefits. They also review various other practices involving corporations' public activities such as non-profit organizations that they donate to as well as how they conduct marketing (Human Rights Campaign 2015). Despite focusing on larger organizations, and that the Corporate Equality Index neglects to acknowledge other key issues, it has brought attention to a need for LGBT rights to be addressed in the workforce.

There have been legal processes indicating that there is a growing awareness and support for transgender people in the workforce. Bender-Baird (2011) states that since 2000 there have been a growing number of instances in which judges rule in favor of transgender people in discrimination lawsuits. This indicates that there have been changes in mainstream society as people are becoming more aware of diversity in the workplace.

At the same time, the system is not completely open. This is seen through the emerging backlash from some politicians and laws. An example of resistance to the increasing rights for LGBT people can be seen from recent activities from politicians in several states. One example of this is Kansas' governor repealing anti-discrimination bills through executive action (Lacey-Bordeaux 2015). These changes in rulings from the legal system that advocates a more open system for transgender people are being hindered by other legal attempts acting against the advancements for these rights. Another example of this is bathroom bills in which there are

attempts to pass laws that coerce transgender people to use public restrooms according to their assigned sex at birth. These laws increase their risk of being harassed and experiencing physical violence. In response, transgender people have been using media to bring discussion about the laws to light. One such example is users of social media using hashtags such as “occupotty” and “wejustneedtopee” to bring attention to the bathroom policies that put the lives and wellbeing of transgender people in danger.

The semi-open system shows that while there have been gains in the rights of the LGBT community, there is still a need for full rights to be obtained; and while the legal system is helping to advance the rights for LGBT people that same legal system is being used as a way to stop the advancement for their rights. One thing of note for the movement is that while there is focus on work for the LGBT community, transgender people are addressing a need not primarily focused on by LGBT organizations—the basic need to go to the bathroom in public without harassment.

Along with changes in political rights, Tarrow (2011) also states that division among people in power, and electoral instability is an indicator of structural opportunities changing to allow for better success of a social movement. Observing the discussion of people in power does indicate that there is division between those supporting and not supporting the LGBT movement. The rights of LGBT people in general have been used as a platform in many elections in the past and continue to be used as one in the current election.

The LGBT community has noted that there is support from people in power. As of January 2015, transgender people were acknowledged in the State of the Union Address. President Obama stated that our respect for human dignity should be the reason people should not condemn people on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity (State of the Union

Address 2015). This statement was extremely powerful. Being the first president in history to acknowledge the importance of legal rights for transgender people, in fact being the first president to mention the LGBT community in the state of the Union Address in general, he shows that changes that have occurred since the beginning of the LGBT movement. As stated by Masen Davis, currently the Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center:

While it seems like a simple thing – saying the word ‘transgender’ in a speech – President Obama’s statement represents significant progress for transgender people and the movement towards equality for all.

Tarrow (2011) states that support from people in power influence social movements. While historically, various politicians have come out in support of LGBT community, the president openly talking about acceptance of people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity as a human right in a State of the Union Address does show the advances in the LGBT movement.

There has also been an increasing amount of support from people with not only more political power but also people with more visibility, which has helped in terms of advancing the movement. Most recently noted for the transgender rights movement has been the discussion of Caitlyn Jenner. As a celebrity, her transition has received a substantial amount of publicity. The National LGBTQ Task Force (2015) discusses the importance of Caitlyn Jenner’s publicity as a transgender woman stating, “When any high-profiled figure comes out as transgender, it can help highlight the challenges transgender people face every day all across the nation.”

Despite the visibility that Jenner brings to transgender people, it has also been acknowledged by media outlets that her experience is not the same experiences as many transgender women in the United States. Grinberg published an article for CNN using the data from “Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.”



The article noted that many transgender people face various forms of discrimination for housing and employment.

While acknowledging the fact that many transgender people do not have the same experience as Caitlyn Jenner, both CNN and the National LGBTQ Task Force do seem hopeful that her publicity will help to start discussions about the rights of transgender people.

Tarrow (2011) addresses how structural opportunities can influence the emergence of a social movement. When looking at the current climate for the LGBT movement in the United States, there are indications that it will continue as a social movement. It has a semi-open system that allows rights to be obtained legally although the same legal system has been used to take rights away from the LGBT community. People in power openly support them, which helps to encourage the social movement, and having allies with influence, such as celebrities, helps to bring discussion and publicity to the movement. When looking at the structural opportunities there are many indicators that the current climate could help to support the advancement of the LGBT movement.

### **Framing**

When examining frames and how they affect the LGBT movement today, one sees how supporters of rights for LGBT people frame it as a human rights issue. One can also see that those opposed to advancing the rights of LGBT people have used various frames to counter these advancements.

Snow (1986) explains that there are two types of frame amplifications used to influence social movements. These are the amplification of values and beliefs. Values amplification discusses morals and ideals that need protection and belief amplification that affect these values positively or negatively (Snow 1986). Tadlock (2014) adds that the values used for framing are

ones that people tend to see as highly valued. He states that these values can then be turned to political issues, and people within social movements then attempt to show how these issues affect everyone. Tadlock (2014) makes note of these framings when discussing how safety and security are brought up for both people that are for the rights of transgender people and people who oppose to transgender rights.

As I write this, there has been a recent controversy for transgender people and the right to use public bathrooms. The rights of transgender people to use public restrooms is unfortunately not a new issue; however, recently various states have suggested bathroom bills that would force people to use restrooms in accordance to their assigned sex regardless of gender identity or expression.

Tadlock (2014) makes note that safety and security are important for the needs of transgender people. In his content analysis, the need for these rights was mentioned in several news articles. One such article discussed the concern of physical violence against transgender people, using a value frame that everyone should be entitled to safety and protection. This is also seen with discussion of bathroom bills. According to Transgender Law Center, even in cities that are more progressive for the rights of transgender people, harassment and assault occurs in public restrooms, as one person states in the article, “Being in gendered bathrooms consistently makes me feel vulnerable to violence and possible arrest” (Transgender Law Center 2005:11). This fits a safety framing because a person does express concern for their safety and fear of not only physical violence, but also of legal action in public bathrooms simply for performing a bodily function. This could be a value amplification because the concern of people being allowed to have safety and comfort when going about daily routines is something that many people value.

In attempts to address the concern of safety in public restrooms, many transgender advocacy groups have made suggestions to ensure that people can go to the bathroom and experience minimal encounters of harassment. While there is some attention paid to how transgender people can use gendered bathrooms safely, there are also suggestions to institutions as to how to make bathrooms safe for everyone (Transgender Law Center 2005).

Many of the bathroom bills that are brought up in various states do not help with the concern of gendered bathrooms. Ennis (2015) expresses in the *Advocate* that not only would transgender people's safety in bathrooms be affected with the passing of bathroom bills, but also the safety of cisgender people who don't fit the cultural expectations of gender in our society. This concern has only been reaffirmed when a woman experienced a violent encounter with a security guard for using the women's restroom because she did not fit the socially constructed characteristics of feminine (Kellaway 2015). When advocates for transgender rights examine bathroom bills, it is not only addressed as a safety issue for transgender people, but also for cisgender people who do not adhere to the social expectations of gender norms. This can be considered frame amplification because it does address a value that is important to people, which is the value of safety and security. Frame amplification is also used by illustrating that the value of safety and security is being impeded on with bathroom bills being implemented. It later illustrates that this is not just a safety issue for transgender people, but also for people who are not deemed masculine or feminine enough to other people.

People opposing the advancements of transgender rights also use the frame amplification of safety. One thing that is also focused on in this value amplification is the safety of others as well. Tadlock (2014) states that, when discussing restroom bills, those who are in favor of their implementation argue that the rights of many people are violated to favor a few. They go on to

argue that it is the safety of children that people should be concerned about. This argument not only shows amplification of a cherished value, but also targeting this value toward a group of people much of society agrees to be a population with extra needs for protection. When analyzing current discussion regarding bathroom bills, this frame is still being used by many groups opposed to advancing the rights of transgender people. One such example is an article from the Family Research Council, which is a religious organization noted for homophobia and transphobia. Sprigg (2010) published an article for the organization that accused those against violating the rights of transgender people of encouraging harm to women and children by creating bathrooms that allow in rapist and pedophiles. This is a frame amplification because it amplifies the value of safety especially, emphasizing safety for women and children. The article also uses belief amplification by openly stating that the rights of transgender people impede on the safety of children.

The Transgender Law Center had already rebutted the claims that were issued by the Family Research Council. They point out that the safety of children could be better protected in bathrooms that were not gender segregated by allowing parents to go into bathrooms to supervise instead of waiting outside. It further states that the safety of people in gender-segregated restrooms is not guaranteed.

Safety is expressed as a type of frame amplification for those advancing transgender rights and those that are opposed to the rights of transgender people. In the example of bathroom bills, which are a current debate, safety is the value amplified for both sides.

In noting the changes in the LGBT movement one sees how changes have occurred over time that relate to frame transformation. As presented by Snow et al. (1986) transformations involve changing an erroneous frame to gain more support. One indicator of this is the National

LGBTQ Task Force, which has changed its name several times in attempts to be more inclusive. The task force is one of the oldest organizations in the LGBT movement. It began as the National Gay Task Force and then changed into the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. As of 2014, the name has changed again to the National LGBTQ Task Force. It addressed the goals behind this name change in a YouTube video stating that the goal of the name change was “to tear down any remaining barriers to full freedom, justice and equality for LBGTQ people” (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force).

This could be a frame transformation because the task force has over time acknowledged that changes are needed to be more inclusive. It has also gone beyond changing the name and has done so by being involved in transgender activism by helping with the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. The National LGBTQ Task Force illustrates frame transformation by extending its goal from being advocates for gay and lesbian rights to also advocating for transgender rights. They indicate the desire for all people to be allowed to be themselves in their day-to-day lives. While it started with sexual orientation, they recognized that people who were penalized for self-expression was not just due to their sexual orientation but also because of gender identity and expression. The framing was transformed to be more inclusive of people who experienced oppression because of society’s gendered expectations. Though one could argue that there is still much need for the task force to continue growing, they are working toward upholding their mission statement that calls for a future in which everyone is free to be allowed to be who they are without being negatively affected for doing so.

## **Divergence and Convergence**

As noted previously, historically for the LGBT movement, the issues of transgender people have not completely been met within the LGBT movement. This can still be noticed with current research.

When Tadlock (2014) examines the frames involved in several news articles discussing the rights of LGBT people he makes note that the frames in articles supporting LGB rights were different from frames in articles supporting transgender rights. When looking at the focus frames have for LGB rights, it was found that a majority of the articles focused on equality or morals and values (Tadlock 2014). Articles focusing on transgender rights focused primarily on the need for education and information (Tadlock 2014).

Nownes (2014) also argues that while it is beneficial for LGB groups to have added the T, historically it has not always been a positive influence. He states that LGBT groups advocating for transgender rights have brought in more resources to the transgender rights movement. However, he also argues that it is also important for transgender rights groups to exist on their own. His argument for this is that while LGBT organizations have started to take part in advancing transgender rights, there is still concern that transgender people can be marginalized within the LGBT rights movement. He states that often times, social movement organizations will focus on the most privileged members of groups and may neglect the needs of more marginalized members. He argues that white gays may take priority in the LGBT movement because the organizations have limited resources to meet the needs of everyone for whom they advocate. As a result, organizations focus on gaining rights for groups that will be most easily obtained. He argues that while many LGBT groups say they have become more inclusive of transgender rights, there have been instances in which these rights have been neglected in order to better advance the LGB rights. To further argue this point, he discusses a

few examples that historically have indicated that LGB rights have taken priority over transgender rights in the past, such as the controversy with the ENDA bill. Because of this, he argues that while many LGBT organizations advocate for transgender rights, there is still need for organizations that focus solely on transgender rights to advance policies.

Schilt (2010) reports that at times, transgender people are marginalized even within the LGBT organizations. In her book, *Just One of the Guys? Transgender Men and the Persistence of Gender Inequality*, she finds that when working in occupations that focus on LGBT issues they experienced tokenization within their workplace.

Schilt (2010) states that ““Transgender” became a master status—an identity that overrode all others—even when they personally felt that other identities...had more salience for them” (118). In her research, many transgender people working for LGBT organizations felt tokenized. She argues that in some instances coworkers and employers would use these identities without the control or consent of the person. While this does indicate attempts of inclusion in LGBT organizations, there is still concern as to how transgender people are treated within organizations that focus on LGBT issues because this could be a reflection of how the organization addresses transgender rights. For example, one of Schilt’s respondents reports that their position at their job felt like it was a “theoretical commitment to transgender clients that fell short in practice” (Schilt 2010: 117). Perhaps there is need to be concerned that some LGBT organizations will fall short of meeting needs of transgender rights in a similar manner. This gives further support to Nownes’ suggestion that there is need for organizations that focus solely on advancing the rights for transgender people.

Most recently, the controversy at the White House’s Pride Month Reception could be an indicator as to where the LGBT movement is going. With President Obama beginning a speech,

Jennicet Gutiérrez, spoke out in protest. When she spoke out against the treatment of LGBTQ Latino/Latina people in detention, President Obama shamed her for her protest. Furthermore, the audience rejected her with jeers and boos. Gutiérrez indicates to the *Advocate* that she was mostly disappointed by the audience's reaction stating, "I'm part of the LGBT community, and they didn't back me, instead they were booing, which to me was like a slap in the face to all these people in detention centers" (Villarreal and Ennis 2015). In addition, shortly after her protest, The *Advocate* published an article stating that she had been rude in protesting. Ennis (2015) jumps back and forth on the argument of her protest. Overall Ennis seems to indicate that she found it distasteful for Gutiérrez to protest, even while acknowledging that sometimes in order for change to occur, people need to act in an unappreciated manner.

There are organizations working to aid more marginalized members of the LGBT movement. One such example is the Sylvia Rivera Law Project. Named after the activist Sylvia Rivera, the Sylvia Rivera Law Project is dedicated to aiding more marginalized members of the LGBT movement:

... (SRLP) works to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine their gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing harassment, discrimination, or violence... Therefore, we seek to increase the political voice and visibility of low-income people and people of color who are transgender, intersex, or gender non-conforming (Sylvia Rivera Law Project 2015).

The work at the Sylvia Rivera Law Project is unique compared to the various other organizations. In their efforts to ensure their mission is achieved, they are very explicit about employing people who are low-income, people of color, intersex, transgender, or gender non-conforming in order to ensure communities they work to help are represented.



The National Center for Transgender Equality also attempts to focus some work on more marginalized members of society. In their discrimination survey, there were attempts to reach low-income people. Instead of using only an internet survey, there was distribution of paper surveys at homeless shelters, mobile health clinics and other places that provided services (National Center for Transgender Equality 2011). In doing so, the survey was able to reach populations that are neglected when distributing surveys electronically.

## **Conclusion**

In modern context, there have been numerous advancements for the transgender rights movement. Currently there are structural opportunities that have influenced and perhaps could continue to influence these advancements. Some of the events that have indicated the possibility for the advancement in the transgender rights movement have been in the form of support from people in power. Support from political officials and celebrities can influence more awareness and visibility for the advancement of the transgender rights movement.

There are many ways frames are being implemented that are also affecting the transgender rights movement. For both people opposed to, and in favor of, transgender rights frame amplifications have been using the value of safety as a frame to justify the stance held on the issue to the public.

Frames are also being used by those who support the transgender rights movement in the form of frame transformation. While many LGBT groups did not add the T until the 1990s, there are organizations that are taking actions to indicate their support for the advancements of transgender rights. However, while LGBT groups are now starting to work toward transgender rights, there is still need for organizations that focus solely on advancing the rights of transgender people. The reason for this is that while LGBT organizations have started to act as a

resource for advancing the transgender rights movement, there is still need for more awareness within LGBT organizations. This could allow for more inclusive activism from organizations.

## Chapter 5 - Stages of Social Movements

The cycle of the LGBT movement can be traced using the stages of social movements. While the stages of social movements is criticized for being too rigid, one can see how the stages apply to the LGBT movement. There are four stages in a social movement. These were first identified by Herbert Blumer. He named these stages “social ferment,” “popular excitement,” “formalization,” and “institutionalization” (Christiansen 2009:2). Christiansen (2009) states that the stages have stayed similar but the names have changed from Blumer’s original work. The four stages now identified are “emergence” “coalescence” “bureaucratization” and “decline” (Christiansen 2009: 2).

Christiansen (2009) defines the emergence of a social movement, or the social ferment, as the very beginnings, which has minimal organization. While there are people who are unsatisfied with a social condition, there has not been any mobilization to take action against it. He argues that during this point, social movement organizations can serve as agitators to advance the movement. Social movement organizations and other agitators act by bringing awareness to an issue and let the general population know about the concern.

Perhaps one can consider the emergence of the LGBT movement to be with the formation of the Mattachine society in the late 1950s and early 1960s. According to Bronski (2011) “homosexuality was far from “unspoken,” as popular thinking has it; America was increasingly obsessed with it” (177). Bronski (2011) argues that the work of Alfred Kinsey, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* influenced much of this discussion. Kinsey was attempting to gain objective information about various aspects of sexuality while avoiding “social or moral interpretations of the fact” (Bronski 2011: 178). Kinsey’s report changed that way Americans perceived homosexuality. Initially it was assumed that gay men acted feminine and thus could be detected

easily. Kinsey's publication indicated that in fact, 37 percent of all males had experienced homosexual contact between their teens and old age (Bronski 2011). These findings influenced the development of the Mattachine Society. Harry Hay, the founder of the society, began looking for people to discuss this report with (Bronski 2011). Similarly the Daughters of Bilitis was founded. A lesbian organization, the Daughters of Bilitis, also added gender as an important component to address. Daughters of Bilitis discussed how exposure could lead to loss of child custody for married women, and single women in the workforce experienced discrimination and harassment (Bronski 2011).

While these organizations were forming, Bronski (2011) also points out that gay men and lesbians found more stability in bars and public cruising areas than in these organizations. The reason why this point in history could be considered as the emergence of the social movement is that discussion was occurring. There were a few organizations forming to support the gay and lesbian rights movement, however there was not much stability in these organizations. Many gay men and lesbians found more stability in their local communities with bars and public areas. This is why it can be argued the coalescence of the LGBT movement occurred after the Stonewall Riots. At this point many national chapters of gay and lesbian rights organizations began to form.

Coalescence, which Blumer referred to as popular excitement, is next stage of a social movement. In this stage "the movement becomes more than just random upset individuals...they are now organized and strategic in their outlook" (Christiansen 2009:3). At this point, the movement becomes focused not only on the problem, but also on how to address the problem in order to fix it. Instead of small groups of individuals being discontent, collective action occurs. This becomes a way to demonstrate the demands of the social movement organization and leadership begins to assemble in order to strategize how to advance the movement.

In 1969 the Stonewall Riots changed the gay and lesbian rights movement. Prior to the riots, the gay and lesbian rights movement had been relatively small with only fifty organizations advocating for the cause (Engel 2001). After the Stonewall Riots, gay and lesbian rights organizations began to emerge rapidly, leading to around 800 organizations in the early 1970s (D'Emilio 1998). At this point, the movement began to focus on structural oppressions. Not only did the police force become targets for criticism, but so did the laws and heterosexism that occurred within the system. The Gay Liberation Front indicated that they knew institutions acted as a form of oppression for many gays and lesbians. This is seen in the mission of their organization:

...complete sexual liberation for all people cannot come about unless existing social institutions are abolished. We reject society's attempt to impose sexual roles and definitions on our nature... (Engel 2001:42)

Previous organizations such as the Mattachine Society in the 1950s had the similar knowledge. However, with 100 discussion groups, it was smaller than the Gay Liberation Front. Furthermore, while the Mattachine Society had started out being considered a more radical group influenced by communist ideologies, it changed to better fit the political climate. McCarthyism influenced the Mattachine Society to become more moderate. The Mattachine Society distanced themselves from their original communist ideologies for fear of placing themselves in danger during the era of McCarthyism (Engel 2001). The Mattachine society started discussion for the LGBT community and heavily influenced the way the LGBT movement has continued today. However, it was also heavily oppressed by McCarthyism, which blended communism with homosexuality lumping together the "red scare" and the "lavender scare" (Bronski 2011: 180). After the Stonewall Riots, the Gay Liberation Front expanded rapidly as well as several other

organizations advancing the LGBT movement. However, as indicated by the history of the Gay Liberation Front, the movement had not yet reached the stage of bureaucratization.

Bureaucratization or formalization is the stage of a social movement in which organizations are established and need “disciplined participation and coordination of strategies for achieving the movement’s aims” (Della Porta and Diani 1999:147). It is this point in the movement that more skilled staff is needed. It is also this phase that the social movement has more political power because of alliances formed with political leaders.

The LGBT movement has experienced bureaucratization. Christiansen (2009) argues that if the movement had not passed through bureaucratization, the needs of the movement would have gone unmet. D’Emilio (2002) states that what sustains a social movement is its organizations. Kissack (1995) illustrates this to some extent when discussing one of the major reasons the Gay Liberation Front declined. He argues that Gay Liberation Front ended because many of its members noticed the Gay Activist Alliance’s successes in acting within the system and working to change laws and started working with them.

Closely related to the Gay Activist Alliance was the National Gay Task Force which has continued to this day. According to D’Emilio (2002), the founders of the task force, worked with the Gay Activist Alliance (D’Emilio 2002). The National Gay Task Force’s concern with the Gay Activists Alliance were similar to the concerns of the Gay Liberation Front. The National Gay Task Force considered Gay Activists Alliance organizations to be chaotic and their methods of operation made it difficult to make change. D’Emilio (2002) states that “it saw change as not only coming through government, but through a range of institutions in American Life” (105). One of these institutions included the American Psychological Association, which had voted to take homosexuality off its list of mental disorders, when opposing psychologists resisted the

decision, the task force and its allies worked to gain support for the vote (D'Emilio 2002). Other organizations that they worked with were the Civil Service Commission to allow employment of lesbians and gay men in federal jobs, and the American Bar Association to repeal sodomy laws (D'Emilio 2002). The task force represents the bureaucratization of a social movement. The task force "was founded specifically to free itself from the excessive democracy of local gay activist organizing, addressing national issues as a professionalized advocacy group" (D'Emilio 2002: 112). While other organizations prior to the task force had worked toward making change, the Task Force had formally organized to change many of the institutions that affected the lives of lesbians and gay men.

The final stage is decline. Christiansen (2009) points out that declines do not indicate that the social movement has failed. A social movement declines several ways: repression, cooptation, success, failure and, in some instances, establishment with mainstream society (Christiansen 2009). A social movement declining because of repression occurs when authorities actively attempt to stop the social movement from expanding. This can occur through passage of laws and other government actions that are justified by declaring the movement dangerous.

According to Christiansen (2009) cooptation occurs when leaders in the social movement associate more with authorities and targets of the social movement. This could happen through the leader being paid off by these groups. It could also occur if the social movement leader attempts to work for target groups in attempts to change them but instead becomes absorbed into their system taking on those values rather than the values of the social movement.

Christiansen (2009) argues that failure of a social movement occurs when there is rapid expansion without clear organization or focused goals. He argues that this can lead to a social movement's decline because it can cause dispute within a social movement. This can cause the

groups to become more separated from the movement and also create tighter knit groups that other interested parties may find difficult to join.

Success can be another reason for a social movement to decline. Christiansen states that usually social movements that experience success are ones that have focused goals. He argues that once a social movement has achieved its goals it can shift to other goals similar to the previous one.

Another reason that a social movement declines is that it becomes adopted by mainstream society. At times, a social movement's goals and ideals are adopted into political, economic, and social systems. Once society adopts the values of a social movement the need for a movement declines.

The LGBT movement continues to be active and has not shown indications of decline. It could be argued that there are points in history that may have repressed the movement but not enough to end it. However, these points in history did affect the LGBT movement. For example McCarthyism did act as a repressive force. It is argued to have led to more reserved activity in the gay and lesbian rights movement (Bronski 2011). In later decades, society also had an influence on the LGBT movement. The more conservative culture of the late 1970s and 1980s is argued to have influenced the LGBT movement to reinforce the gender binary, only further alienating transgender people involved in LGBT activism.

When examining the stages of social movements, in current contexts the LGBT movement has continued, and there are indications of progress. Vaid (2012) states that there have been five major achievements that have created optimism within the LGBT movement. The first being policy changes, such as repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell and the progress in equal marriage rights. The second has been the shift in public opinion. Vaid (2012) cites several



studies that indicate that the percentage of people in favor of marriage equality has increase over the past 10 years. Another reason for optimism and possibly the shifting attitudes is that the populations of younger people, who often lean in favor of accepting marriage equality, are increasing (Vaid 2012). Fourth would be the growing divide within religious organizations. One indicator of this is that in 2009 the Episcopal Church allowed for openly LGBT clergy (Vaid 2012). Furthermore allies for LGBT equality have come to challenge religious institutions that have historically opposed equal rights (Vaid 2012). And finally the international community is working toward ending punishment and human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Vaid 2012).

However there has been criticisms of the LGBT movement in how it has changed and where it stands today. Dean Spade (2011) points out that many large corporations have started to sponsor the cause. This is seen with pride celebrations sponsored by oil companies and banks. While it has not caused the movement to decline it causes concern that it does not really change the systems. Spade argues that these companies are showing support as a purely symbolic gesture. He argues that inclusion of these systems will not lead to change, and will only strengthen the structures that have historically been oppressive. Spade (2011) also argues that the LGBT movement has left out many marginalized people in society and has focused primarily on being included into the current structures. This leads to the current trajectory of the social movement to focus on the needs of more privileged people within the movement. Spade also expresses concern that the movement's goal to be included in the social structures strengthens the systems that have oppressed marginalized people such as prisons and military.

Christiansen (2009) does point out that one of the criticisms of the stages in social movements is that many social movements do not have clear steps in changing from one stage to

the next. This can be seen with the LGBT movement. There is debate as to when it first coalesced with some arguing that the Mattachine society was the beginning of the LGBT movement, others argue that it started with poets writing homoerotic literature (Bronski 2011). Despite the discussion, the Stonewall Riots did change the LGBT movement, influencing its expansion throughout the United States. When discussing the four stages of social movements, it is a concern that they can be applied too rigidly. Christiansen (2009) states that the stages of social movements is a good tool to use for following social movements, but it assumes that these systems are repeated the same way each time. Of course, this is not the case.

Historically, one can trace out the stages of the LGBT movement. Below is a table indicating some of the occurrences that may have influenced the LGBT movement ranging from structural opportunities to collective identities:

**Table 5.1 Social Movement Theories and the LGBT Movement**

A-D	Structures	Resources	Frames	Identity
1960s	-Previously occurring social movements -Growing discussion	-Financial contributions to research -Media attention/Positive publicity	-Frame Extension-reaching out to other social movements occurring -Frame Amplification-Emphasis of similarities of gay men and lesbians compared to heterosexual population	--
1990s	-Political changes breaking down binaries	-Lesbian-feminists at Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival protest	Frame Amplification-Value amplification of Justice and	-Transgender becomes a uniting identity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Growing literature promoting transgender activism</li> <li>-Queer theory emerges</li> <li>-Queer Nation and Queers Read This literature</li> <li>-Discussion of AIDs</li> </ul>	exclusion of transgender women	belief amplification that ignoring AIDs framing it as a “gay disease” and denying resources is unjust	-LGBT used as boundary expansion
2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-More legal support</li> <li>-Legal discussion</li> <li>-President acknowledging LGBT in State of the Union</li> <li>-Celebrity gaining media attention</li> </ul>	LGBTQ Task Force partnering with National Center for Transgender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amplification- Public bathroom discussion framed as safety issue</li> <li>Frame Transformation- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force changing their name to the LGBTQ Task Force</li> </ul>	--

While the LGBT movement and the transgender rights movement can be traced out together, there are differences between these movements. Much of these differences are seen through the divergences in how the needs are met within the social movement.

**Table 5.2 Divergences of the LGBT Movement and the Transgender Rights Movement**

	Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement	Transgender Rights Movement
1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Publicity was focused on</li> <li>-Anti-Sodomy Laws</li> <li>-American Psychological Association</li> <li>-Display of Gendered Behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use gay rights media to connect</li> <li>-Change of cross-dressing laws</li> <li>-Discussion of sex-change surgeries</li> </ul>

1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fight for more publicity</li> <li>-Queer Studies</li> <li>-Adding T to the LGBT movement</li> <li>-AIDs Awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Queer Studies and Transgender Studies</li> <li>-Camp Trans-First National event</li> <li>-Rights to self-identity</li> <li>-AIDs Awareness</li> </ul>
2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Focus on equal rights to marriage, work</li> <li>-More inclusion of transgender rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Focus on education, awareness</li> <li>-Healthcare rights</li> <li>-Discussion about low-income transgender people</li> </ul>

One can trace out the LGBT movement using the four stages of social movements. Beginning with the emergence, which created discussion for the rights of LGBT people, the movement coalesced at the Stonewall Riots. Stonewall influenced the emergence of the Gay Liberation Front as well as several other organizations that worked for equal rights. One can see the bureaucratization of the LGBT movement as organizations developed that focused on changing government policies and working with other institutions that affected the lives of gay men and lesbians. At this point the LGBT movement has not declined but has been criticized for being sponsored by large corporations and for excluding the needs of more marginalized members of society.

## Chapter 6 - Conclusion

Historically the gay and lesbian rights movement has been closely related to the transgender rights movement. In examining the history of the LGBT movement, I intended to answer how the gay and lesbian rights movement was related to the transgender rights movement. Part of this interest was because there did not seem to be an extensive amount of literature addressing how the movements converged and diverged. There was also a need to explore how these movements used coalition building. The history of these movements indicates that they share a relationship, have affected each other historically, and continue to do so.

The first question I asked for my research was: historically, how has the gay and lesbian rights movement set the stage for transgender rights movements to advance? It could be argued that it did not set the stage initially. In fact some argument indicates that it was transgender rights movement that emerged first. However, the gay and lesbian rights movement influenced the transgender rights movement. In exploring the history of the gay and lesbian rights movement and how it relates to the transgender rights movement I have found that both have been related and have influenced each other's advancement. In the late 1960s, as Tadlock (2014) points out, it was transgender people who started the LGBT movement. Stryker (2008) also argues that transgender people were heavily involved in the LGBT movement from the beginning, not only being a part of the Stonewall Riots but perhaps even being the catalyst for the riot. One could argue that the transgender rights movement acted as the spark for the gay and lesbian rights movement. There were structures that allowed for the gay and lesbian rights movement to advance, but the structures and resources at the time were changing more in favor of transgender people. Stryker (2008) does argue that it was these resources that influenced the transgender rights movement by giving hope for change.

Initially it seems like the gay and lesbian rights movement did not help in the advancement of the transgender rights movement. As the overall climate of the United States became more conservative, the gay and lesbian rights movement focused more on similarities to the general population and reinforced gender norms. This left transgender people to be marginalized within the movement and, as Spade and Currah state, given the “crazy-uncle status” (Tadlock 2014: 28).

In the 1990s the gay and lesbian rights movement could have affected the transgender rights movement. With the emergence of Queer Nation, there became more discussion about the need for visibility. Queer Nation also criticized the previous goals of the gay and lesbian rights movement which advocated for the right to privacy. Much of the argument Queer Nation presented was that publicity was needed in order for change to occur. Queer Nation argued that publicity was needed to change the institutional violences occurring, such as the blaming them for the spread of AIDs. With the emergence of Queer Nation, Stryker (2008) argues that many gay and lesbian rights organizations began to include transgender rights as part their mission statements and organizational titles. In doing so, they identified themselves as the more progressive queer rights organizations instead of gay and lesbian rights organizations of the past.

At the same time the transgender rights movement did begin to find allies from the gay and lesbian rights movement. One such example could be seen in the controversy at the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival in which many lesbian allies supported transgender women in protest of the policy that excluded transgender women. This could have also set the stage for gay and lesbian organizations to work towards becoming more inclusive of transgender people. However, it is argued that many gay and lesbian rights organizations that included transgender rights only did so at surface level, and that the needs of transgender people were unmet.

In modern day context it is arguable that some LGBT organizations are working toward becoming more inclusive. One such organization is the LGBTQ Task Force which has worked with the National Center for Transgender Equality. This indicates efforts to do more than simply adding transgender rights to their mission; there are attempts to extend this inclusion into actions. This does set the stage for advancements in the transgender rights movement because it has been argued by Stone (2009) that the transgender rights movement does need the LGBT movement for resources. However even today there are still signs that transgender rights are on the back burner in the LGBT movement. LGBT organizations actively supporting the transgender rights movement, indicates that more resources can be used to build coalitions between the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement in order to reach similar goals in resisting oppression.

In answering my second question I explored where the gay and lesbian rights movement has historically converged and diverged from the transgender rights movement. Initially both were fighting against heteronormativity, but even at its emergence the gay and lesbian rights movement did diverge from the transgender rights movement. At the beginnings of the social movements, there is argument that the reason for transgender rights becoming marginalized within the gay and lesbian rights movement was because the climate of the United States had become more fundamentally religious. This led to people within the gay and lesbian rights movement to reinforce the gender norms in order to prove that gay men and lesbians were as normal as the mainstream society (Tadlock 2014). However even prior to the more conservative climate emerging, there were indications that the needs of transgender people were not being met by the gay and lesbian rights movement. The expansion of the gay and lesbian rights movement

did act as a starting point for transgender people. They were able to mobilize through the use of news media that was geared toward gay and lesbian rights.

In the 1990s there were still illustrations of the transgender rights movement diverging from the gay and lesbian rights movement. The major mark of the divergence was the decision to continue to exclude transgender people from the March on Washington. This was not changed until 1994. Furthermore, when organization attempted to be more inclusive of transgender rights, many assumed sexual orientation to be the same as gender identity. This left many needs of transgender people unmet and reinforced the gender binary. In the news media that was aimed at gay and lesbian rights, transgender rights were overlooked, as seen with the case of Brandon Teena.

However there are some convergences also seen between the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement. This happened as people in gay and lesbian rights organizations began to advocate for transgender rights. This influenced many organizations to begin advocating transgender rights in their mission statements.

In current context, there are some indications that LGBT organizations are trying to do more to include the needs of transgender people. This is most seen with the LGBTQ Task Force which has paired up with the National Center for Transgender Equality. However, divergences of the transgender right movement are still seen. Nownes (2014) advocates for keeping organizations that focus on transgender rights separate from LGBT organizations despite their steps towards inclusion. Part of this is because, within LGBT organizations, many transgender people report feeling tokenized (Schilt 2010). Tadlock (2014) also notes the divergence when analyzing news articles that advocate for transgender rights and comparing them to article advocating for gay and lesbian rights. While equal rights are discussed as needs in both social



movements, news articles focusing on transgender rights also express the importance of educating society about the needs of transgender people (Tadlock 2014). While some LGBT organizations have put forth effort to be more inclusive, there is still need for organizations that focus on transgender rights.

I finally asked about current relationship between the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transgender rights movement. The current relationship shows that there are some attempts for the LGBT movement to be more inclusive of transgender rights. However, there is still concern that the LGBT movement only focuses on more privileged members of society. This could be indicated by the reaction to Jennicet Gutiérrez. The Pride Month's Reception was held shortly before the Supreme Court declared same-sex marriage to be legal. While this ruling was met with celebration, Gutiérrez's protest at the Pride Month's Reception was met with rejection. This could indicate that while the nation is changing to support gay and lesbian rights, it is only changing for advantaged members of the LGBT movement. Gutiérrez was objecting to the treatment of LGBTQ Latinas and Latinos in detention. The negative reaction from the audience indicates the lack of support for challenging issues affecting the most marginalized members of the LGBT movement. There are resources from LGBT organizations that are becoming more focused on transgender rights. However, there is concern that the social movement is still focusing on the needs of more privileged members of the movement.

While historically the gay and lesbian rights movement has not always had the same goals as the transgender rights movement, both movements are fighting similar forms of oppression by challenging heteronormative structures. In doing so the LGBT movement has used frame extension and boundary expansion to continue to advance. However it has received criticism for focusing on the needs of more advantaged members in the social movement.

Perhaps, in order to ensure that the LGBT movement works to benefit less advantaged members within the movement, there could be more emphasis on the critique of privilege and the need for coalition building. Coalition building involves addressing the intersectionality of identity groups, or building alliances “across differences” (Carastathis 2013: 941). Carastathis (2013) argues that coalition building encourages social movements to challenge practices that marginalize and exclude some people while presenting other people to be “representative...of an entire movement” (942). Carastathis (2013) argues, citing Crenshaw’s work on intersectionality, that it is important to explore multiple identities in categories to form coalitions. Doing so can allow for the movements to better address the

Inadequacy of categories of discrimination...constructed using an essentialist logic that abstracts the experiences of relatively privileged members of oppressed groups and, falsely universalizing them... (Carastathis 2013: 961)

Coalition building is important in advancing the LGBT movement. There is also indication that the LGBT movement will need to continue to work with political structures to advance the rights of the LGBT population. Marriage equality was a significant step in the movement, however there is still concern with discrimination. As Eckholm (2015) notes in the New York Times, many that oppose the rights of LGBT people use religious liberty to discriminate against the LGBT population. Some states have even passed bills to protect people who use religion as a way to justify discrimination against LGBT people. This has led to discussion about anti-discrimination laws being needed in order to protect people from discrimination on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity. Eckholm (2015) quotes the concerns of Oregon Senator Merkley “...you can get married in the morning and be fired from your job or refused entry to a restaurant in the afternoon.” This illustrates the reason why anti-

discrimination policies should be addressed in the next step toward advancing LGBT rights. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality, however, only 22 states offer anti-discrimination protections (Eckholm, 2015).

While the LGBT movement has worked towards being more inclusive of transgender rights with boundary expansions and frame extension, there is still more work needed. Coalition building should be considered in order to ensure that multiple discriminations are addressed within the LGBT movement. Along with these concerns, there is still need to examine the political structures that affect the lives of the LGBT population.

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