

BLOOD UNDER THE BRIDGE: REFLECTIONS ON “THINKING SEX”

Gayle Rubin

To the incomparable Eve Sedgwick, whose absence at the conference, and in our lives, has been so acutely felt and sadly noted.

The Fight against Forgetting

*T*wenty-five years after its publication, I have been asked to reflect on my essay “Thinking Sex.” A quarter of a century is a long time. One indicator of time’s passage is the technology of textual production. I bought my first computer a year after “Thinking Sex” went to the publisher. “Thinking Sex” was written the old-fashioned way: on a typewriter. It was edited when “cut and paste” still meant slicing up paper with real scissors and reassembling the pieces with actual glue. Reading back through the reams of material generated by the controversies of the early feminist sex wars, I was continually reminded that almost all of the innumerable flyers, leaflets, articles, broadsides, and letters to the editor were done without computers. In the early 1980s there was an Internet, but it was still mostly the preserve of military personnel, scientists, and computer programmers. Most communication was still by way of landline telephones and snail mail.

Another indicator of change is the status of the essay itself. Although the paper resulted from the intersection of several different intellectual agendas and political concerns, its initial reception was filtered through the acrimonious controversies of the feminist sex wars. These conflicts have at times obscured the essay’s intellectual concerns and scholarly contributions. As a result, many of the

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early responses to “Thinking Sex” fluctuated between patronizing condescension and hostile indignation.¹ As these conflicts within feminism have cooled, the essay’s academic aspects have become more visible and salient. Its reception has shifted from the scholarly to the scandalous and back again.

“Thinking Sex” was first published in Carole Vance’s 1984 book *Pleasure and Danger*, the anthology of papers from the 1982 Barnard Sex Conference, where I had given a version of “Thinking Sex” as a workshop.² The Barnard conference has become extremely famous, in large part because it was the occasion of one of the most volcanic battles in the feminist sex wars. What actually happened at Barnard has been widely misunderstood. In her opening remarks at the “Rethinking Sex” conference, Heather Love commented that she, who was not in attendance at Barnard, had a fear of having missed something. I, on the other hand, nurse the horror of having been there. The attack on the Barnard conference was a particularly repellent episode in what was unfortunately a repetitive pattern of conduct. Some antipornography advocates preferred to resort to ad feminem attacks and character assassination rather than to debate substantive issues. They attempted to excommunicate from the feminist movement anyone who disagreed with them, and they aggressively sabotaged events that did not adhere to the antiporn party line. Their conduct left a bitter legacy for feminism. Like many others involved in the sex wars, I was thoroughly traumatized by the breakdown of feminist civility and the venomous treatment to which dissenters from the antiporn orthodoxy were routinely subjected.³

I had been working on the ideas presented at my Barnard workshop for several years prior to the conference. I had lectured on these subjects at the University of California, Berkeley; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of California, Santa Cruz; and the New York Institute for the Humanities. In all of these venues, audience responses were unremarkable, and the discussions that ensued were typical of academic events: spirited and engaged, at times argumentative, yet always polite.

Once I had been identified as a public enemy by early feminist antipornography activists, however, my appearances became occasions for protests against my speaking, not just on pornography but on any topic at all. The protest against my participation at the Barnard conference generated the most press of any of these attempts at silencing and intimidation, but it was neither the first such occurrence nor the last. The opposition began a few years before the Barnard conference and continued for more than a decade after. There were some early and, in comparison with later events, relatively mild episodes in the Bay Area in the late 1970s. For example, around 1979, I was scheduled to make a presentation about

Michel Foucault on a panel for an informal Marxist–feminist discussion group in Berkeley. Several antiporn members of the group felt I should not be allowed to speak. After a campaign to have me removed from the panel failed, those opposing my participation boycotted the discussion. In another incident, a local group of gay and lesbian leftists imploded over having invited me to participate on a panel discussion of political differences and similarities between lesbians and gay men. These kinds of situations proliferated and became increasingly vitriolic. Nor was I the only target. The list of ostensibly unacceptable feminists expanded over time, and eventually included, among many others, Dorothy Allison, Pat Califia, Lisa Duggan, Dierdre English, Amber Hollibaugh, Nan Hunter, Joan Nestle, Cindy Patton, Carole Vance, and Ellen Willis.

Revisiting those days is at best bittersweet. Nonetheless, this is an occasion to situate my essay in the context in which it was produced and to remember the historical conditions that shaped it. Jonathan Ned Katz, one of the founders of the modern field of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender history, ends his e-mails with the slogan “Fight Against Forgetting.”⁴ While these memories can be painful, I am happy to be a foot soldier in the fight against forgetting.

Texts are produced in particular historical, social, and cultural circumstances, and are part of discursive conglomerates that shift over time. As texts are read in new contexts, the conversations and issues that formed them are often forgotten or unknown. Various parts of “Thinking Sex” were conceived throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, and were shaped by three main developments. The first was the paradigm shifts then taking place in the study of sexuality. The paper attempted to synthesize an analytic framework that had emerged in gay history, feminist history, and the history of sexuality in the late 1970s. These theoretical interests informed an ethnographic research project on urban gay men, gay neighborhood formation, and the political economies of sexual location. The second development consisted of the feminist sex wars, in which I was deeply involved, and of which the events of the Barnard conference were a part. The third was the lurking menace of the socially conservative Right, which was gaining increased influence over policy, public discourse, state bureaucracies, and the legal regulation of sexuality in the United States.

Shifting Paradigms of Sex

With all due respect to the organizers of the “Rethinking Sex” conference, I do not believe that my essay “inaugurated the field of contemporary sexuality studies.”⁵ My own work was a product of a broader set of intellectual transformations in the

study of gender and sexuality that were well under way in the 1970s. My work resulted from many of the same developments that influenced writers and scholars such as Allan Bérubé, George Chauncey, Madeline Davis, John D’Emilio, Martin Duberman, Jeffrey Escoffier, Estelle Freedman, Eric Garber, Jonathan Ned Katz, Liz Kennedy, Joan Nestle, Esther Newton, Jim Steakley, Martha Vicinus, and Jeffrey Weeks, just to name a handful of people working on what would become gay and lesbian studies. This burst of scholarly activity was produced largely by social movements—feminism and gay liberation—taking place both inside and outside the academy. The early 1970s were the heady days of the first Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, the conferences of the Gay Academic Union, and the founding of journals such as *Feminist Studies* and *Signs*. By the mid-1970s, the cross-pollination of concepts and data from anthropology, sociology, and history had resulted in a new theoretical formation. By 1977 Weeks drew from his training in both sociology and history to articulate a framework for gay history that would come to be labeled “the social construction of sex.”⁶

Social construction was little more than the application of ordinary social science tools to sexuality and gender. What seemed so radical was in many respects a conventional set of approaches to an unconventional and highly stigmatized set of subject areas. As Vance has often observed in conversation, what is most odd is not that social constructionist theories of sexuality were developed, but how long it took. By showing that same-sex eroticisms and cross-gender behavior were historically and culturally specific, social construction cleared away obsolete assumptions, generated new research programs, and legitimized new topics. Despite initial controversy and some persistent arguments, the major assumptions of social construction now form the familiar ground on which most queer scholarship takes place. It is easy to forget what the field was like before that paradigm shift, when, among other things, much of gay history was the search for glorious ancestors, and male homosexuality and lesbianism were understood to be stable and largely unchanging phenomena. The accumulation of data within the old paradigm was incredibly valuable, however, and provided the foundation for social construction to emerge. “Thinking Sex” was part of the intellectual ferment reshaping the study of sexuality in the late 1970s.⁷ Generated by the excitement of my initial encounters with the social constructionist framework, the essay was an attempt to work out some of its implications, especially with respect to my own ethnographic research on urban sexual populations and locations.

I have previously complained in print about the amnesia that obscures the early strata of homophile and gay liberation scholarship.⁸ I do want to note, at least in passing, that the neglect of this body of work stemmed in part from the

paucity of institutional support for it. Some who did this work were not affiliated with any university.⁹ Those affiliated with universities were, to put it mildly, not well rewarded. Many were graduate students whose advisers told them bluntly that they were committing academic suicide, and these warnings were not unrealistic. Many others who did this early work of queer scholarship endured systematic unemployment or underemployment in the academy. These kinds of subjects, and the scholars who studied them, were generally treated as disreputable within their disciplines, and such research was not deemed appropriate for publication in the prestigious academic journals. Some of the most important work in gay history, such as D'Emilio's study of the homophile movement, Steakley's revelations of the Nazi persecution of homosexuals, and Bérubé's early research on gay San Francisco, was published not in academic journals but in programs for gay pride celebrations; in the *Body Politic*, a Canadian gay liberation newspaper; and in *Gay Community News*, the gay liberation newspaper from Boston.¹⁰ One of Bérubé's first essays on gay men and lesbians in World War II was published in *Mother Jones*.¹¹ These were great periodicals, but they did not count toward tenure. There was a sea change in the 1990s, when doing various kinds of queer and sexuality scholarship (especially for junior scholars in some fields) was no longer a career killer. This change occurred earlier in the humanities and more slowly in the social sciences, where LGBTQ studies are still struggling to establish a durable institutional presence.

While academia did not nurture the early gay and sexuality scholarship, there was nevertheless a dense intellectual and social network that did. When we did not have departments, we had study groups where community-based and university-affiliated researchers could share their discoveries. Two such informal groups were extremely important to me. One was an intensely educational and stimulating "feminism and the history of sex" study group with participants such as Nancy Chodorow, Ellen DuBois, Barbara Epstein, Michelle Rosaldo, Mary Ryan, Judith Stacey, Kaye Trimberger, and Martha Vicinus. The second was the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay History Project, founded around 1978–79 by Bérubé, Escoffier, and Garber. The membership was fluid, but Freedman, Holibaugh, and I were active long-term participants, and D'Emilio and Bert Hansen were frequent visitors.¹²

Bérubé's research provided an anchor. He discovered archival data on women who passed as men in early San Francisco.¹³ He found documentation on the surveillance of gay bars in California conducted by the Alcoholic Beverage Commission, as well as the court cases that established the legal rights for homosexuals to drink in public.¹⁴ I remember the first time he spoke of a shoebox of let-

ters written by gay men during World War II; these letters started the project that resulted in his pathbreaking book *Coming Out Under Fire*.¹⁵ I first heard Garber speak of his work on African American gay men and lesbians in Harlem in the early twentieth century at a meeting of the History Project.¹⁶

I cannot say enough about the intellectual excitement and impact of the History Project. Nevertheless, it was not insulated from the early phases of the sex wars. In 1979, after Bérubé presented his slide show on passing women, several additional lesbians joined the group. Some of these individuals entered with ideological commitments that led them to try to expel me, both because of my research, which was on the gay male leather and S/M population, and because of my involvement in the then nascent lesbian S/M community. In the end, I was able to stay, and those who were most opposed to my presence left the History Project. I maintained my membership, but it was, in Erving Goffman's terms, "spoiled."¹⁷ I was sufficiently radioactive that for many years after I was not asked to share my research at any of our public presentations.

Speaking Bitterness: The Feminist Sex Wars

The name "Barnard Sex Conference" is actually shorthand for "The Scholar and the Feminist IX: Towards a Politics of Sexuality," the ninth iteration of "The Scholar and the Feminist" conference held annually at Barnard College since 1974. The Barnard Sex Conference's concept paper was titled "Towards a Politics of Sexuality." The planning committee for the conference included Barnard faculty, graduate students from Columbia University, and New York feminist intellectuals and activists, who responded to an open letter calling for participation. The invitation letter, written by Vance, the conference's academic coordinator, was sent to Barnard College faculty, all members of previous Scholar and Feminist planning committees, and academics and activists who worked on sexuality.¹⁸ The planning committee met every two weeks for eight months, functioning as a study group on sexuality. Minutes of the meetings of the planning committee and comments by each member of the planning group were included in a seventy-two-page booklet, *Diary of a Conference* (see GLQ Archive, this issue).

Like the conference itself, the *Diary* was innovative, ambitious, and fresh. It was to be distributed to attendees, and since it was intended to serve as the conference program, it included the schedule of events and the list of speakers. However, it was much more than a program. It was designed to be an archival document, not only of the planning process but also of the day itself. There were even blank pages so attendees could take notes. Each workshop was given a page

containing a description of the workshop, a list of the presenters, and often a suggested bibliography. The workshop pages featured faux postcards that were used to list the presenters' credentials. The speakers were asked to send in some kind of graphic to be used as the image on the front of the postcard. The image could reference the workshop topic, but, in the spirit of a diary, it could also be something personal or even merely something each speaker found meaningful, interesting, visually compelling, or amusing.

Plenary speakers for the opening and closing sessions included DuBois, Alice Echols, Linda Gordon, Hollibaugh, Hortense Spillers, and the poets hat-tie gossett, Cherrie Moraga, and Sharon Olds. The eighteen afternoon workshops featured diverse topics and presenters. Workshop leaders included Allison, Meryl Altman, Dale Bernstein, Mary Calderone, Arlene Carmen, Muriel Dimen, Oliva Espin, Elsa First, Roberta Galler, Faye Ginsburg, Bette Gordon, Diane Harri-ford, Susan Hill, Shirley Kaplan, Barbara Kruger, Maire Kurrik, Kate Millett, Carole Munter, Nestle, Newton, Mirtha Quintanales, Pat Robinson, Kaja Silverman, Sharon Thompson, Shirley Walton, and Paula Webster. Topics addressed in the workshops included Jacques Lacan, abortion rights, gay and lesbian rights, pornography, teen romance, popular sex advice literature, creativity and theater, artistic vision, butch/femme roles in both gay and straight relationships, class, race, psychotherapy, politically correct and incorrect sex, body image, disability, the sexuality of infancy and childhood, prostitution, and psychoanalysis. My workshop was "Concepts for a Radical Politics of Sex" (figs. 1 and 2).

The conference's reputation, however, bears almost no relationship to the substance of the event. A small number of antipornography activists from New York were outraged by the conference, or what they imagined it to be. As recounted in Vance's detailed epilogue to *Pleasure and Danger*, these antagonists staged a noisy protest outside the conference, distributed leaflets denouncing it as antifeminist, and thoroughly spooked the Barnard administration.¹⁹ As Vance noted, the leaflet was "a masterpiece of misinformation" that served "as a template for subsequent reaction to the conference."²⁰ She observed, "The leaflet, along with the rumors and distorted newspaper reporting it inspired, depicted a phantom conference, restricted to but a few issues which matched the anti-pornographers' tunnel vision concerns about sexuality. . . . That such diversity of thought and experience should be reduced to pornography, S/M, and butch/femme—the anti-pornographers' counterpart to the New Right's unholy trinity of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll—is an example of the effective use of symbols to instigate a sex panic."²¹

Ironically, the conference's major theme, reflected in workshops, the concept paper, and the resulting anthology, was that sexuality is for women both a

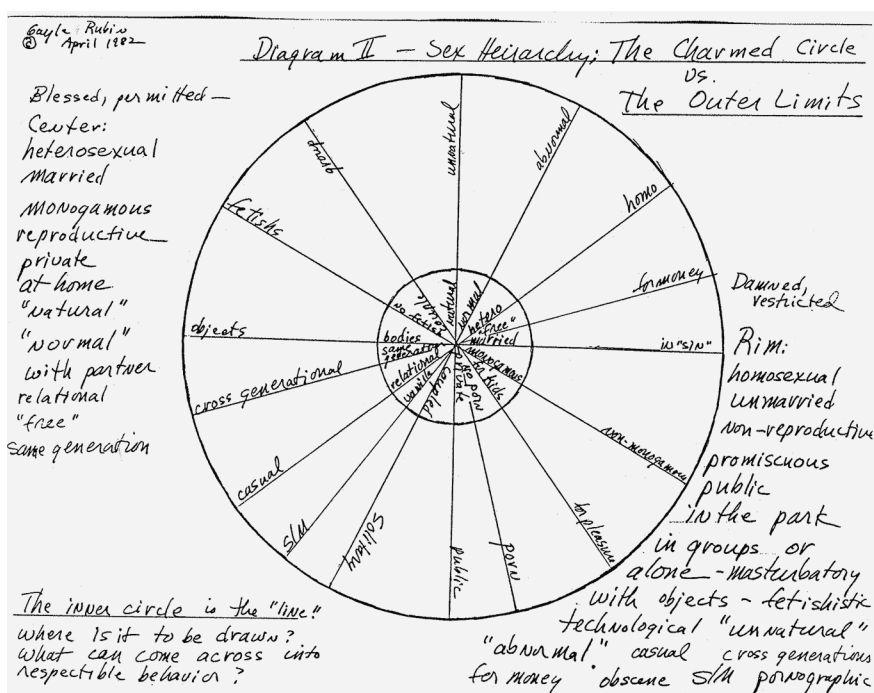


Figure 1. Sex Hierarchy: The Struggle over Where to Draw the Line. Distributed as handout at Rubin's workshop at the Barnard Conference, 1982. Courtesy of Gayle Rubin

means of pleasure and a source of danger. To be sure, there was no deference at Barnard to the specific claims of antipornography feminism. There was a workshop on pornography. As noted in the description recorded in the *Diary*, "This workshop will situate pornography within the context of a number of other discourses which construct sexual difference and the female subject in similar ways, most notably advertising and dominant cinema. We will also argue that pornography cannot be isolated from a larger critique of the existing symbolic order, or from such seemingly diverse structures as the family or the church."²² Such nuance was anathema to the leadership of the antiporn movement, whose ideology situates pornography as the major engine of female subordination and the single most pernicious institution of male supremacy.

One of the architects of the leaflet and protest against the Barnard conference was Dorchon Leidholdt from New York's Women Against Pornography (WAP). Her response is captured by Susan Brownmiller: "'Then,' Dorchon recalls with a shudder, 'came the Barnard conference.'"²³ Brownmiller's description typifies the antiporn account of the conference: "The ninth annual 'The Scholar and the Feminist' conference at Barnard College on Saturday, April 24, 1982, pro-

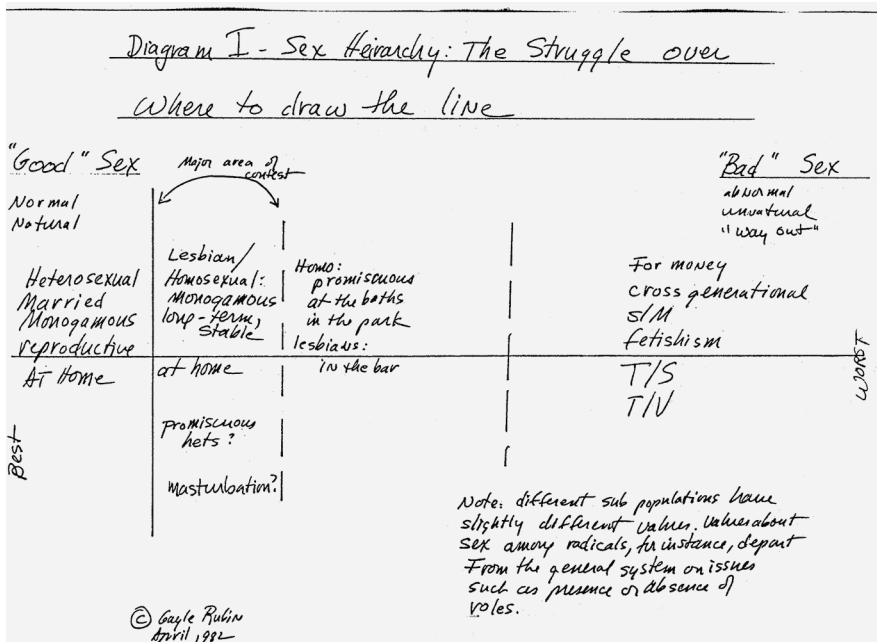


Figure 2. Sex Hierarchy: The Charmed Circle vs. the Outer Limits. Distributed as handout at Rubin's workshop at the Barnard Conference, 1982. Courtesy of Gayle Rubin

claimed "Towards a Politics of Sexuality" as its groundbreaking theme. Months of planning by Carole Vance, a Columbia anthropologist, and a team of advisers of her choosing had gone into the day's proceedings, intended to produce a joyful exploration of 'politically incorrect' sexual behavior, to counter the 'fascist' and 'moralistic' tendencies of WAP. The bizarre result was a somewhat nervous, somewhat giddy, occasionally tearful exposition of the pleasures of s/m. . . . Not every speaker at Barnard that day addressed s/m or butch-femme roles. A few invitees read academic papers" (314–15).

In actuality, none of the eighteen workshops specifically focused on S/M and only one on butch/femme. Although these topics certainly did come up during various discussions—not surprising after attendees had been handed leaflets specifically denouncing them—they were hardly the dominant focus. With three workshops, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis got far more attention than S/M, and abortion rights were more heavily emphasized than butch/femme. The common denominator of the workshops was, in fact, people reading academic papers. The account of the conference promulgated by antipornography crusaders had a few grains of reality swirling in a noxious brew of hyperbole and misinformation. Vance did not assemble a group of "advisers of her choosing." She had issued an

open call to which interested parties had responded. All of this was documented in the *Diary*. But no one saw the *Diary* on the day of the conference, because the *Diary* had been confiscated by the panicked Barnard administration.²⁴

Instead, the some eight hundred attendees arriving at the Barnard College gates were confronted by a small group of protesters who wore T-shirts emblazoned with “For a Feminist Sexuality” on the front and “Against S/M” on the back.²⁵ They were handing out leaflets that accused the conference organizers of endorsing “the backlash against radical feminism” and of having “thrown their support to the very sexual institutions and values that oppress all women.”²⁶ The leaflet singled out several participants for special condemnation because of their allegedly “un-feminist” sexual behaviors or political opinions. These included Allison and two unnamed proponents of “butch femme roles,” presumably Nestle, Hollibaugh, or Moraga. The leaflet complained about the participation of Brett Harvey because of her involvement with No More Nice Girls, a reproductive rights group characterized as “a group of women writers who publish in the *Village Voice* and who contend that pornography is liberating.”²⁷ The leaflet’s rationale for the objection to No More Nice Girls was that one of its founders was Willis, who did write for the *Voice* and who was one of the first feminists publicly to take issue with the antipornography analysis.²⁸ My participation was attacked because of my association with Samois, a lesbian S/M group from San Francisco. Califia, also a member of Samois, was denounced in the leaflet despite having no role at all in the conference (Califia did attend). The leaflet claimed I was there “representing” Samois, which I was not. Leidholdt would later claim in *off our backs* that “we weren’t protesting the exclusion of WAP but of the whole sexual violence part of the movement. It’s particularly dangerous when you’re including someone like Gayle Rubin.”²⁹

There were actually two contradictory versions of the WAP complaint: the first was that the Barnard conference was a blatant celebration of S/M. The second was that the perverted agenda was all the more insidious because it was a hidden one. Leidholdt told a reporter from *off our backs* that “the bias was so hidden at the Barnard conference,” and she complained that “nowhere in the program were workshop leaders’ affiliations with Samois or LSM (New York’s Lesbian Sex Mafia) given.”³⁰ This complaint bears some scrutiny. Of the almost forty speakers and workshop leaders, only two were members of either organization. But in any case, of what relevance were such memberships? Should all participants in academic events list all of their recreational, social, and political associations? I was a graduate student at the University of Michigan speaking at an academic conference, so I listed my academic affiliation, as was appropriate. Evidently, I should have had the decency to wear a black leather triangle or perhaps a scarlet letter.

Whether people supported or opposed the conference's aims, the exaggerated and inaccurate characterizations promulgated by the leaflet and subsequent press coverage remain to this day the conference's dominant legend. While there were arguments over the conference's legitimacy, these rarely challenged the accuracy of the phantom conference narratives. For example, a decade after Barnard, Leidholdt still proclaimed that "along with waging a no holds barred attack on radical feminists and our politics, conference speakers, organizers, and workshop leaders promoted and defended the sexuality of dominance and submission. An at times thinly disguised, at times overt defense of sadomasochism was an underlying theme."³¹ Even Jane Gerhard's largely sympathetic account of the conference describes it as composed of "sessions on sexual practice, S/M, butch/femme roles, pornography, children's sexuality, and sexual therapies."³² While they differ in their evaluations, Leidholdt's and Gerhard's descriptions substantially agree on the conference's ostensible emphasis and fail to mention the majority of topics discussed.

There are many reasons for the persistence of the conference's image as a venue to celebrate kinky sex. But one was surely the confiscation of the *Diary*. As Vance noted, "The unavailability of the *Diary* to registrants on that day made the conference's purpose more vulnerable to distortion. Leaflets were handed out before any papers or presentations were made, and registrants' perceptions of what occurred were colored by the leaflet's inflammatory and sensational charges."³³ By the time the *Diary* was finally republished and provided to participants several weeks later, the outlandish claims and febrile descriptions of the antiporn contingent's narrative had taken root.

As Vance recounts, in the week preceding the conference, "anti-pornography feminists made telephone calls to Barnard College officials and trustees, as well as prominent local feminists, complaining that the conference was promoting anti-feminist views and had been taken over by 'sexual perverts.' Lunatic as these claims were, they had a galvanizing effect on the representatives of a sexually conservative women's college. . . . Within days, Ellen V. Futter, President of Barnard, interrogated the staff of the women's center, scrutinized the program, and—concerned about the possible reactions of funders to sexual topics and images—confiscated all copies of the conference booklet."³⁴

Jane Gould, the director of the Barnard Women's Center, recounts being summoned to the president's office just prior to the conference. Gould later learned that "the president's office had been inundated with calls from Women Against Pornography attacking the conference, calling it pornography, and announcing their intention to picket on the day of the conference. One of the calls informed the

president that the conference planning had been dominated by a California lesbian group called Samois, which supported sadomasochism.”³⁵ I should note that no one from Samois was part of the planning group: no one seems to have considered the logistical implausibility of a San Francisco group participating in meetings in New York every two weeks for eight months. But these myths persevere. Gerhard even lists me as a conference planner, which I was not. That she does so demonstrates the triumph of the narrative over the facts.³⁶

When Gould entered the president’s office, she found “Futter, the director of public relations, and the college lawyer . . . all with copies of the *Diary*. President Futter’s expression said it all. She plunged right in, saying that she regarded the publication as a piece of pornography and that she was not going to tolerate its distribution to the conference participants and to the public. . . . She insisted that it must be destroyed, shredded immediately.”³⁷ Vance notes that while the Barnard administration confiscated all fifteen hundred copies two days before the conference, she and members of the planning committee were not informed of the confiscation until less than twenty-four hours before the conference.³⁸ Barnard administrators directed Vance to say that the *Diary* was “delayed at the printers.” She ignored this demand and informed participants that the president of Barnard College had confiscated and censored the *Diary*. After considerable pressure and legal threats, Barnard College agreed to pay to reprint the *Diary*, removing two lines of type with the names of Barnard College and the conference funder, the Helena B. Rubinstein Foundation, and to distribute the reprinted document to conference participants.³⁹

The *Diary* was finally reprinted and mailed out to attendees in June. In August Andrea Dworkin sent out copies of the *Diary* with a cover letter stating:

This is a copy of the so-called Diary put together by the planners of the recent conference on sexuality at Barnard College. . . . *Please read this Diary from beginning to end. Please do not skip any parts of it.* Please look at the pictures. Please read it right away: however busy you are please do not put off reading this. This Diary shows how the S&M and pro-pornography activists . . . are being intellectually and politically justified and supported. It shows too the conceptual framework for distorting and significantly undermining radical feminist theory, activism, and efficacy. There is no feminist standard, I believe, by which this material and these arguments taken as a whole are not perniciously anti-woman and anti-feminist. It is doubtful, in my view, that the feminist movement can maintain its political integrity and moral authority with this kind of attack on its fundamental and essential premises from within.⁴⁰

The news coverage of the conference further enshrined the vision of the phantom conference. The periodical *off our backs* was the closest thing to a newspaper of record of the feminist movement. It was therefore extremely distressing that its coverage so closely mirrored the WAP accounts. There was an avalanche of letters to the editor from those of us with a different perspective: from me, Frances Doughty, Barbara Grier, Hollibaugh, Nestle, Newton, Vance, Walton, and Willis. There is a letter from Samois. There is even a letter from Cleveland Women Against Violence Against Women in which the organization distanced itself from the protest leaflet.⁴¹ But while the articles from *off our backs* are readily available online, the letters are not. A digitized version of *off our backs* is available through Proquest, but the letters have not been included in the digital archives. The incomplete digitization of *off our backs* ensures that the one-sided and distorted picture of the events remains canonical. To get a sense of the full range of the discussion in *off our backs*, it is necessary to consult crumbling newsprint. As yet, there has been no comprehensive history of the feminist sex wars, and one challenge is that so many of the primary documents are not easily accessible.⁴²

The West Coast Sex Wars: Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media and Samois

Tracking the actual events of the Barnard conference demonstrates the absurdity of the claims that the conference was characterized by a single-minded devotion to S/M, butch/femme, and an uncritical promotion of pornography. The ease with which such distortions were treated as credible and their remarkable persistence call for both analytic attention and historical contextualization. Why were some feminists protesting a feminist conference, and why were they wearing T-shirts emblazoned with the slogan "Against S/M"? Why was Samois, then a small and obscure San Francisco lesbian S/M group, supposed to be involved in, much less responsible for, a conference three thousand miles away? Part of the explanation lies in events that took place prior to the Barnard Sex Conference and far from New York. Many people, particularly those from the East Coast, think that the Barnard conference initiated the feminist sex wars. But there were earlier episodes, and one important battle front had already opened in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1978. The controversies that engulfed the Barnard conference are more intelligible with some knowledge of this prehistory.

The West Coast battles took place between Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media (WAVPM), the first feminist antipornography organization, and Samois, the first lesbian S/M organization, both active in the San Fran-

cisco Bay Area in the late 1970s. Their skirmishes generated many of the patterns and themes that characterized the early phases of the sex wars. “Pornography,” a genre of media, and “somasochism,” a sexual preference and practice, are different kinds of things. Yet the terms were construed as opposites and used to articulate a range of political differences. The conflict between WAVPM and Samois helped establish “pornography” and “somasochism” as critical positions, ideological frameworks, and antithetical worldviews that were then deployed throughout the sex wars.

WAVPM was founded in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1976 and held the first national feminist conference on pornography in 1978.⁴³ New York’s WAP was established in 1979, shortly after the WAVPM conference. It is not widely understood how much the feminist antipornography movement was also, from its inception, a war against S/M imagery and practice. Diana Russell, one of the founders of WAVPM, articulated these fusions (and confusions) in a 1977 article in the feminist journal *Chrysalis*. Russell rarely gets the credit she clearly deserves for her contributions to the antiporn movement, which is often attributed instead to Catharine MacKinnon and Dworkin.⁴⁴ Yet Russell provided the early movement with most of its intellectual leadership, analytic language, and ideological coherence.

In the *Chrysalis* article, she asserts that pornography is “degrading” to women by nature, that it is inherently misogynist, and that it is vicious, antiwoman propaganda. Moreover, she used S/M porn to represent all that she found repugnant in pornography: “Before disagreeing with this statement, go see some of it! You might try a batch of movies regularly shown at the San Francisco Kearny Cinema (or its equivalent in other cities). The titles are self-explanatory: ‘Lesson in Pain,’ ‘Corporal Punishment,’ ‘Slave Girl,’ ‘Golden Pain,’ ‘Club Brute Force,’ and ‘Water Power.’”⁴⁵ At the time of this writing, San Francisco had probably twenty or so porn film theaters, of which only two, the Kearny and the North Beach, showed films with bondage or S/M themes. Yet these two theaters are repeatedly singled out in San Francisco antiporn literature. Similarly, there were probably hundreds or thousands of porn movies shown annually, but the titles of the small number of kinky films are used as if these represented pornographic films as a whole. S/M materials in Russell’s essay were used to persuade readers of the truth of the indictment against pornography, and their mere existence was taken both as representative of all porn and to confirm that porn is intrinsically foul.

Russell continues:

Pornography is not made to educate but to sell, and for the most part, what sells in a sexist society is a bunch of lies about sex and women. Women are

portrayed as enjoying being raped, spanked, or beaten, tied up, mutilated, and enslaved, or they accept it as their lot as women to be victims in such experiences. In the less sadistic films, women are portrayed as turned on and sexually satisfied by doing anything and everything that men want or order them to do. . . . Some pornography I saw recently doesn't even include sex: Women are kidnapped, beaten, tied up, then hung upside down like pieces of meat. And that's the end of the movie. Domination and torture are what it is about.⁴⁶

Several features of what would become recognizable as antipornography rhetoric are apparent in this passage. One common tactic is lists that mix some things that are clearly horrible, such as rape, with some other things that might be pleasurable, such as being spanked. Disgust mobilized by the front-loaded images of horror are then directed at things that might ordinarily be more difficult to get people upset about, for example, a woman finding pleasure in heterosexual intercourse.⁴⁷

Describing a different film, Russell exclaims:

In another movie I saw, boiling candle wax was dripped onto a bound woman's breasts. Had she consented beforehand? Even if she had, this is a violent act—one which was followed by her acting the willing and adoring lover of her torturer. So, even where models have consented to participate, they don't necessarily know what they're in for, and often they are in no position to maintain control.⁴⁸

Russell assumes that no one could enjoy hot candle-wax dripping on bound breasts; that such experiences could not be part of legitimate lovemaking; and that the act is intrinsically violent. One implication is that any woman who might actually enjoy such a practice must have something wrong with her. Russell's analysis betrays a limited concept of human sexual variation and an assumption that S/M is intrinsically degrading and repulsive. Such premises allow her to make the more explicit claim that the models could have agreed to participate in such films only because they were uninformed, duped, or coerced. In other words, the image's content, and Russell's own revulsion, substitute for evidence that anyone was actually tricked, abused, or coerced in the making of the film. As I have pointed out elsewhere, there is confusion between the image's content and the conditions of its production; if such criteria were consistently applied, we would have to assume that all of the actors blown up, murdered, shot, burned, drowned, or otherwise killed in movies were actual fatalities.⁴⁹

Russell's arguments, assumptions, language, and rhetorical tactics were incorporated into the early WAVPM literature. For example, each issue of WAVPM's newsletter, *Newspage*, contained a statement, "Who Are We?" In the September 1977 issue, it reads:

Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media is a core group of approximately 35 Bay Area women who are meeting because we share a common concern about the alarming increase of violent crimes against women. Media, including pornography, is our primary focus. We believe there is a relationship between what we see and hear in the media, and how we think and consequently act. *We want to put an end to all portrayals of women being bound, raped, tortured, mutilated, abused, or degraded in any way for sexual or erotic stimulation.*⁵⁰

This statement mirrors the language and analysis of Russell's essay. Like Russell, WAVPM was blaming pornography, and especially S/M imagery, for violence against women. Both Russell and WAVPM precluded the possibility of any legitimate S/M erotica, whose elimination was plainly stated as an explicit political goal of the organization. The mechanics of its abolition were left unspecified.

In a later *Newspage*, WAVPM published a list of frequently asked questions and their answers. Although the group's stated purpose was "to educate women and men about the hatred of women expressed in pornography and other media-violence to women," the entire document focuses on pornography. In WAVPM literature, other forms of "media-violence" quickly became a subsidiary theme and an occasional afterthought, unless their objectionable aspects could be blamed on pornography.

Q: What kinds of images are you talking about when you say you are opposed to "violence in pornography and media"?

A: We are talking about books and magazines which depict women being bound, beaten, and abused. We are protesting the message of these images—that beating and raping women, urinating and defecating on women, is erotic and pleasurable for men; and that women desire this kind of treatment, or at least expect it. We are talking about record-album photos, fashion and men's magazine lay-outs, department-store window displays and billboards, in which women are shown bound, gagged, beaten, whipped, and chained.

Q: But not all pornography is violent. So you object to pornography in which there is no violence.

A: *Yes*. Not all pornography is violent, but even the most banal pornography objectifies women's bodies.⁵¹

While WAVPM's critique was ostensibly directed against pornography, assumptions about sadomasochism in word, deed, and representation were integral to its analysis. WAVPM swept all S/M erotica up into its category of images that should not exist, and its program demanded the elimination of all S/M imagery or at least its banishment from public visibility. When WAVPM began to stage public protests in the spring of 1977, its focus was on S/M as much as porn, or rather on this confused composite target made up of porn, S/M, violence against women, and female subordination.

It was not surprising that WAVPM's rhetoric, program, and targets of protest alarmed local S/M activists, particularly the feminist ones. Samois formed in 1978. S/M activism had been inaugurated in 1971 with the formation of the Eulenspiegel Society in New York, which was followed by San Francisco's Society of Janus in 1974. Eulenspiegel and Janus were initially mixed-gender and mixed-orientation groups, but by the late 1970s they were predominantly heterosexual. Ferment over S/M had begun to appear in the lesbian feminist press in the mid-1970s. There were attempts to form lesbian S/M organizations at least as early as 1975, but Samois was the first ongoing lesbian S/M organization. The group articulated an ideological defense of S/M as a legitimate eroticism, even for feminists. Samois never claimed that S/M was particularly feminist, only that there was no intrinsic contradiction between feminist politics and S/M practice. Nor did Samois claim that S/M was an inherently liberatory practice, only that it was not inherently oppressive.⁵²

Since Samois was a lesbian group, many of whose members, including me, had already been active in the women's movement, it was attuned to developments in feminism in a way that the more heterosexually oriented Eulenspiegel and Janus were not. Several of us quickly perceived that WAVPM's program was as much anti-S/M as antipornography. We naively assumed that the members of WAVPM were uneducated about S/M and would welcome dialogue and discussion. As it turned out, WAVPM had no interest in discussing issues with any feminist who disagreed with them, much less with people who engaged without apparent guilt in forms of sexuality they felt exemplified the worst manifestations of patriarchy.⁵³

Shortly after Samois was formed, we started sending letters to WAVPM asking to meet to discuss their position on S/M. These requests were consistently rebuffed. However, the tensions between the two groups escalated in April 1980, when flyers suddenly appeared around the Bay Area announcing a WAVPM fund-

raiser: a forum on sadomasochism in the lesbian community. Since WAVPM had refused efforts to discuss their position on S/M, Samois objected to the forum and responded with a leaflet. One of WAVPM's favorite slogans was that "pornography was a lie about women." The Samois leaflet was titled "This Forum Is a Lie about S/M." The leaflet expressed three objections to the forum:

1. WAVPM, without taking an "official" position on S/M has nonetheless promoted a false image of S/M sexuality and helped to create a climate that is oppressive and dangerous to S/M-identified people. WAVPM's most obvious error is the equation of consensual S/M with violence. . . .
2. Panelists have made . . . public statements that equate S/M with self destruction, male supremacy, fascism, misogyny, or mental illness. The anti-S/M arguments you will hear at this forum are as biased and bigoted as homophobic attacks on lesbians and gay men or right-wing attacks on independent feminist women. These arguments are based on biological determinism, conventional morality, and psychiatric notions of sexual perversion. We protest the promulgation of negative stereotypes of S/M.
3. Consensual S/M is not anti-feminist or anti-woman. S/M people are a stigmatized sexual minority, and as such are subjected to street harassment, job and housing discrimination, violence, and other forms of persecution.

All of the speakers at the forum denounced S/M. Eventually, many of their talks became articles in the anthology *Against Sadomasochism: A Radical Feminist Analysis*.⁵⁴ After the forum, WAVPM evidently had an internal debate on whether to take an official position on S/M. When the organization declined, several disgruntled members decided to edit the anti-S/M anthology.

One of the biggest successes of the feminist antipornography movement has been to intensify a shift in the locus of legal and social concern about sexual imagery away from genital proximity and toward kinkiness. The movement helped transform popular conceptions of "hard core," and legal definitions have shifted as well. The distinction between hard- and soft-core porn once had mainly to do with whether there was genital exposure and contact. Increasingly, "hard core" refers to something the viewer finds repugnant or considers "way out there," and all too often consists of depictions of kinky or S/M sexuality.⁵⁵

S/M continued to be a potent flashpoint throughout the feminist sex wars, in part because the antipornography argument depended on its indictment of S/M, its contention that pornography overwhelmingly featured S/M content, and its use of S/M imagery as an effective tool of persuasion. WAVPM pioneered a character-

istic fusion of anti-S/M and antiporn propositions that shaped subsequent feminist antiporn ideology and activity. Opposition to S/M has always been a major subtext of the feminist antiporn movement: indispensable to its analytic coherence, the source of its most rhetorically potent examples, and a primary target of its prescriptions for social change. Samois challenged the fundamental credibility of both the logical structure and empirical claims of WAVPM's case against porn. Thus the disputes between Samois and WAVPM prefigured much of the subsequent struggle in feminism over sexual practice and sexual representation. They help explain why S/M (engaged in by a relatively small proportion of the population, feminist or otherwise) was such a flashpoint, and why the name of Samois such a significant talisman.

By the time of the Barnard conference, the specific confrontation between WAVPM and Samois had been generalized. S/M had become a code for any feminist opposition to the antipornography creed. Since antiporn feminists seemed unable to accept that there might be any rational basis for disagreement, S/M also functioned as an explanation for behavior they apparently considered both inexplicable and despicable. Given the stigma of S/M, it was also a convenient slur with which to try to discredit any opposition. Feminists who did not go along with the antiporn program were accused of being tools of the patriarchy, dupes of the pornographers, sadomasochists and other sex perverts, leftists, Marxists, bourgeois academics, liberals, libertarians, heterosexuals, lesbians, and antifeminists. Some of these characterizations (such as academics, heterosexuals, lesbians, liberals, leftists, and the occasional sadomasochist) were of course true, although it was not clear how they invalidated our arguments and empirical claims. Some characterizations were erroneous, some were debatable, and many were completely idiotic. All were deployed to impugn our right to speak on the issues and to excommunicate us from the ranks of legitimate feminists. Feminists who opposed antiporn dogma were often called sadomasochists or supporters of sadomasochism, whatever their actual sexual preferences.⁵⁶ All of this history came into play not only at Barnard but also well beyond.

Barnard Redux

The Barnard Sex Conference, it turned out, was the opening act for a series of similar conflicts. As Vance perceptively noted in the Barnard aftermath, "Some feminists decried these tactics, but the fact that the people who had deployed them were not totally discredited guaranteed that they would be repeated. The principle was established: Zealotry and unprincipled behavior were acceptable in the ser-

vice of ‘protecting’ women.”⁵⁷ In 1986 they were indeed repeated when the Five College Women’s Studies Project held a conference called “Feminism, Sexuality, and Power” at Mount Holyoke. I had been invited to give the keynote, on new theories of sexuality. The organizers experienced something quite different from what they had planned, as Margaret Hunt reported in *Gay Community News*:

More than a hundred feminist activists met at Mt. Holyoke College for a symposium intended . . . to explore the variety of ideas about the ways that sexual practices are affected by history, culture and politics. . . . the conference organizers had in mind a quite broad based approach to sexuality and power. They planned a program which included a substantial amount of material on the ways class and race interacted with gender in the organization of sexuality and they took care to represent a variety of erotic lifestyles to avoid the prevalent Western bias of much scholarship on sexuality. What they got was a pitched battle over the question of lesbian S/M, an issue which so dominated the conference as to make all other matters fade into the polished neo-gothic Mt. Holyoke woodwork.⁵⁸

After this debacle, Meryl Fingrudt, one of the organizers, lamented:

Radical feminism, as it was presented at our conference, has a very narrow range of vision. . . . it was at the level of intellectual and personal freedoms that these radical feminists threw me into despair. The speakers refused to be moved off the issues of pornography and S/M and they were downright nasty to their sisters. . . . They refused to debate or sit on the same panel with anyone who held another point of view. . . . Above all, it was unnerving to see, with each successive presentation, incredibly narrow and specific lines drawn around sexual practices that were permissible if one wanted to be a real feminist. . . . any inquiry that proposes to raise questions about the content of these categories or even argue that these are dangerously limiting is labeled non-feminist, anti-feminist, or fascistic.⁵⁹

The Five Colleges conference ended up feeling like Barnard, Act II.⁶⁰

Act III was played out in Australia, in 1993, when several American scholars whose work dealt with sexuality and LGBT studies were invited to the Humanities Research Centre (HRC) at the Australian National University (ANU). Among the visiting fellows from the United States were Henry Abelow, D’Emilio, Duggan, David Halperin, Patton, Vance, Vicinus, and me. Several Australian radical feminists, including Sheila Jeffreys, Denise Thompson, and Renate Klein,

sent a letter to the university's vice chancellor to protest our presence and attack the HRC for having invited us. "Some of the women invited," said the letter, "hold what can only be described as anti-feminist positions. . . . In particular we want to protest in the strongest possible terms against the HRC's bias in inviting Gayle Rubin, Cindy Patton and Carol [sic] Vance to be conference participants. . . . The work of these women from the US displays a zeal in defence of male supremacist meanings and values that amounts to an outright anti-feminism."⁶¹ A few days later, the *Sydney Star Observer* ran an article with the headline "ANU denies conferences showcase anti-feminism." Thompson is quoted in the article as saying, "Not only do these women from the US lack any ability to think through questions of sex and power, they are also anti-feminist." Thompson also blasted the ANU for "importing tenth-rate yanks."⁶² The HRC and ANU politely but firmly stood by their invitations and continued with their plans. Some of us among the visiting fellows took to calling ourselves the Tenth-Rate Yanks. It would have been a great name for a band.

Over the years, there have been plenty of mini-Barnards. Many of those who were involved in the attacks on Barnard, the Five Colleges conference, and the HRC are still actively working in pursuit of the same, or closely related, agendas. They continue to dismiss anyone who disagrees with them as antifeminists, sadomasochists, and supporters of patriarchal violence.⁶³ We might hear less about them these days because so many of them have left the women's movement as their arena of action to work in the federal government and international nongovernmental organizations where they influence decisions with great public impact. Most now describe their target as "sex trafficking," to which they are bringing the same agenda they brought to pornography and which they hope to codify in international law and policy.⁶⁴ For example, Dorchon Leidholdt helped found the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and has served as its codirector. Laura Lederer served as senior advisor on trafficking in persons to the under-secretary of state during the Bush administration.

Rethinking "Thinking Sex"

Once I write a paper, I rarely reread it. But the "Rethinking Sex" conference seemed a good time to reacquaint myself with "Thinking Sex." I am often asked what I might have written differently. There is a part of me that always wants to go back and do yet another edit on any article that has left my hands, but I could never fix this piece. Any serious revision would require another article, one set in these different times. Yet there are certainly some things I would have done dif-

ferently, had I known then what I know now. My remarks about transsexuality, sex work, and the sexuality of the young were far too sketchy for such complex topics. Nor is it possible here to redress those lacunae fully; a few brief comments will have to suffice.

Every theory has what Max Weber famously called “inconvenient facts,” examples or data that stress the capabilities of any given intellectual scheme.⁶⁵ Both sex work and transsexuality are in a sense such “inconvenient facts,” in that they reveal the limitations of the theoretical models and conceptual distinctions developed in “Thinking Sex.” The essay had useful things to say about each, and I tried to note the ways in which each did not fit the argument’s framework, although I was more explicit about prostitution than about transsexuality.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, both phenomena exceed the parameters the essay was so careful to construct.

Susan Stryker has gently taken “Thinking Sex” to task for having “clearly categorized transgender practices as sexual or erotic acts rather than expressions of gender identity or sense of self.” She further notes that “Thinking Sex” contributed to an analytic framework that transgender theories had to overcome: “As the transgender movement began to regather force in the early 1990s, it posed a challenge to the new queer theory similar to the one posed by sexuality to feminism—it asked whether the framework of queer sexuality could adequately account for transgender phenomena, or whether a new frame of analysis was required. These are the questions that led, in the years ahead, to the development of the new interdisciplinary academic field of transgender studies.”⁶⁷

Of course, Stryker is completely correct in her critique of the treatment of transsexuality in “Thinking Sex” and in her observation that “transgender phenomena are not intrinsically sexual (having more to do, more often than not, with regulatory schema of bodily integrity, visual coherence, and bureaucratic intelligibility than with wanton ways of fucking).”⁶⁸ The contrast between transgender studies now and the cruder tools available in the early 1980s illuminates some of the very positive changes that have occurred in the interim.

Since transgender studies did not yet exist when I was writing “Thinking Sex,” I had limited resources with which to respond to the nasty vein of anti-transsexual sentiment that had developed within feminism in the 1970s and was articulated most comprehensively by Janice Raymond.⁶⁹ Although I wanted to undermine the foundations on which such antitrans screeds were built, there were many alternative strategies I might have used. One approach would have been to ground my argument in feminism’s own core critiques of gender roles and anatomical determinism, although that would have unduly complicated other agendas of the essay.

I should reiterate that antifeminism was not one of my objectives. While the essay has sometimes been interpreted as a rejection of feminism, I saw it as completely within the best traditions of feminist discourse, particularly the constant self-critical striving toward more analytic clarity and descriptive precision about inequality and injustice. Unfortunately, as time erodes the details of context, such conversations, internal to feminism, are often seen as more oppositional than they were ever intended to be.⁷⁰

Then there are the children. I clearly underestimated the size of the impending tsunami about the sexuality of the young. When I finished writing "Thinking Sex" in 1983, the outlines of the panics over children were clear, but their scale and duration were not.⁷¹ The panics that seemed episodic in 1983 now are a permanent feature of our social and political landscape. When the history of the last quarter of a century is finally written, one of the distinguishing features of this period will be the extent to which legitimate concerns for the sexual welfare of the young have been vehicles for political mobilizations and policies with consequences well beyond their explicit aims, some quite damaging to the young people they are supposed to help. The rhetoric of child protection has anchored many conservative agendas with respect to intensifying women's subordinate status, reinforcing hierarchical family structures, curtailing gay citizenship, opposing comprehensive sex education, limiting the availability of contraception, and restricting abortion, especially for young women and girls.

Laws and policies that are supposed to protect children have been used to deprive young people of age-appropriate and eagerly desired sexual information and services. Laws intended to protect children and young people, such as very broadly drawn child pornography statutes, have been used to prosecute them (such as the cases where minors have been charged with breaking the law by texting nude images of themselves). Almost anything, from promoting abstinence to banning gay marriage and adoption, can be and has been framed as promoting children's safety and welfare.⁷² A critical evaluation of the details, impact, and scope of child protection laws and policies is long overdue; yet people who try to engage in such analysis are often attacked and accused of supporting child abuse.

In the early 1980s one could still have a thoughtful discussion about the sexuality of the young. It has become increasingly perilous to address the many complex questions about children, sex, and minors that need to be thoroughly discussed and carefully vetted: these include what kind of sexual information, services, and behavior are appropriate for the young, and at what ages; what constitutes sexual abuse and how can it be prevented and minimized; how should young people learn about sex; what are the appropriate roles of adults in the sexual lives

and learning of children; what kinds of representations of sexuality should be available to minors, and at what ages; should sexually active minors be treated in punitive ways, and where is the line between protection and punishment; in what ways do the policies, legal apparatus, and structures of fear that have been built over the last several decades enhance or damage the experience of growing up; what is pedophilia, and what is child molestation; who abuses children; what is child pornography; and for what offenses is someone labeled a “sex offender”? I do not have answers to all of these questions, but I think it is tragic that discussion of most of these questions has been reduced to a collection of crude sound bites, stereotypes, and scare tactics that have been cynically manipulated into stampeding the public and politicians into many ill-considered changes that have not promoted safety or sound policies for minors.

One example is California’s 1994 initiative, Three Strikes and You’re Out. This law was passed in the emotional wake of a horrible crime: the abduction, rape, and murder of a young girl. But the law was an example of bait and switch: rather than protect young people from serial rapists, the primary effect of the law has been to incarcerate tens of thousands of Californians, many on relatively minor charges, including drug use and possession. Three Strikes has contributed to the out-of-control expansion of a vast prison gulag and diverted critical resources from other needs, including one of the most important for children: primary, secondary, and higher education.⁷³

The fear of sexual abduction, rape, and murder of children by strangers has substantially reshaped many areas of society. It is a major concern of parents, and haunts the young. Yet it is relatively rare. According to *Newsweek*, more children drown in swimming pools each year than are abducted by strangers.⁷⁴ By a large margin, the leading cause of fatalities among teenagers is automobile accidents.⁷⁵ Yet most people are not terrified of cars, and few parents are as afraid of swimming pools as they are of “sex offenders,” ostensibly lurking behind every bush and lamppost. Despite the facts that most sex abuse is perpetrated at home and by family members, most murdered children are killed by their parents, and most kidnapped children are abducted by noncustodial parents, the family is depicted as a place of safety threatened by dangerous strangers. The ever-growing apparatus of regulation and control adopted to address these issues is directed primarily toward such strangers. “Child protection” is a bit like the defense budget, the intelligence bureaucracy, and the endless wars on terror: there are genuine issues and real problems, but much of the response consists of uncontrolled institutional expansion, escalating expenditure of resources, poorly defined targets, and few effective ways to measure success.

In her statement about her Barnard workshop on the sexuality of infancy and childhood, Kate Millett observed: "There is, in short, a great deal of sexual politics frustrating the sexual expression of children and the young. You and I will live to see this discussed, almost for the first time in history. Considering we were all children once, and if we are very good, we're children still—we all have a stake in this. The emancipation of children is our emancipation in retrospect, and that of the future as well."⁷⁶ Millett's comments (and some of mine in "Thinking Sex") now seem hopelessly naive and unrealistically optimistic. But she was right to point out that all of us who have reached adulthood are former children. Much of my concern in these areas is a result of having grown up in the 1950s, when it was hazardous to be a sexually active female teenager.

Like most other girls, I had plenty of experience with both "pleasures and dangers." I had to contend with my share of unwanted sex, but I also encountered many barriers to sex I wanted. Contraception was unavailable, abortion was illegal, and the stigmatization of sexually active young women was ferocious. Sex education in school consisted of a film about menstruation, enhanced by surreptitious reading of disreputable novels like *The Catcher in the Rye* and gleaning sexual terms from the rare unabridged copies of *Webster's* dictionary. Getting pregnant was ruinous: when I was in high school, girls who got pregnant were summarily expelled. They lost their chance at further education and became social non-persons, at least in the universe visible to those of us who remained in school. Second-wave feminism was in part a reaction to this punitive regime. Social conservatives, on the other hand, seek to reconstitute such a system, or something worse. They often justify their program as necessary to protect a sentimentalized notion of childhood innocence.

Writing "Thinking Sex," I dimly saw the outlines of the shape of things to come, but badly miscalculated their reach, persistence, and consequences. My comments on sex and children were made in a different context, in which I assumed (wrongly, as it turned out) that no one would imagine that I supported the rape of prepubescents. Even now, as I write this, I am aware that whatever I say will be interpreted in the worst possible way by some antipornography advocate or right-winger, and misconstructions are inevitable. Children are not, in fact, a major area of my interest or expertise. But why should even an exploration of such issues need to be done so gingerly, and feel so dangerous? That it does is an indication of something deeply wrong.

Issues of urban space have remained major and enduring areas of my research interest. The parts of "Thinking Sex" that are most germane to my current work are those that grew out of my ethnographic project on gay men in San

Francisco, and I am even more focused now than I was then on topics such as geographies of sexual location, and the formation and dissipation of gay neighborhoods. While the term *gentrification* had been coined in the 1960s, the study of gentrification was just becoming a coherent field in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and there were only a handful of studies on the relationship of gay neighborhoods and populations to that emerging literature.⁷⁷ I was not yet conversant with the early gentrification literature when I wrote "Thinking Sex." My field research had made it clear, however, that the location of gay populations and institutions was enmeshed in conflicts over land use and that homosexuals were convenient scapegoats for the crisis in affordable housing in San Francisco.⁷⁸

It was even more obvious that large redevelopment projects threatened existing gay enclaves and that sexual stigma was a readily exploitable resource for making land available for capital-intensive development. In 1984 I commented that areas such as Times Square in New York and San Francisco's Tenderloin, North Beach, and South of Market were on the verge of being "made safe for convention centers, international hotels, corporate headquarters, and housing for the rich."⁷⁹ There is now a sizable literature on the transformation of Times Square, including Samuel Delany's elegiac *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*.⁸⁰ In San Francisco, the Tenderloin and North Beach have not yet been conquered, but South of Market, the location of my research, has been substantially rebuilt and socially reconstructed. Blocks that once housed maritime union halls and where gay men congregated are now the sites of luxury condominium towers. Moreover, the other gay neighborhoods of San Francisco from the 1960s and 1970s are either gone or shrinking. On rereading "Thinking Sex," I was surprised to see my observation that the gay neighborhoods that we could take for granted in the early 1980s might prove temporary.⁸¹ The attrition of urban gay concentrations in the early twenty-first century has become a serious challenge for gay social life and political aspirations, and its potential consequences have not yet been fully articulated.

One aspect of the essay of which I am most proud is its "protoqueerness." I wanted to move the discussion of sexual politics beyond single issues and single constituencies, from women and lesbians and gay men to analyses that could incorporate and address with more intricacy the cross-identifications and multiple subject positions that most of us occupy. I continue to believe that our best political hopes for the future lie in finding common ground and building coalitions based on mutual respect and appreciation of differences and that the best intellectual work is able to accommodate complexity, treasure nuance, and resist the temptations of dogma and oversimplification.

Notes

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1. See, e.g., B. Ruby Rich, "Is There Anything New under the Covers?" *In These Times*, February 20–26, 1985, 19. In "Review: Feminism and Sexuality in the 1980s," *Feminist Studies* 12 (1986): 525–61, Rich dismissed me without engaging at all with "Thinking Sex" in an essay covering several books, including *Pleasure and Danger*. In *Sex, Power, and Pleasure* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1985), 17–18, 150–55, Mariana Valverde managed to dismiss "Thinking Sex" while using conceptual language (such as the "Domino Theory") almost identical to mine, but without attribution. See also Elizabeth Wilson, "The Context of 'Between Pleasure and Danger': The Barnard Conference on Sexuality," *Feminist Review*, no. 13 (1983): 35–41, although Wilson's comments were based on the lecture rather than the published version. A welcome exception was Michèle Aina Barale's thoughtful and engaged comments in "Review: Body Politic/Body Pleasured: Feminism's Theories of Sexuality, a Review Essay," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 9 (1986): 80–89. Exemplary of the hostile reviews was Pauline B. Bart, "Review: Their Pleasure and Our Danger," *Contemporary Sociology* 15 (1986): 832–35. See also Sheila Jeffreys, *Anticlimax: A Feminist Perspective on the Sexual Revolution* (London: Women's Press, 1990), 274; and Bat-Ami Bar On, "The Feminist Sexuality Debates and the Transformation of the Political," in *Adventures in Lesbian Philosophy*, ed. Claudia Card (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 51–63.
2. Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality," in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole S. Vance (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 267–319.
3. See Robin Morgan, *The Anatomy of Freedom: Feminism, Physics, and Global Politics* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1984); 115, and Ellen Willis, "Who Is a Feminist? A Letter to Robin Morgan," *Village Voice*, Literary Supplement, December 1982, 16–17.
4. The historian Jonathan Ned Katz coined this slogan, which now graces the Web site www.outhistory.org, a community-created, nonprofit site on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and heterosexual history.
5. "Welcome Statement," "Rethinking Sex" conference brochure, www.sas.upenn.edu/wstudies/rethinkingsex/.

6. Jeffrey Weeks, *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* (London: Longman, 1977). See also Bert Hansen, "The Historical Construction of Homosexuality," *Radical History Review* 20 (Spring–Summer 1979): 66–75; Robert Padgug, "Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History," *Radical History Review* 20 (Spring–Summer 1979): 3–23.
7. This paradigm shift happened across a broad swath of researchers more or less simultaneously. In addition to my own essay, see Judith Walkowitz and Daniel J. Walkowitz, "'We Are Not Beasts of the Field': Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton under the Contagious Diseases Act," *Feminist Studies* 1, nos. 3–4 (1973): 73–106; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1, An Introduction* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978); Padgug, "Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History"; Hansen, "The Historical Construction of Homosexuality"; Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Carole S. Vance, "Social Construction Theory: Problems in the History of Sexuality," *Homosexuality, Which Homosexuality?*, ed. Dennis Altman et al. (London: GMP Publishers, 1989), 13–34; Vance, "Anthropology Discovers Sexuality: A Theoretical Comment," *Social Science and Medicine* 33 (1991): 875–84; Steven Epstein, "A Queer Encounter: Sociology and the Study of Sexuality," in *Queer Theory/Sociology*, ed. by Steven Seidman (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996), 145–67; and Gayle Rubin, "Studying Sexual Subcultures: The Ethnography of Gay Communities in Urban North America," in *Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology*, ed. Ellen Lewin and William L. Leap (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002).
8. Gayle Rubin and Judith Butler, "Interview: Sexual Traffic," *differences* 6, nos. 2–3 (1994): 62–99.
9. Two key independent scholars were Jonathan Ned Katz and Allan Bérubé. See Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.* (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1976); Katz, *Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983); Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990).
10. John D'Emilio, "Dreams Deferred: Part 1," *Body Politic* 48 (1978): 19; D'Emilio, "Dreams Deferred: Part 2: Public Actions, Private Fears," *Body Politic* 49 (1979): 24–29; Jim Steakley, "The Gay Movement in Germany Part One: 1860–1910," *Body Politic* 9 (1973): 12–17; Steakley, "The Gay Movement in Germany Part Two: 1910–1933," *Body Politic* 10 (1973): 14–19; Steakley, "Homosexuals and the Third Reich," *Body Politic* 11 (1974): 1–3; Allan Bérubé, "The First Stonewall," *San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Program* (1983), 27; Bérubé, "Behind the Spectre of San Francisco," *Body Politic* 72 (1981): 25–27; and Bérubé, "Lesbian Masquerade," *Gay Community News*, November 17, 1979. For more on *Gay Community News*, see Amy Hoffman's wonderful memoir, *An Army of Ex-Lovers: My Life at the Gay Community News* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).

11. Allan Bérubé, "Coming Out Under Fire," *Mother Jones*, February–March (1983), 45.
12. See John D'Emilio, "Allan Bérubé's Gift to History," *Gay and Lesbian Review Worldwide* 15, no. 3 (2008): 10–13.
13. Bérubé, "Lesbian Masquerade."
14. Bérubé, "First Stonewall."
15. Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*.
16. See Eric Garber, "A Spectacle in Color: The Lesbian and Gay Subculture of Jazz Age Harlem," in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey Jr. (New York: New American Library, 1991), 318–31; and Garber, "Gladys Bentley: The Bulldagger Who Sang the Blues," *OUTlook: National Lesbian and Gay Quarterly* 1 (Spring 1998): 52–61.
17. Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963).
18. Carole S. Vance, "Invitation Letter" (September 1981), in *Diary of a Conference on Sexuality*, ed. Hannah Alderfer, Beth Jaker, Marybeth Nelson (New York: Faculty Press, 1982), 1.
19. Carole S. Vance, Epilogue to *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole S. Vance (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 434.
20. Carole S. Vance, "More Danger, More Pleasure: A Decade after the Barnard Sexuality Conference," in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, 2nd ed., ed. Carole Vance (London: Pandora, 1992), xxii.
21. Vance, Epilogue, 434. In the epilogue, Vance introduced the terminology of "sex panic" rather than that of "moral panic," which was used by Cohen, then Weeks, and me. See Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980); Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800* (London: Longman, 1981): 14–15; and Rubin, "Thinking Sex," 297–98.
22. Vance, *Diary*, 47.
23. Cited in Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution* (New York: Dial, 1999), 314.
24. See the *Diary*; Vance, Epilogue; and Vance, "More Danger, More Pleasure."
25. Vance, Epilogue, 433–34.
26. Coalition for a Feminist Sexuality and Against Sadoomasochism, "We Protest." Leaflet distributed at Barnard Sex Conference, April 1981. From the author's collection.
27. Carole S. Vance, "Letter to the Editor," *Feminist Studies* 9 (1983): 589–91; and Ellen Willis, "Letter to the Editor," *Feminist Studies* 9 (1983): 592–94.
28. Ellen Willis, "Feminism, Moralism, and Pornography," in *Beginning to See the Light: Pieces of a Decade* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981): 219–27.
29. Tacie Dejanikus, "Charges of Exclusion and McCarthyism at Barnard Conference," *off our backs* 12, no. 6 (1982): 5.
30. Dejanikus, "Charges of Exclusion and McCarthyism," 5.

31. Dorchon Leidholdt, "Back to Barnard," *off our backs* 23 (Oct. 1993): 30.
32. Jane F. Gerhard, *Desiring Revolution: Second-Wave Feminism and the Rewriting of American Sexual Thought, 1920 to 1982* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 188.
33. Vance, Epilogue, 434.
34. Vance, "More Danger, More Pleasure," xxi.
35. Jane Gould, *Juggling: A Memoir of Work, Family, and Feminism* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1997), 200.
36. Gerhard, *Desiring Revolution*, 184. The actual members of the planning committee were listed in the *Diary* and also in *Pleasure and Danger* (1984), xvii.
37. Gould, *Juggling*, 200.
38. Vance, Epilogue, 431–32.
39. Vance, personal communication, June 2010.
40. Andrea Dworkin, memo, circulated but unpublished, August 1981, author's personal collection, emphasis in the original.
41. Letters to the Editor, *off our backs* 12, no. 7 (1982): Rubin, 24, Hollibaugh, 25, Walton, 25, Newton, 25, Doughty, 26; 12, no. 8 (1982): Ellen Willis, 32, Joan Nestle, 32, Barbara Greer, 33; 12, no. 10 (1982): Samois, 26, Cleveland WAVAM, 26.
42. But see Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce et al., eds., *Caught Looking: Feminism, Pornography, and Censorship* (East Haven, CT: Long River Books, 1992); *Heresies: The Sex Issue* 12 (1981); and Lisa Duggan and Nan D. Hunter, *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissident and Political Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995) for a useful chronology and incisive commentary.
43. See Laura Lederer, *Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography* (New York: William Morrow, 1980). This is the most representative collection of essays from the early feminist antiporn movement.
44. MacKinnon mentioned pornography in passing in her 1982 and 1983 *Signs* articles, but did not become a prominent figure in the antiporn movement until the 1983 Minneapolis ordinance. Catharine MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory," *Signs* 7.3 (Spring 1982): 515–44; and MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: Toward Feminist Jurisprudence," *Signs* 8.4 (Summer 1983): 635–58. See also Gayle Rubin, "Misguided, Dangerous, and Wrong: An Analysis of Anti-Pornography Politics," in *Bad Girls and Dirty Pictures: The Challenge to Reclaim Feminism*, ed. Alison Assiter and Avedon Carol (Boulder, CO: Pluto, 1993), 18–40.
45. Diana E. H. Russell and Susan Griffin, "On Pornography: Two Feminists' Perspectives," *Chrysalis* 4 (1977): 11.
46. Russell and Griffin, "On Pornography," 12. Russell appears to be unaware that the relative lack of explicit sex in some S/M films often resulted from attempts to avoid prosecution. The threshold of explicitness for bringing obscenity charges was often lower for S/M materials.

47. Carole Vance has a particularly lucid analysis of the rhetorical tactics involved in such sexual "laundry lists" in an essay on the 1989 imbroglio over the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). (Carole Vance, "Misunderstanding Obscenity," *Art in America* 78, [May 1990]: 49–55). In addition, one must be careful to understand how potentially loaded terms are used in antiporn literature, and how their meanings can slip. One example, found in the Russell passage cited here, is mutilation. We generally think of mutilation as deliberate and terrible injury causing permanent physical damage, but mutilation is often used in antiporn texts to refer to practices of body modification such as genital piercing, nipple rings, or even tattoos. In this context, one person's idea of mutilation is another's idea of personal adornment.
48. Russell and Griffin, "On Pornography," 13.
49. See, for instance, Rubin, "Misguided, Dangerous, and Wrong."
50. WAVPM, "Who Are We?" *Newspage*, September 1977.
51. *Newspage*, November 1977, my emphasis.
52. Samois, ed., *What Color Is Your Handkerchief? A Lesbian S/M Sexuality Reader* (Berkeley, CA: Samois, 1979) and the organization's carefully worded statement of purpose printed on the last page of *Coming to Power: Writings and Graphics on Lesbian S/M* (Boston: Alyson, 1982). See also Gayle Rubin, "Samois," in *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History in America*, ed. Marc Stein (New York: Scribner, 2004), 67–69; and Rubin, "The Leather Menace," in *Coming to Power*, 194–229.
53. Pat Califia, "History of Samois," in *Coming to Power*, 243–81.
54. Robin Linden et al., *Against Sodomasochism: A Radical Feminist Analysis* (East Palo Alto, CA: Frog in the Well, 1982).
55. Linda Williams traces "a major change taking place in American obscenity law and the prosecution of sex crimes as they have moved away from the notion of explicit sex and toward the targeting of scapegoatable 'deviants' . . . in the definition of obscenity, explicitness has given way to the deviant sexuality of the 'other,' defined in relation to a presumed heterosexual, non-sodomasochistic norm that excludes both fellatio and cunnilingus." (Williams, "Second Thoughts on *Hard Core*: American Obscenity Law and the Scapegoating of Deviance," in *Dirty Looks: Women, Pornography, and Power*, ed. Pamela Church Gibson and Roma Gibson [London: British Film Institute, 1993], 47, 49).
56. Dorchon Leidholdt and Janice G. Raymond, *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism* (New York: Pergamon, 1989). See also Dorchon Leidholdt, "A Small Group," *off our backs* 15, no. 10 (1985): 26; Nan Hunter, "Sex-Baiting and Dangerous Bedfellows," *off our backs* 15, no. 7 (1985): 33; Hunter, "Modern McCarthyism," *off our backs* 15, no. 11 (1985): 26; and Lisa Duggan, "The Binds That Divide," *off our backs* 15, no. 11 (1985): 26.
57. Vance, "More Danger, More Pleasure," xxi.

58. Margaret Hunt, "Discord in the Happy Valley: Report of a Conference on Feminism, Sexuality, and Power," *Gay Community News* 14, no. 21 (1986).
59. Meryl Fingrudt, ". . . An Organizer," *off our backs* 17, no. 3 (1987): 24.
60. It was at this conference that I first met Eve Sedgwick. Eve's paper was called "Spanking and Poetry: Starting with the Fundamentals." Eve too was attacked in some of the press coverage for ostensibly participating in the S/M conspiracy.
61. Multiple authors, "A Protest at the Emphasis of the Humanities Research Centre's 1993 Conferences," Australian National University, 9 March 1993, p. 1. See Sheila Jeffreys's account in *The Lesbian Heresy: A Feminist Perspective on the Lesbian Sexual Revolution* (Melbourne: Spinifex, 1993), 95–97.
62. Barbara Farrelly, "ANU denies conferences showcase anti-feminism," *Sydney Observer*, March 19, 1993.
63. Leidholdt and Raymond, *Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism*.
64. CATW campaigns against decriminalizing prostitution, supports the Mann Act, and supports the federalization of antiprostitution enforcement. See action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=113289; www.catwinternational.org/bioDorchenLeidholdt.php; action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=113289. Jeffreys is also currently involved in feminist antitrafficking and antiprostitution activism. See Vance, this issue, and Rubin, "The Trouble with Trafficking: Afterthoughts on the Traffic in Women," in *Deviations: Essays in Sex, Gender, and Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming).
65. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 147.
66. For my comments on prostitution, see Rubin, "Thinking Sex," 286–87.
67. Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (Berkeley, CA: Seal, 2008), 130–31.
68. Susan Stryker, "Thoughts on Transgender Feminism and the Barnard Conference on Women," *Communication Review* 11 (2008): 218.
69. Janice Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1979). See also Penny House and Liza Cowan, "Can Men Be Women? Some Lesbians Think So! Transsexuals in the Women's Movement," *Dyke, a Quarterly* 5 (1977): 29–35. For responses to Raymond, see Sandy Stone, "The 'Empire' Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto," in *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, ed. Kristina Straub and Julia Epstein (New York: Routledge, 1991), 280–304; and Carol Riddell, *Divided Sisterhood: A Critical Review of Janice Raymond's "The Transsexual Empire"* (Liverpool, UK: News from Nowhere, 1980). Raymond has also moved into antiprostitution activism and was the co-executive director of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) from 1994 to 2007.
70. In addition, the politics of the sex wars led some critics to claim that I had rejected feminism in attempts to discredit me and to bolster their argument that those who

- disagreed with the antipornography analysis were not feminists. See, for example, Jeffreys, *The Lesbian Heresy*, 128; and *Anti-Climax*, 274. For a contrasting assessment, see Annamarie Jagose's careful and detailed discussion of the relationship of queer theory to feminism, in which she correctly notes that the gulf between queer theory and feminism has been exaggerated and comments that "Thinking Sex" was "a resolutely feminist intervention." Jagose, "Feminism's Queer Theory," *Feminism & Psychology* 19, no. 2 (2009): 165.
71. Joel Best, *Threatened Children: Rhetoric and Concern about Child-Victims* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 23–24. See also Paula Fass, *Kidnapped: Child Abduction in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 335–71.
 72. See Ann Burlein, *Lift High the Cross: Where White Supremacy and the Christian Right Converge* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Janice Irvine, *Talk about Sex: The Battles over Sex Education in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Judith Levine, *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children from Sex* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).
 73. See *The Legacy* (dir. Michael J. Moore; 2006); Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); and Joe Domanick, *Cruel Justice: Three Strikes and the Politics of Crime in America's Golden State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
 74. "What Should You Really Be Afraid Of?" *Newsweek*, May 24–31, 2010, 64.
 75. Anna Quindlen, "Driving to the Funeral," *Newsweek*, June 11, 2007, 80.
 76. Vance, *Diary*, 59.
 77. Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 138–72; and Manuel Castells and Karen Murphy, "Organization of San Francisco's Gay Community," in Norman I. Fainstein and Susan S. Fainstein, eds., *Urban Policy Under Capitalism* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1982), 237–59.
 78. For the escalating costs of housing in the early 1980s, see Susan S. Fainstein, Norman I. Fainstein, and P. Jefferson Armistead, "San Francisco: Urban Transformation and the Local State," in *Restructuring the City: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment*, Revised Edition, ed. Susan S. Fainstein, Norman I. Fainstein, Richard Child Hill, Dennis R. Judd and Michael Peter Smith (New York: Longman, 1986 [1983]), 202–44.
 79. Rubin, *Thinking Sex*, 296–97.
 80. Samuel R. Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (New York: New York University Press, 1999). Also on the development of Times Square, see Marilyn Adler Papayanis, "Sex and the Revanchist City: Zoning Out Pornography in New York,"

Environment and Planning D: Space and Society 18 (2000): 341–53; and Bart Eeckhout, “The Disneyfication of Times Square: Back to the Future?” in *Critical Perspectives on Urban Redevelopment*, ed. Kevin Fox Gotham (Oxford: Elsevier Science, 2001), 379–428.

81. Rubin, “Thinking Sex,” 296.