but as a symbolic locus in which individuals experience their fundamental link to 250 million other individuals, is the most unbounded of the hyperspaces we have been describing. The official transformation of national identity into style—of flag into transvestite “flagness”—offers Queer Nation a seamless means of transforming “queerness” into a camp counternationality, which makes good on the promise that the citizen will finally be allowed to own, in addition to all the other vicarious bodies Queer Nation has for sale, his very own national body.

With You Out We’re Nothing, and Beyond

We have territorialized Queer Nation and described the production of a queer counterpublic out of traditional national icons, the official and useful spaces of everyday life, the ritual places of typical public pleasure (parades, malls, bars, and bodies), and the collective identities consumers buy in the mode of mass culture. The effect of casting gay urban life and practices as ongoing and scandalously ordinary is simultaneously to consolidate a safe space for gay subjects and to dislocate utterly the normative sexual referent. If nationality as a form of fantasy and practice provides a legal and customary account of why American citizens in the abstract are secure as heterosexuals, Queer Nation exploits the disembodied structure of nationality by asserting that xenophobia would be precisely an inappropriate response for a straight community to have toward gay Americans. By asserting that straight and gay publics are coextensive with Americans at large, Queer Nation shows that the boundaries that might secure distinctions between sexual populations are local (like neighborhoods), normative (like taxonomies), and elastic (like latex). But these distinctions, in any event, must not be considered national, and in this sense Queer Nation’s relay between everyday life and citizen’s rights seems fitting.

Yet if Queer Nation tactically engages the postmodernity of information cultures, cutting across local and disembodied spaces of social identity and expressivity to reveal the communication that already exists between apparently bounded sexual and textual spaces, the campaign has not yet, in our view, left behind the fantasies of glamour and of homogeneity that characterize American nationalism itself. We might comment on the masculine apriority that dominates even queer spectacles; we might further comment on the relative weakness with which economic, racial, ethnic, and non-American cultures have been enfolded into queer counterpublicity. In short, insofar as it assumes that “queer” is the only insurgent “foreign” identity its citizens have, Queer Nation remains bound to the genericizing logic of American citizenship and to the horizon of an official formalism—one that equates sexual object choice with individual self-identity. We concede the need to acknowledge the names people use for themselves, even when they originate in the service of juridical and medical discipline. Popular forms of spectacle and self-understanding are crucial for building mass cultural struggle. But it is not enough to “include” women, lesbians, racial minorities, and so on in an ongoing machine of mass counternationality. Achieving the utopian promise of a Queer Symbolic will involve more than a story of a multicultural sewing circle sewing the scraps of a pink triangle onto the American flag, or turning that flag, with its fifty-times-five potential small pink triangles, into a new desecrated emblem; more than a spectacle of young, hard girl/woman flesh outting the pseudoabstraction of masculine political fantasy. Queer culture’s consent to national normativity must itself be made more provisional.

We have argued that America has already become marked by a camp aesthetic in the nineties. Camp America enrages, embarrasses, and sometimes benignly amuses official national figures and gives pleasure to the gay, the African American, the feminist, and the left-identified communities who understand that to operate a travesty on the national travesty is to “dissolve” the frame that separates national fantasy from ordinary bodies. But the verb “dissolve” is a temporal fantasy, of course: tactical interventions, such as Dred Scott’s flag doormat in Chicago’s Art Institute or Kelly and Ronnie Cutrone’s transformation of the flag into a sheet for polymorphous lovemaking in New York, have momentarily disintegrated national abstractness by turning bodies into national art and actually making censorship law look silly. These gestures were potentially dangerous and legally scandalous. But contained in museums/galleries, they depended on the usual protections of free high “artistic” expression to purchase the right to scandalize national iconography. At a time when existing laws against public and private sex are being newly enforced, the class distinction between sexual art and sex practices must be replaced by an insurgent renaming of sexuality beyond spectacle.

In other words, the exhibition of scandalous direct contact between oppositional stereotypes of iconic America and its internally constructed “Others” — say, of the “body” and the “nation”—solves as spectacle a problem of representation and power that is conceptually much harder
to solve. But the indeterminate "we" from which we are writing, comfortable on neither side of most taxonomies, seek to occupy a space of a more complexly dimensional sexuality and political identity than these simple sutures suggest. This is, as Monique Wittig contends, not simply a question of "dedramatiz[ing] these categories of language. . . . We must produce a political transformation of the key concepts, that is of the concepts which are strategic for us." 38 As a gesture toward mapping this unsanctioned terrain, let us return to the problem of Sandra Bernhard: her pasty body wrapped in the flag, her extremely (c) little “red corvette,” and her desire to seduce cathartically an African American woman through a lesbian erotics that manipulates sentimentality, national parody, and aesthetic distance. This final seductive moment, when Bernhard utters “Without me / you I’m nothing,” is framed by the “you” in the film’s opening monologue. There, Bernhard wishes the impossible—that “you,” the disembodied, autoerotic spectator, would traverse the space of aesthetic and celluloid distance to kiss her right “here,” on a facial place where she points her finger; no such contact with the audience happens in the frame of the film. In the end, after the masquerade, the racial, regional, ethnic, and class drag, and during the American striptease, the film stages a response that goes beyond the star’s original request: the generic black-woman-in-the-audience about whom the film has periodically fantasized in nonnarrative, naturalistic segments writes on the café table with a lipstick, “FUCK SANDRA BERNHARD.” This syntactically complex statement—a request, a demand, and an expi- tative—situates the black woman as an object of desire, as an author of feminine discourse, and as an image of the film’s hopelessly absent audience. Her proximity to Bernhard’s final lesbian/nationalist striptease thus suggests neither a purely sentimental “essentialist” lesbian spectacle, nor a postmodern consumer feminine autoerotics, nor a phallocentrically inspired lust for lesbian “experience,” but all of these, and more.

In this encounter, Bernhard tries to merge national camp with lesbian spectacle. 39 She produces scandalous erotic pleasure by undulating between the impossibility of laminating the flag onto her body and the equal impossibility of ever shedding the flag altogether: as she peels off her flag cape, she reveals three more in the form of a red, white, and blue sequined G-string and patriotic pasties, leaving us no reason to think that this exponential multiplication of flags would ever reach its limits. This undulation of the body and the flag, which eroticizes the latter as it nationalizes the former, is coterminal with the tease and the denial of the cross-race, homoerotic address to her consumer—the black-woman-in-the-audience. That is to say, the political liberation the flag promises and the sexual liberation its slipping off suggests makes a spectacle of the ambiguity with which these subjects live American sexuality.

Bernhard’s refusal to resolve her feminine and sexual identities into a lesbian love narrative also illustrates how the eroticization of female spectacle in American public culture frustrates the political efficacy of transgressive representations for straight and lesbian women. The film imagines a kind of liberal pluralistic space for Bernhard’s cross-margin, cross-fashion fantasy of women, but shows how lesbophobic that fantasy can be, insofar as it requires aesthetic distance—the straightness of the generic white woman-identified woman—as a condition of national, racial, and sexual filiation. Her desire for acceptance from the black-woman-in-the-audience perpetuates the historic burden to represent embodiment, desire, and the dignity of suffering that black women in cinema have borne on behalf of white women, who are too frightened to strip themselves of the privileges of white heterospectacle. Thus in addition, the rejection Bernhard receives from the black-woman-in-the-audience demonstrates the inability of cinematic public spectacle to make good on its teasing promise to dignify feminine desire in any of its forms. Bernhard’s inability to bridge the negativity of anyone’s desire focuses the lens on female spectacle itself, staging it as a scene of negativity, complete with producer, consumer, audience resistance, and the representation of multiple and ambiguous identifications.

The failed attempt to represent and to achieve a lesbian/national spectacle foregrounds the oxymoronic quality of these two models of identification. In the remainder of this essay we mean to explain how this failure to conflate sexual and political spectacle can provide material to transfigure queer as well as American nationality—not to commandeer the national franchise for our particular huddled masses but instead to unsettle the conventions that name identity, frame expressivity, and provide the taxonomic means by which populations and practices are defined, regulated, protected, and censored by national law and custom. Lesbian/national spectacle emerges here as the measure of a transitory space, a challenge to revise radically the boundaries of the normative public sphere and its historical modes of intelligibility, among which are male homosociality, a very narrowly defined set of public “political” interests, and garbled relations between politics and affect. 40 We understand that to define sexual expressivity as public political speech, and to
resist censorship by expanding the range of erotic description, is simultaneously to exercise a fundamental privilege of American citizenship and to risk forsaking the refuge of camp. But these are risks that queers/Americans cannot afford to pass on. Indeed, the question of whether female/lesbian sexuality can come into any productive contact with the political public sphere is a founding problem of lesbian political writing of the last fifteen years, and this problem is a problem for us all, by which we refer to “us” queers and “us” Americans.

Female subjects are always citizens in masquerade: the more sexual they appear, the less abstractable they are in a liberal corporeal schema. Lesbian theory’s solution to this dilemma has been to construct imagin-able communities, which is to say that America’s strategies for self-promotion have not worked for lesbians, who have historically and aesthetically often embraced the “space-off” in expatriate expression of their alienation from America. The female body has reemerged in the safe spaces of lesbian political theory outside the political public sphere, in tribal structures that emphasize embodied ritual and intimate spectacle as a solution to the indignities women, and especially lesbians, have had to endure. The blinking question mark beside the word “nation” in Jill Johnston’s separatist Lesbian Nation; the erotogenic metamorphoses of the body, sex, and knowledge on the island of Monique Wittig’s The Lesbian Body; and even the personal gender performances central to Judith Butler’s sexual self-fashioning in Gender Trouble all reveal an evacuation of liberal nationality as we know it. But for what public?

Separatist withdrawal into safe territories free from the male gaze secures the possibility of nonpornotropic embodiment in everyday life and aesthetic performance by emphasizing intimacy, subjectivity, and the literally local frame. We do not mean to diminish the benefits of separatist expatriation: in its great historical variety, separatist withdrawal has expressed a condition of political contestation lesbians and gays already experience in America and has used the erotics of community to create the foundation of a different franchise. However, by changing the locus of spectacle — transporting it over state lines, as it were — lesbian theory has neglected to engage the political problem of feminine spectacle in mass society. Even Butler’s metropolitan polymorphous solution to the politics of spectacle limits the power of transgression to what symbolic substitution on the individual body can do to transform custom and law. And as Queer Nation has shown us, no insistence on “the local” can secure national intimacy and national justice, where spectacle is inti-

macy’s vehicle, and the vehicle for control. If the spectacle of the body’s rendezvous with the flag has seemed to yoke unlike things together, the distance between persons and collective identities must also be read not only as a place to be filled up by fantasy, but as a negative space, a space where suddenly the various logics of identity that circulate through American culture come into contradiction and not simple analogy.

Along this axis, the negativity of national life for nonwhite and/or nonmale queers has reemerged in a more radical diacritic: the queer fanzine. We move away from the word “lesbian” and toward these descriptions of negative identity because it is this space—the space of nonidentification with the national fantasy of the white male citizen—that is both the symptom of even “queered” Enlightenment nationality and the material for its refashioning. As a rule, underground fanzines make explicit their refusal of a property relation to information and art, repudiating the class politics of mainstream gay for-profit journals like the Advocate and Outweek, and shunning the mock Madison Avenue production values of Queer Nation, Gran Fury, and ACT UP. The Toronto fanzine BIMBOX writes that the magazine is free because “the truth is, you have already paid for BIMBOX. We have all paid for it dearly. We have paid for it in blood and we have paid for it in tears. Unrelenting pain is our credit limit, and we are cursed with interminable overdraft protection.” Xerox collage, desktop publishing, and other photo-techniques have combined in a medium of comic and political communication, whose geographically isolated examples have converged into the infocultural version of the tribe: a network. Thus, the contest over the territory of the Queer Symbolic has resulted in what Bitch Nation, a manifesto in BIMBOX, calls a civil war.

The fanzines’ only shared identity is in their counterproductivity—a multifold mission they share with other sexual radicalisms to counter American national and Queer National culture’s ways of thinking about political tactics and sexual intelligibility. In the first place, the zines show that “obscenity” itself is political speech, speech that deserves constitutional protection. Transforming “the American flag into something pleasant,” Sondra Golvin and Robin Podolsky’s “Allegiance/Ecstasy” turns “I pledge allegiance” into an opportunity to add “my cunt helplessly going molten,” “her clit swelling to meet my tongue,” “my fist knocking gently at her cunt” to the national loyalty oath. Additionally, the zines have widened the semantic field of sexual description, moving
sexual identity itself beyond known practical and fantastic horizons—as when BIMBOX imagines “fags, dykes, and uso’s (Unidentified Sexual Objects).” But they are also magazines in the military sense, storehouses for the explosives that will shatter the categories and the time-honored political strategies through which queers have protected themselves. Queer counterspectacle might well be read as a means for aggressively achieving dignity in the straight world; in the zine context, however, these spectacles are also icons that require smashing. The suspicion of existing tactics and taxonomies runs deep: “Dykes against granola lesbians. Fags against sensitive gay men. And bitches against everyone else.”

Along with joining queer culture’s ongoing politics of dirty words, then, some zines engage in what would seem to be a more perverse activity: the aggressive naming and negation of their own audience. If citizenship in the Queer Nation is voluntary and consensual, democratic and universalist in the way of many modern nationalisms, the application for citizenship in the Bitch Nation, for example, repudiates the promise of community in common readership, the privileges of a common language, and the safety of counteridentity. “And—don’t even bother trying to assimilate any aspect of Bitch Nation in a futile attempt to make your paltry careers or lame causes appear more glamorous or exciting. We won’t hesitate to prosecute—and the Bitch Nation court is now in session!!” As Bitch Nation endangers the reader who merely quotes, abstracts, and appropriates zine culture, many zines engage in a consumer politics of sexual enunciation, forcing the reader to see where she is situated, or to restate herself politically—and culturally. Thus, when the cover of Thing magazine proclaims that “She Knows Who She Is,” it mobilizes the common gay use of the feminine pronoun in the ventriloquized voice of the “woman’s magazine” to categorize “insiders” by attitude rather than by gender or sexual identity, disarming many different kinds of essentialism through arch indirect address.

This move to materialize the spectator as different from the spectacle with which she identifies has powerful political force for women, whose collective and individual self-representations are always available for embarrassment, and most particularly for lesbians, whose sexual iconography has been overdetermined by the straight porn industry. By reversing the direction of the embarrassment from the spectacle toward the spectator, the zines rotate the meaning of consent. In severing sexual identity from sexual expressivity, the spectacle talks dirty to you, as it were, and you no longer have the privilege to consume in silence, or in tacit unconscio

sciousness of or unaccountability for your own fantasies. As Negativu, a Chicago lesbian fanzine, puts it, “What you looking at bitch?”

Linked complexly to the enigma of consensual sex is that of consensual nationality, which similarly involves theories of self-identity, of intention, and of the urge to shed the personal body for the ease of safe mutual or collective unboundedness. American national and Queer National spectacle depend upon the citizen’s capacity to merge his/her private, fractured body with a collectively identified whole one. Uncle
Sam points his finger and says he wants you to donate your whole body literally and figuratively to the nation, and Queer Nation uses the allure of commercial and collective embodied spectacle to beckon you toward a different sort of citizenship. But the fanzines' postnational spectacle disrupts this moment of convergence: just as you, the desiring citizen, enter the sphere of what appears to be mutual consent, an invisible finger points back at you. It unveils your desire to see the spectacle of homoculture without being seen; it embarrasses you by making explicit your desire to "enter" and your need for "permission" to identify; and it insists that you declare your body and your goods and that you pay whatever political and erotic duty seems necessary.

Thus, like Queer Nation, the zines channel submission and bitterness into anger and parody. Queer Nation and allied groups struggle to reoccupy the space of national legitimation, to make the national world safe for just systems of resource distribution and communication, full expression of difference and rage and sexuality. Parody and camp thus become the measure of proximity to the national promise, as well as the distance from access to its fulfillment. Gestures of anger, parody, and camp in the zine network, by contrast, represent a disinvestment in authenticity discourse that moves beyond the intelligibility of gender, of sexual object choice, and of national identity by cultivating a passionate investment in developing the negative for pleasure and politics. In their drive to embody you, the citizen/spectator/reader/lover, by negating your disembodiment, the zines represent the horizon of postpatriarchal and postnational fantasy.

Even in their most parodic manifestations, gestures of sexual and national intelligibility—both oppressive and emancipatory—are part of a process of making norms. The zines acknowledge the necessity, and also the reality, of stereotypical self-identity and at the same time try to do violence to normative forms that circulate in America. In staging the process by which stereotypes become hybrid forms, their clarifying function as sites of identity and oppression exhausted, the zines do more than deconstructively put the icon "under erasure." The negated stereotype remains available: mass politics requires a genuinely populist currency. But the stereotype is expensive. The fanzines' gestures in countering national political sovereignty, then, lead us in another direction. They suggest a space of politics in which to be "out" in public would not be to consent parodically to the forms of the political public sphere but rather to be out beyond the censoring imaginary of the state and the information culture that consolidates the rule of its names. We support Queer Nation and ACT UP's commitment to occupy as many hegemonic spaces as possible in their countering moves. What we seek to describe, in addition, is the value in converting the space of negativity that distinguishes queer American identity into a discursive field so powerful that the United States will have to develop a new breed of lexical specialists to crack the code of collective life in a hot war of words about sex and America, about which the nation already finds itself so miserably—and yet so spectacularly—archaic.
Paula A. Treichler, "Feminism, Medicine, and the Meaning of Childbirth," 115.

Willis's casting as a fetal presence in these films repeats the role he played in late episodes of Moonlighting: while Maddy (Cybill Shepherd) worries about the paternity of the baby she carries, he actually plays the fetus, solving the narrative problem of identity long before it is solved for the mother. See Joyrich, "Zone Tied."


In my discussion of the cinema of the fetus I use the actors' "star names" to describe what their characters do in the films, to focus on the structures of commodity identification in Hollywood cinema and their effects on the iconic circulation of what had been politically contested signs.

For readings of Alley's typicality as a failed maternal icon, see Faludi, Backlash; E. Ann Kaplan, Motherhood and Representation, 205–9.

On gender, comedy, and carnivalesque inversion see Horton, Comedy/Cinema/Theory, especially Fischer, "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child." This excellent anthology says absolutely nothing about race comedy or race, genre, and the (re)production of marginality in Hollywood: starting places for that kind of discussion are Alexander, "Fatal Beauties"; Lipsitz, Time Passages; Neale and Kruutnik, Popular Film and Television Comedy.

Martin, Flexible Bodies.

For more on doctor/patient contestations over expertise, see Martin, The Woman in the Body; Oakley, The Captured Woman; and Rapp, "Constructing Amnioncensis."

The baby-fat bibliography is itself quite big. Concerns on behalf of the child that the mother regulate her eating, of course, predate the political moment of fetal personhood. The following texts, which vary widely in the forms of expertise they offer, all register anxiety over the competition between mother and fetus as anxiety about the claims of health versus the moral, aesthetic, cultural, and psychological "need" for women to not be fat once they are not pregnant. American Academy of Pediatrics; American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Guidelines for Personal Care (Evanston, IL, 1983), 166; Behan, Eat Well, Lose Weight While Breastfeeding; Brewer with Brewer, What Every Pregnant Woman Should Know; Diller, "Your Baby," "Your Body"; Eisenberg, Murkoff, and Hathaway, What to Eat When You're Expecting; DeLysr, Fonda, and Schapiro, Jane Fonda's Workout Book for Pregnancy, Birth, and Recovery; Gates and Meckel, Newborn Beauty; Montagu and Montagu, Life before Birth, 32–46; O'Brien, Birth and Our Bodies; Verrill and Mueser, While Waiting, 99; Phyllis S. Williams, Nourishing Your Unborn Child.

For an analogous point of entry into the study of mass culture and nation formation, see Morris, "Banality in Cultural Studies."

This phrase opens the chorus to the theme song of I Love Lucy. See McClay, "I Love Lucy," xxii, 116, 270.

"Lucy Is Ensnared" is episode 50 of I Love Lucy: its narrative is told in McClay, "I Love Lucy," 70–71, 158–61.

Because the characters on television are made more "real" to the audience through the commodity-structured repetition of their names, I use their character names here, in contrast to my earlier determination to focus on the star aura of the film actor in the ideological system of the film text.

Mellencamp, "Situation Comedy, Feminism, and Freud"; Spigel, Make Room for TV.

Sobchack, "Child/Al!en/Father," 14–15. See also Sofia, "Exterminating Fetuses."

See the works by Ginsburg, Martin, and Rapp cited in note 15 above.

See, for example, As the World Turns (February 1996) and The Young and the Restless (March 1992).

After writing this, I called Valerie and asked her about the birthday scene on Zak's video, and she acknowledged that those images and repeated narratives of her childhood did indeed influence her construction of her son's birthday. My mother called shortly after to say that, contrary to both of our recollections, the memorialized event was Valerie's six-month birthday and that only one picture of it, taken by a neighbor, ever existed.

Barthes, Camera Lucida; Bourdieu et al., Photography.

Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 17.


4 Queer Nationality

We thank our collaboratrices: Claudia L. Johnson, Tricia Loughran, Deborah N. Schwartz, Tom Stillinger, AK Summers, Michael Warner, the Gay and Lesbian Studies Workshop at the University of Chicago, and the Cultural Forms/Public Spheres study group at the Center of Psychosocial Research.

1 There is as yet no anthology or full history documenting Queer Nation, and its redefinitions in the print media are ongoing. For some contemporary accounts of Queer Nation, see the following articles: Bérubé and Escoffier, "Queer/Nation"; Chee, "A Queer Nationalism"; Esther Kaplan, "A Queer Manifesto," in Guy Trebay's article "In Your Face," 36; Kay Longcope, "Boston Gay Groups Vow New Militancy Against Hate Crimes," Boston Globe 2 August 1990: 25, 31; Maria Mag Maggenti, "Women as Queer Nationals," Outlook: National Lesbian and Gay Quarterly 11 (winter 1991): 20–23; Deborah Schwartz, "Queers Back Back," Gay Community News 24 June 1990: 14–15; Shilts, The Queerining of America; Trebay, "In Your Face."


3 These affinity groups include ASLUT (Artists Slaving under Tyranny); DORIS SQUASH (Defending Our Rights in the Streets, Super Queers United against Savage Heterosexuals); GHOST (Grand Homosexual Organization To Stop Teleevangelists); H1 MOM (Homosexual Ideological Mobilization against the Military); LABIA (Lesbians and Bisexuals in Action); QUEER PLANET, an environmental group; QUEER STATE, which deals with state governments; QUEST (Queers Undertaking Exquisite and Symbolic Transformation); SHOP (Suburban Homosexual Outreach Program); UNITED COLORS, which focuses on experiences of queers of color. For the extended list, see Bérubé and Escoffier, "Queer/Nation," 15.

4 Our construction of the manifold publics, political, and symbolic cultures that traverse American life emanates from a number of sources: Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities; Berlant, The Anatomy of National Fantasy; Echols, Daring to Be Bad; Freeman, "Pinnings on the History of the Country"; Mosse, Nationalism and Sexuality; Nicholson, Feminism/Postmodernism; Young, "Polity and Group Difference" and Throwing Like a Girl.
For the political need to postminoritize cultural experience through the manipulation of representational codes, see Lloyd, "Genet's Genealogy." 3
Three essays that argue for the need to recontextualize sexual identity have inspired this essay: Newton and Walton, "The Misunderstanding"; Rubin, "Thinking Sex"; and Sedgwick, Epistemology of the Closet, 1–63.
This death knell was sounded as early as June 1991, in Toronto, according to Xtra! Toronto. "Quotelines," Outline 5, no. 1 (June 1991): 7.
See Ross, No Respect, 135–70.
Esther Kaplan, "A Queer Manifesto," in Trebay, "In Your Face," 36; Kaplan's emphasis.
Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere."
Identity is linked to territorialization, both geographical and ideological: we mean to offer an account of a subcultural topolgy, a description of how modern space requires negotiating a complex relation between situated identities and mobilized identifications. The shifting terrain in the meaning of the phrase "gay community" symptomatized in Queer Nation's practices has been splendidly explicated by Richard Herrell, "The Symbolic Strategies of Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Pride Day Parade."
Spivak, "In a Word," 120.
See Sedgwick, Epistemology of the Closet, 1–63.
We cite the texts in their entirety. "I Praise Life": "I praise life with my vulva. I thank the gods for all the women who have kissed my lips. I praise life." "I Praise God": "I praise God with my erection. I thank God for all the men I've slept with. I praise God." They were created in 1990 by Joe Lindsay of Queer Nation Denver.
Ford, "Sacred Sex."
D'Emilio, Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities, 216.
Trebay, "In Your Face," 36.
The "Absolutely Her" series, parodies of the ads for Absolut vodka, were produced by the anonymous group OUTPOST.
Trebay, "In Your Face," 39.
Kirk and Madsen, After the Ball. Kirk and Madsen advise the gay community to present nonthreatening images of homosexuality to straight culture, a "marketing campaign" designed to win mainstream support for the bourgeois homosexual at the cost of eliminating drag queens, butch lesbians, transsexuals, and so on from visibility.
For a discussion of the relationship between the trademark, commodity identification, and the colonized American body, see Berlant, "National Brands/National Body."
A powerful and extensive exploration of the role of this "stereotyped fantasy body" in the black gay voguing subculture is provided by Jennie Livingston's documentary Paris Is Burning. See also Berlant, "National Brands/National Body.
On the history of the Gay Pride parade, see D'Emilio, Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities.
See Ross, No Respect.
See Herrell, "The Symbolic Strategies." Herrell discusses how Chicago politicians annually assume at the parade pseudo-Irish last names such as "Mayor Richard O'Daley." The stigma attached to various cultural groups might well be discerned by such a litmus test: the unthinkable prospect of "Mayor Richard Gayley" suggests that there is, as yet, no such thing as "honorary" symbolic homosexuality.
See Friedberg, "Les Flaneurs du Mal." Whereas Friedberg analyzes the mall as a theater, an illusionary and ultimately nonparticipatory realm, we would argue that "mall eroticism" extend beyond the consumer/commodity exchange she describes to include visual consumption of other people as products.
Duane, The Desire to Desire.
A letter in Raundi reveals that Southglenn Mall in Denver, Colorado, where guests—which one of us hung out every Saturday for her entire adolescence, also used to contain one of the best arrays of glory holes in the country. Imagine my delight. McDonald, Raundi.
We first heard this phrase at Queer Nation Chicago, spring 1991.
See Jill Posener's photo-essay on the British and Australian feminist billboard spray-painting movement, in Louder Than Words.
Paradoxically, actual corporations have in turn exploited Queer Nation/Gran Fury's recognizable style to produce mock-gay ads such as the Kikib board which portrays two "lesbians" — actually an androgynous heterosexual couple — kissing.
The New York Times devoted a full section to paid advertisements supporting the Persian Gulf invasion and to commercial ads linking patriotism with purchase. Included were an ad for a Steuben glass flag paperweight, a Bloomingdale's spread saluting fathers' "devotion to family and country alike," and — in the most sinister pun of our times (apart from, perhaps, "Saddarmize Hussein") — a Saks Fifth Avenue ad captioned "A woman's place is in the home of the brave and the land of the free" (New York Times 9 June 1991).
Fernandez, "Undocumented Aliens in the Queer Nation."
Our reference to a "Queer Symbolic" follows Berlant's analysis of the official "National Symbolic," which coordinates political affect in American life and extends the notion of a political counterexample to the current practices of Queer Nation. The National Symbolic is defined as "the order of discursive practices whose reign within the national space . . . transforms individuals into subjects of a collectively held history. Its traditional icons, its metaphors, its heroes, its rituals, and its narratives provide an alphabet for a collective consciousness or national subjectivity; through the National Symbolic, the historical nation aspires to achieve the inevitability of the status of natural law, a birthright. This pseudo-generic condition not only affects profoundly the citizen's subjective experience of her/his political rights, but also of civil life, private life, the life of the body itself." (Berlant, The Anatomy of National Fantasy, 20).
Wittig, "The Straight Mind."
We have been orally instructed on the genealogy of camp counterpolitics and its intersection with radical sexuality by Richard Herrell and Pam Robertson. For textual support, see Newton, Mother Camp; Ross, No Respect; and Robertson, "Guilty Pleasures."
For an aligned project, see Tucker, "Gender, Fucking, and Utopia."
See de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*; and Harris, "The More Profound Nationality of Their Lesbianism."


Spillers, "Mama’s Baby/Papa’s Maybee."

Citational proprieties in the "University of Chicago style" are both inappropriate and virtually impossible with regard to the zines. Here is a selected list of those we consulted to make these generic observations: BIMBOX 2 (summer 1990); Don’t Tell Jane and Frankie (n.d.); Dumb Bitch Deserves to Die 2 (winter 1989); The Gentlemenwomen of California 5 (n.d.); Holy Titelamps 6 (fall 1990); Homoture 2 (n.d.); Manhattan Review of Unnatural Acts (n.d.); Negativa 1–3 (March–May 1991); No World Order (1990); Screambot 1 and 2 (November 1990; May 1991); Sister/My Commute (winter 1991); Taste of Latex 4 (winter 1990–91); Thing 4 (spring 1991).

See Crimp and Rolston, *AIDS Demo Graphics."

In May 1991, the Randolph Street Gallery of Chicago hosted the first international queer fanzine conference, called "SPFW: the Homoglyphic Convergence."

Rubin, "Thinking Sex;" and Duggan, "Sex Panics."

Golvin and Podolsky, "Allegiance/Ecstasy."

Don’t Tell Jane and Frankie, no page number.

We understand the risk we take in citing Bitch Nation against its stated will: we look forward to our punishment at the hands of editor G. B. Jones, who "takes her girls like Tylenol—at a time" (see Don’t Tell Jane and Frankie).

On the national stereotype and hybrid identities, see Bhabha, "The Other Question."

5 The Face of America and the State of Emergency

Much thanks to Arjan Appadurai, Carol Breckenridge, Cary Nelson, and Candace Vogler for goading me on to do this competently; and to Roger Roose for his archival help, vast knowledge, intensive debate, and heroic labor of reading.

Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 257.

2 See Foucault, "Governmentality," especially 100–104. Foucault argues that modern states substitute a relatively decentered economic model of population control for the familial model of the sovereign, pre-Enlightenment state, and at the same time become obsessed with maintaining intimacy and continuity with its governed populations, an obsession that results in a fetishism of the kinds of knowledge and feeling that support the security of the state. Thus the intimate identity form of national fantasy accompanies the increasing segmentation and dispersal of state force, violence, and capital.

The literature on the "culture wars" is extensive. Inspiration for the conservative war to make a core national culture continue to be derived from Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind,* its current figurehead is former Secretary of Education, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy William J. Bennett. See *The De-Valuing of America* and *Our Children and Our Country,* particularly the chapters "The Family as Teacher," 67–68, and "Public Education and Moral Education," 69–76; and the section "In Defense of the West," 191–218. Some samples of the anti-core-culture side of the struggle (mainly over the content of educational curricula and youth-culture entertainment) are Richard Bolan, *Culture Wars;* Gares, *Loose Canons;* Graff, *Beyond the Culture Wars;* and Jacoby, *Demonic Wisdom."


This essay takes up the spirit of Ian Hacking’s *Making Up People,* with its argument about the mutual and dialectical constructedness of categories of identity and kinds of subjectivity. See also Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan.

The literature on race, gender, migration, state formation, and transnational capital is extensive: for a start, see Amott and Matthaei, *Race, Gender, and Work;* Dominiell, *Women across Continents;* Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack;* Sassen, *The Mobility of Capital and Labor."

7 Newt Gingrich has recently claimed that Republicans who oppose gays are "not representative of the future," and that the GOP is open to homosexuals "in broad agreement with our effort to renew American civilization." This concession to queer American nationality is amazing. However, in the context of the radical-right revitalization of the family as the next for the future of national identity, it is clear that Gingrich has assimilated homosexuality to the project of reprivatizing sexual property in the person. See Gannett News Service wire report, "Gingrich: 000 Must Include Gays," 23 November 1994.


9 Concepts of the protesting mass as a "mob" have even taken on Mafia tones since the Supreme Court, at Clinton’s behest, allowed 2200 antimob statutes to be used against nonviolent pro-life protesters. See *National Organization for Women Inc., et al. v. Joseph Scheidler, et al., 114 S.Ct. 798.* For discussions of the Court’s decision to link organized protest to racketeering, see *the Connecticut Law Tribune,* 13 June 1995, and *the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin,* 7 February 1995 and 25 July 1995.
THE QUEEN OF AMERICA GOES TO WASHINGTON CITY

Essays on Sex and Citizenship

Lauren Berlant

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS  Durham & London 1997