

**BELONGING, BEING AND BORDERS:
UNDERSTANDING COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a theoretical analysis of organisational identity, community and belonging. I use a debate concerning transgender inclusion/exclusion to exemplify the identity work of the Council members of Morton Hall, a UK based public sector LGB organisation. I draw on a range of queer, feminist and post-structural theorists in explicating the processes of dis/identification that I have observed. I elucidate the complex, and often contradictory, relationship between gender and sexuality by employing discourse/narrative analysis on the transcripts of interviews and meetings of the organisation. The reasons given by Council members for either including or excluding transgender from the organisation give insights into the identity constructions of the individuals themselves, and of the organisation as a whole. This is combined with a diverse and distinctive theoretical approach which aims to utilise contemporary queer and gender theory as well as less obvious thinkers such as Nietzsche, Durkheim, Hegel, Bataille and Deleuze and Guattari. Using these theorists I develop the argument that the transgression of normative gender codes is central to the creation of a boundary between gender and sexuality which instigates the exclusionary practice adopted by the organisation at the conclusion of the debate. Whilst the research site specifically relates to sexual and gender identity, the theoretical conclusions regarding the construction of collective identity and the formation of community are widely applicable.

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INTRODUCING MORTON HALL

The relationship between the individual and the collective, and the ways in which it is structured are, perhaps, some of the oldest preoccupations of sociology and philosophy. On the larger levels, this relates to the relationship between the individual and society itself - what could be termed the Hobbseian problem of order: how are the bonds between people created so that we can exist within society, how do people 'belong'? However, the majority of relationships between individuals and collectivities are not at the level of society, but rather at the level of groups within society, be they based upon ascribed or achieved characteristics. Questions of identity, belonging and the self have been a mainstay of social theory and research, and it is to this body of work that this thesis contributes.

For many, identity is either un-thought-of, or conversely, hotly contested. For most, identity only becomes thought-of when it is questioned; when one's right to live, or behave, in a certain way is challenged. As Bauman argues 'the thought of "having an identity" will not occur to people as long a "belonging" remains their fate' (Bauman 2004: 11-12). Identity is not something natural that we can be said to possess; rather it is something that has to be invented,

As a target of an effort, "an objective"; as something one still needs to build from scratch or to choose from alternative offers and then to struggle for and then to protect through yet more struggle – though for the struggle to be victorious, the truth of the precarious and forever incomplete status of identity needs to be, and tends to be, suppressed and laboriously covered up (Bauman 2004: 15-16).

This thesis explores some of the struggles for identity of Morton Hall and the Executive Committee members, and details the methods employed to suppress the 'incomplete status of identity.' The following chapters illustrate the work and

effort put into defining gender and sexual identity, and thus the remit of the organisation.

In the thesis I utilise a Foucauldian understanding of power; that is ‘power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organisation’ (Foucault 1998: 92). Power is not something that works in a hierarchical fashion, acting on more or less passive subjects, rather it is relationally constructed. In *The History of Sexuality* Foucault asks what the questions that should be addressed are; they are not –

Given a specific state structure, how and why is it that power needs to establish knowledge of sex? Neither is the question: What over-all domination was served by the concern, evidenced since the eighteenth century, to produce true discourses on sex? ... It is rather: In a specific type of discourse on sex, in a specific form of extortion of truth, appearing historically and in specific places ... what were the most immediate, the most local power relations at work? (1998: 97).

Similarly, I am concerned with the local power relations at work in the Executive Committee of Morton Hall which have, for a moment, fixed the identity of the organisation. Much of the thesis demonstrates that these power relations are historically, socially and culturally specific. I am interested in the multiple ways in which the various discourses of inclusion and exclusion are constructed. Moreover, these discourses must not be seen to be divided along the lines of dominant and dominated, rather there are a multiplicity of discourses that can be brought to bear in various contexts. As well as transmitting and producing power, discourse ‘also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it’ (Foucault 1998: 101). Foucault notes the historical confusion surrounding sodomy – that it was both punished brutally and seemingly tolerated, given the infrequency of judicial intervention. Such discretion, undermining and confusion can be found in the discourses of trans inclusion/exclusion employed by Executive Committee members, as the thesis will illustrate.

This introduction will outline the research setting and provide a brief description of Morton Hall, before placing the research in the wider context of current work on identity and the self. This chapter will conclude with a précis of the proceeding chapters. The setting for my research is Morton Hall, a lesbian, gay and bisexual organisation in the UK, and, more specifically, the executive body of that organisation - the Executive Committee. Within the Executive Committee, the research centres on a debate that occurred, at the time of writing (2007), three years ago, concerning whether Morton Hall should widen its remit from working for lesbian, gay and bisexual people to include transgender people as well: this is referred to throughout the thesis as the trans(gender) inclusion/exclusion debate.

The Research Setting

As the methodology chapter outlines in greater detail, the organisation, and those within it have been completely anonymised so as to prevent the disclosure of the true identity of the organisation and its members. Notwithstanding this, I provide here a description of the main purposes and functions of Morton Hall as far as these constraints allow. Morton Hall is a relatively new organisation, having been formed within the last ten years with the dual purposes of seeking political change and of community building. The central aims of Morton Hall are to, first, promote the human rights and equal treatment of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and to challenge discrimination against such people; second, to consolidate and develop the infrastructure within lesbian, gay and bisexual communities and to enable them to contribute to and have representation in policy developments; and third, to articulate the needs and interests of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and represent these to local and national government and other appropriate bodies. These aims should be borne in mind throughout the thesis as they have a bearing on the decision making process. Chapter 8, in particular, discusses the ways in which having both a political and a community aspect to the organisation has proved problematic during the trans inclusion/exclusion debate. These aims frame Morton Hall as a particular type of LGB organisation; a theme that will be

developed throughout the thesis. That the organisation explicitly claims to represent lesbian, gay and bisexual people raises centrally important questions concerning both who is represented and how they are represented; furthermore this also raises the, arguably more important, issue of who is *not* represented by Morton Hall. As this thesis sets out, the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate illuminates who is represented by the organisation and who is not; in doing so it demonstrates the Executive Committee members' understandings of gender and sexual identity.

The Executive Committee is the executive part of the organisation and is responsible for setting the agenda of Morton Hall. There are also paid workers, including a Director, who carry out the work of the organisation on a day to day basis. On top of this there is the wider membership of the organisation which is made up of those in the area who wish to have an input into Morton Hall and be informed of its activities. The membership are invited to the annual general meeting and conference where they are informed of what the organisation has done in the past year as well as be invited to suggest ways that the current campaigns can be taken forward and new ones developed. The Executive Committee is comprised of volunteers who put themselves up for election to the Executive Committee at the annual conference. At any one time there are fifteen elected Executive Committee members who are elected for a period of three years. Each year five members stand down, meaning that (excluding the possibility of others resigning) there are five new members each year and ten old members. On top of this there is the facility for the Executive Committee to co-opt five (un-elected) people to the Committee; this may be done, for example, to bring someone with particular expertise onto the Executive Committee that was otherwise lacking.

The Executive Committee meets five or six times a year, and the function of this group is to:

- (a) determine high level strategy according to the identified needs of the population
[within the area covered by Morton Hall]

- (b) Help to identify needs and opportunities
- (c) set priorities
- (d) Address key strategic issues
- (e) Support the Director in delivering the strategic plans
- (f) Act as 'ambassadors' in relation to communities and/or organisations
- (g) Assist in the identification and development of appropriate partnerships
- (h) Assist in the identification and development of appropriate resources
- (i) To further the development of strategic issues by participating in task groups, where appropriate

The Executive Committee is, then, the body that controls the objectives and structure of Morton Hall; as the methodology chapter elaborates, this is why I focused my research on it, rather than the wider, general, membership of the organisation. Further research on the wider membership's opinion of the outcome of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate would be interesting, but fell without the time constraints of the thesis.

A Critical Site

Central to this thesis is a desire to engage with, and interrogate ideas, be they theoretical or empirical, through the particular research site by analysing the trans inclusion and exclusion debate. To this end this thesis is a case study on the construction of community and identity using Morton Hall as an exemplar, rather than an ethnography of the organisation. The examination of the debate provides ways of understanding not only the reasons Executive Committee members advocated either inclusion or exclusion, but also the precarious nature of identity and belonging. The following chapters, outlined below, demonstrate this relationship between the research site, diverse theories and the power/knowledge regimes of trans inclusion and exclusion.

Chapter 2 considers the methodological and epistemological considerations of the research. The methods of the research, that is, participant observation and interviews will be elucidated. Ethical issues surrounding consent and anonymity that were raised during the research will be discussed and my solutions to these

problems presented. Here the relationship between myself, as an active participant in the Morton Hall Executive Committee both prior to, and during, the research will be discussed, along with some of the problems and benefits this position afforded me. This chapter also examines the methods of analysis employed in the thesis, namely discourse analysis (broadly defined).

Chapter 3 is the first of two chapters that seeks to situate the research in terms of wider debates concerning transgender and LGB politics and identity. Chapter 3 discusses transgender identity and politics and serves to introduce several themes concerning this that are centrally important throughout the thesis, as well as explaining where my thesis fits into current discussions of transgender identity and politics. Central to this chapter is a problematisation of the definitions of transgender, transsexual and transvestite used by Morton Hall which prefigures several claims made in subsequent chapters. Furthermore this chapter demonstrates that 'transgender' does not refer to a coherent politics or identity; a factor which makes it difficult for an LGB organisation to consider trans inclusion. Different versions of transgender politics are discussed and are compared to the understanding of transgender politics employed by Morton Hall. The relationship between transgender and LGB politics is also considered, enabling comparisons to be made with Morton Hall. This is to situate the organisation's trans inclusion/exclusion debate in the context of wider debates on gender and sexual identity.

Chapter 4 is the second chapter to discuss the research with regard to wider debates, in this case, those concerning LGB politics and identity. This chapter situates the trans exclusion/inclusion debate with regard to queer theory and the history of gay activism. I map the historical relationship between gender transgression and homosexual communities from the eighteenth century to the present day, considering previous positions, and how they have changed. The purpose of this is to argue that the relationship between cross-gender practices and same-sex sexual attraction and LGB identities are both culturally and historically constructed and contingent. This demonstrates that there is no finite end to the debate in Morton Hall and problematises some of the arguments for exclusion

deployed in the debate, for example, the contention that (heterosexual) trans people know nothing of LGB experience. This chapter introduces several conceptual tools that are used throughout the thesis, such as minoritising/universalising views of sexual orientation (Sedgwick 1990), and Young's (1997) definition of identity politics. In this chapter the works of Butler (1993, 1999, 2004) and Sedgwick (1990) are discussed and compared in detail and are used to question the nature of gender and sexuality, and the possibility of separating it, or otherwise. The understandings gained from this are used to critique transgender exclusion and also raise several themes to be discussed in later chapters.

Chapter 5 concerns some of the arguments that were employed to advocate trans exclusion, specifically the separation of gender and sexuality. The chapter argues that several Executive Committee members were successful at claiming that trans issues were about gender, whilst LGB issues were about sexuality, and that, furthermore, the two are not related. This rationalisation of gender and sexual identity produces an ethnic and essentialist model of identity. I expand upon Young's (1997) work on identity politics and demonstrate that her criteria of identity politics are present in Morton Hall. This chapter also considers how definitions of transgender were employed in the debate: I contend that whilst most Executive Committee members referred to transgender people, they were, more properly, referring to transsexual people. This was evidenced by a reliance on legislation and organisations that primarily cater to the needs of transsexual, rather than transgender persons, such as the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Press for Change. This section of the chapter demonstrates that this legislation and similar organisations are specific to transsexuals. This demonstrates that whilst the debate was supposed to be about the inclusion or otherwise of *transgender* it is clear that there was confusion as to the meaning of transgender, partly related to the fact that, as Chapter 3 argues, there is no stable definition of transgender. The chapter also begins the discussion of trans and LGB subjectivity by considering Sartre's (1976) theory of seriality as a mechanism for group formation.

Chapter 6 considers themes of pollution, danger and fear and begins with a discussion of liminality, demonstrating that transgender, as opposed to transsexual occupies a marginal and liminal position that is capable of provoking pollution behaviour in others. The chapter then goes on to analyse the different ways in which the inclusion of transgender (particularly heterosexual trans people) induced fear and is regarded as contagious by several Executive Committee members. The ways in which transgender is seen as a dangerous contagion works to strengthen the collective identity of Morton Hall is considered. This chapter identifies heterosexual transgender people as being definitionally central to Morton Hall. In the ways in which such people are positioned by the organisation, one can see what is being permitted and what is being denied. I also relate my research to other research that has considered the exclusionary practices of gay and lesbian organisations. In so doing it becomes clear that although the specific reasons for exclusion or inclusion are different for different organisations, the methods are similar. As well as arguing that transgender can be seen as a polluting influence and as a contagion, this chapter also problematises these arguments and demonstrates other ways of thinking about transgender and sexuality that do not have recourse to themes of pollution.

The subject of chapter 7 is transgression and it expands upon the understandings of transgender gained in the previous chapter as it focuses on the transgressive nature of transgender. Several theories of transgression are employed to demonstrate how transgression works to define collective identity, starting with the Durkheimian (1947) ideas of repressive and restitutive sanctions and mechanical and organic solidarity. The trans inclusion/exclusion debate is then analysed in terms of dialectics which enables a clear picture of the internal and external parts of the debate to become apparent. The chapter then moves to consider Nietzsche (1969, 1974 2003a, 2003b) and his relationship to transgression, particularly through the death of God and the re-evaluation of morals and values. The transgression of transgender is interpreted in Nietzschean terms before I consider it in terms of Foucault (1977) and Bataille (2001). Both Foucault and Bataille show how the revelation of the limit by the transgression

also reveals and constitutes the centre. This chapter illustrates the liberating power of potentially including transgender within the remit of Morton Hall as well as the actual hostile reaction to inclusion. This relates back to chapter 3 as I argue that it is only a particular model of transgender that has transgressive potential, rather than transgender per se.

Chapter 8 concerns some of the theories of Deleuze and Guattari (2004), particularly that of rhizomatics. Whereas the focus of preceding chapters has been on arguments for exclusion, this chapter is more centred on arguments for trans inclusion and employs theories of rhizomatics to understand the differences between queer understandings of identity and politics and ethnic/identity understandings which argue for inclusion and exclusion respectively. I argue that the separation of gender and sexuality and the subsequent rejection of trans inclusion can be seen as an example of arborescent logic as it enforces the verb 'to be' onto gender and sexual identity. On the other hand, the arguments for inclusion can be seen as rhizomatic in their reliance on multiplicity and non-linearity. I argue that the exclusionary arguments attempt to fix and stabilise gender and sexual identity. I also employ Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between maps and tracings, claiming that Morton Hall has chosen to trace sexual and gender identity rather than map it, resulting in the exclusion of trans from the organisations remit. Furthermore, the notion of becoming minoritarian is also discussed and it is suggested that there is a possible becoming trans of Morton Hall.

In the conclusion I bring together the central themes that run through the preceding chapters and draw out the implications of the research. I consider the more narrow situation of Morton Hall before considering some of the broader conclusions to be drawn from the thesis, about, for example, the nature of community and the organisational shaping of identity.

ASSUMING NOTHING: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter will consider the methodology and methods of the research. To this end I discuss, first, the methods used for data collection and the reasons for employing them; second, the type of analysis carried out on the data; third, the ethical consideration of the research; and fourth, the epistemological basis of the research.

The introduction contains a brief description of Morton Hall; however, I pick out certain factors here that are methodologically relevant. The Executive Committee meets five or six times a year for meetings that last between three and three and a half hours. In these meetings the policies of Morton Hall are decided. This includes the writing of business plans, deciding campaign objectives and securing future funding for the organisation. There are usually between fifteen and twenty people present at each of the Executive Committee meetings. It is these Executive Committee meetings that have provided the basis of my research. I recorded the Executive Committee meetings on minidisk and transcribed them as soon as possible after the meeting. As well as recording the meetings, I also interviewed eight of the Executive Committee members, for between three quarters of an hour to one and a half hours. These interviews were transcribed and analysed along with the meeting transcripts. See below for a detailed discussion of the analysis.

Whilst I have been a participant observer as part of the research, it was not of the more traditional sort. First, unlike many other settings for participant observation or ethnography, such as a school or community, it was impossible to spend an extended amount of time carrying out the observation. As already stated, the Executive Committee only comes together a maximum of six times a year, making sustained immersion in it impossible. Nor do the Executive Committee members necessarily see each other in the periods between the meetings, although

they may do, either because of friendship or on the business of the organisation. This meant that my periods of observation were limited to those times at which the Executive Committee met as a whole; that is, at Executive Committee meetings, and the annual conference. If one wanted to do a prolonged study of the organisation, one would have to focus primarily on the activities of the paid workers and director. Whilst this would most likely produce some good data it would not have been of particular relevance to my research. This is because it is the Executive Committee which decides what the Director and other paid workers should be doing on a broad level. Therefore the Executive Committee meetings are the site of the high level decision making processes of Morton Hall. Furthermore, my primary interest in the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate meant that the most pertinent data would come from the discussion of the future policy of the organisation, rather than the implementation of that policy. Also, any implementation of the policy, whilst obviously relevant, fell without the time period of my research.

Although it remained with the same general aim of exploring lesbian, gay and bisexual identity, the focal point of my thesis altered during the period I was in the field (April 2004-5). My original intention was to explore how Morton Hall operated as an identity politics organisation in a time when such organisations and ways of thinking have been heavily criticised by both queer and feminist theories. This decision was made before I had any knowledge that Morton Hall would be debating the inclusion or otherwise of transgender in the organisation. It was at the first meeting that I attended and recorded for the purpose of research that the issue of transgender inclusion/exclusion was raised. During the debate in that meeting I quickly realised that this issue would provide an excellent way of understanding the identity constructions of the Executive Committee members. Therefore I decided to concentrate on this debate in order to analyse the Executive Committee members' perspectives on gender and sexual identity.

Using Gold's (1969) continuum for defining observer-observed relations, my position occupies the area between complete participant and participant as observer. Contemporaneous with the former I was engaged fully as a member in the

activities of Morton Hall, however, my role as a researcher was overt, as in the latter, but I had more involvement in the activities than Gold's participant as observer. My involvement with Morton Hall did not begin with the research as I was elected onto the Executive Committee two years prior to beginning my fieldwork, therefore I was undertaking research with an organisation that I was already a member of. My personal involvement with the research subject is elaborated upon, below.

Interviews and Participant Observation

It is probably true that there are as many theoretical opinions on interviewing and participant observation as there are practitioners of these methods. One's epistemology and ontology are deeply entwined in one's choice and practice of a particular method. Kvale (1996) has conceptualised two types of interviewer-knowledge production, that of the miner and a traveller. In the former 'knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is a miner who unearths the valuable metal' (1996: 3), whilst the latter sees the 'interviewer as a traveller on a journey that leads to a tale to be told on return' (1996: 4). These lead to two very different types of interview. Working in a largely queer framework (Jagose 1996, Seidman 1996) I see myself as a traveller. I do not believe that there is some abstract notion of 'truth' that I could capture in my research. Rather I got the participants multiple perceptions of their lives and identities. This is true for both interviews and participant observation. This was not Becker and Geer's view of participant observation (1970a, 1970b). They tended to the view that participant observation is a gold standard against which other methods, including interviews could be measured, as 'a model which can serve to let us know what orders of information escape us when we use other methods' (1970a: 133). This is reminiscent of the positivist orthodoxy whereby asking the right questions and seeing the right things will give the 'correct' answers. Becker and Geer also claim that 'participant observation makes it possible to check description against fact, noting discrepancies [and] become aware of systematic distortions made by the person under study' (1970a: 139). Becker and Geer here present an unproblematic

idea of 'fact', however the researcher in the seventh moment of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln 2000) is in no position to lay claim to indisputable facts. If, for example, I noticed a difference in what I saw someone say in an Executive Committee meeting and an interview setting I would want to find the reasons for this difference, for instance, was there some political expediency which called for the discrepancy, but would not place a value judgement upon it.

Contra Becker and Geer, 'interviews generate accounts and narrative that are forms of social action in their own right' (Atkinson and Coffey 2002: 810). A narrative account of an event is constructed in discourse in interviews in a manner that is just as meaningful as observing that event.

Doing participant observation on Morton Hall was different from observing, for example, a definable subculture within which it is possible to live since, as stated above, there are only five/six Executive Committee meetings each year, and the members are not situated in the same locale. This makes sustained immersion in the group impossible. Therefore of necessity observation times are largely predefined. Consequently I have also used interviews. Taking heed of Spradley (1979) there are differing question styles to give differing levels of information. The use of these skills enabled me to build up information on the participants' ideas on what it means to identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or indeed straight. The interviews were semi-structured; that is I had certain topics I wished to cover, but my interview schedule was not prescriptive. The questions asked were generally open ended and allowed the interviewee to talk about whatever they wanted in their response. For example I asked 'why do you think that some Executive Committee members objected so strongly to including transvestites', rather than 'do you think some Executive Committee members object to the inclusion of transvestites because of X, Y or Z'. This also meant that I was trying not to lead the interviewee in any particular way. Because the interview schedule was not prescriptive I was also able to ask follow-up questions to clarify and expand upon what the interviewees said. This made the interviews into more of a conversation than simply a series of questions and answers.

The epistemology of the interview is also a subject of debate. The type of interview I employed, and how I have interpreted them have implications on the research. If I were to take the approach of the ‘miner’ I would be following a route totally incompatible with the poststructural sensibilities of the queer theory I am trying to interrogate. Against this positivist approach lays the postpositivism of those such as Mishler (1986). Mishler appears to put great emphasis on having a ‘carefully prepared transcript’ (1986: 50) as the only way interviews can produce valid data. This is still a predominantly modernist project, ‘particularly the assumption that there is a ‘reality’ out there that the research can accurately capture or represent, given the use of improved research methods’ (Scheurich 1997: 66). Such a method does not sit well with queer theory, which ‘houses the analytic tools used to examine what is “normal” and “abnormal”, primarily through deconstructing issues of that sexuality in society’ (Dilley: 1999: 469). Furthermore Mishler’s paternalistic idea of empowerment is problematic. Whilst he correctly states that there are power inequalities within the interview context he relies on the goodwill of the interviewer to ‘encourage the [interviewees] to find and speak in their own “voices”’ (Mishler 1986: 118). Here the researcher remains in a position of control over the interview, and ultimately of the meaning s/he attributes to the respondent’s ‘voices.’ A queer interview is one that realises that ‘there is no stable “reality” or “meaning” that can be represented’ (Scheurich 1997: 73) rather meaning is created by the interaction between researcher and researched, and that an ‘interviewee’s subjectivity is *locally produced* sequentially in and through talk’ (Rapley 2001: 307 original emphasis).

As my research is partly to investigate some of the major theories of queer, for example those of Butler (1999) and Sedgwick (1990), my methods need to take account of their being the basis for theory. This is in response to their being possible ‘theoretical capitalists,’ ‘engaging in pure speculation’ (Seale 1999: 99). Although I could use a hypothetico-deductive method to validate or refute these theories, I believe a more inductive, grounded approach is preferable. Part of the claim to grounded knowledge lies in the fact that ‘practitioners [of participant observation] shun what is known as the *a priori* ... preferring the *a posteriori*’

(May 2002: 148). I therefore observed Executive Committee members at work (including myself) and saw how they managed multiple identities, which has enabled me to come to some theoretical conclusions regarding the nature of gender and sexual identity construction. I would argue that this is the case with interviews as well, if they are carried out in the appropriate way, although it might be harder than using participant observation as I could be bringing my prejudices about queer theory to the interview in a more explicit and overt way than in observation. The implications of using participant observation or interviewing in my research to create some sort of inductive theory are largely the same, as it is the analysis of the data that is central, rather than the collection, as shown by the fact that 'quantitative ... data can ... be incorporated into a grounded theory approach' (Seale 1999:102). The analysis needs to take account of the fact that there are multiple theories that could come out of the research, not one 'true' one. It is '*flexibility* and the discovery of *meaning* rather than standardisation, or a concern to compare through constraining replies by a set interview schedule, [that] characterise this method' (May 2001: 125 original emphasis). This is central to my research; I am concentrating on the meanings, feelings and emotions attached to identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Also in using interviews one is able to reflect upon what the interviewee says, to clarify a point, or to elaborate a new topic that was raised. This was particularly important for me, because whilst I had some ideas as to the construction of collective identity, I certainly did not know them all. I expected to be told things not previously considered. An interview is the best method for finding out certain information, as it is unlikely that what are often personal identity-meanings would come to surface in participant observation, especially as that method was limited for me. Notwithstanding this, several people did reveal highly personal information in the Executive Committee meetings whilst debating trans inclusion/exclusion, as will become apparent in the following chapters. I think that this was because the topic is a very sensitive and personal one that can produce emotive responses that have a reliance on personal experience. Furthermore, in interviews I have discussed the

trans inclusion/exclusion debate with the research participants. This has given me multiple understandings of the debate.

Using a combination of interviews and participant observation has been beneficial for my research as interviews can 'illuminate the researchers' understandings and provide information which is simply not available through observation' (May 2001:129). In my case all of my observation has been of the formal arena of the Executive Committee meetings, which is obviously constrained by the agenda and the Chair; resultantly information about people's personal lives and experiences will, in the majority of cases, only be available from interviews.

The management of myself as a reflexive self is of great importance as 'the accomplishment of fieldwork is not a passive activity. We actively engage in identity construction and recasting' (Coffey 1999: 26). I would argue that this is particularly true if you are researching an identity that you share. Whatever my methods there are issues about my own identity. To this extent, I shall be writing some form of autoethnography, if only by virtue of the fact that I was already a part of Morton Hall prior to beginning the research, and have analysed my own input into the trans inclusion/exclusion debate. However, there are some who argue that this deep personal engagement/relationship with the researched group is disadvantageous, for example Gans argues that 'once researchers fail to distance themselves from the people they are studying, ...the rules of qualitative reliability and validity are sidestepped, reducing the likelihood that sociologists and their work will not be trusted by their readers' (1999: 542-3). Whilst perhaps this was the case in the past, I believe that the recent theoretical developments of feminism, postmodernism, poststructuralism and queer have changed the 'rules of qualitative reliability and validity.' Furthermore, concurring with Coffey that 'an emphasis on the autobiographical side of fieldwork and ethnographic writing can be a productive way of encapsulating ethnography' (1999: 126), I would claim that to deny my personal relationship with the subject of my research would be harmful to it as my own identity is entwined with my ideas of, and interpretations of queer theory. Schwable (1996) gives an account of how his own biography interacts

with the stories of his participants. He says that 'my experience in the psychodrama convinced me. If my feelings were real, so were those of the other men' (1996: 63). This illustrates that an 'engaged' researcher can get more information than a purely objective one. Furthermore, Denzin claims that 'those who write culture using reflexive interviews are learning to use language in a way that brings people together' (2001: 24). This seems eminently suited to queer theory, as part of queer is breaking down the binary nature of Western thought, especially dualisms as they are constructed in language. Moreover, as an active participant in the debate I was part of the researched group, as well as the researcher. In doing my analysis I have tried to treat my interventions in exactly the same way that I would treat them if spoken by another person.

Issues of Consent

The main ethical problem during my thesis was that of negotiating the consent of the Executive Committee members to undertake and write up the research. Before I started to record the meetings I emailed all the Executive Committee members a letter detailing my research and stating that I would be using extracts from the transcripts of the meetings in my thesis and future work. I gave everybody the opportunity to reply to me if they wanted to discuss this further or to refuse to be part of the study. I also emailed this letter to the newly elected Executive Committee members who joined the Executive Committee after the first meeting which I recorded.

Some months later I presented a paper on Morton Hall as part of a seminar series at another university. At this point I had used pseudonyms for the Executive Committee members, but had not anonymised the organisation itself. Through a fairly tortuous route, my paper found its way back to two Executive Committee members who claimed that their consent for my research had not been obtained. In response to the first person who complained to me, I apologised profusely, explained why I thought that consent had been obtained, and, in accordance with their wishes, assured them that I would not use anything they had said in my thesis or in any further published work. Having thought that the

problem had been solved, I then received another complaint from another Executive Committee member threatening me with the Data Protection Act and the (non-existent) Confidentiality Act. At this point the matter was passed on to the university's Data Protection Officer, who, in conjunction with my supervisors met the Executive Committee members who had complained, to resolve the situation.

The problems resulted from the fact that although I had emailed all the Executive Committee members asking for their consent for me to conduct the research I had not asked them to confirm their consent to me, rather I asked them to contact me if they had a problem with me conducting the research. Those who claimed that I had not sought consent had either not read, or not received, my emails. There were approximately three people in this position. At this point I was fortunate that the Director of Morton Hall, as well as several other Executive Committee members were supportive of both me and my work. To remedy the situation, and prevent any future confusion I wrote again, by post, to all Executive Committee members asking them to return a signed consent form stating whether they were happy for me to use their words in my thesis and subsequent publications, or not. In the end there were four people who withdrew from my research, whilst the remainder were happy for me to use their words in my work. With the ever-useful benefit of hindsight, it is clear that when securing consent in the first place, I should have sought written confirmation, which would have removed this problem.

At this point I also took the decision to completely anonymise the data. As stated previously, I had used pseudonyms for the Executive Committee members, but had left the identity of the organisation intact. However, I decided to anonymise the organisation as well. This involved not only changing the name, but also removing anything that could identify the organisation, such as references to particular locations, individuals, other LGB(T) groups and local authorities. Furthermore, as will become apparent throughout the thesis, the pseudonyms that I have chosen for the Executive Committee members are all gender neutral, that is they can be both women's and men's names. Although I have chosen to refer to

individuals as 'he' or 'she' rather than using any of the gender neutral pronouns available (this is purely for stylistic reasons), this should not be taken to signify the gender of the individual. This was done so that it should be almost impossible to identify a speaker from the data available in the thesis. This high level of anonymisation has meant that there are certain themes in the data that I have not been able to raise because it would go some of, or all, the way to revealing the identity of the organisation and possibly thereby identify individuals. However, this has not been a significant problem given that the focus of the thesis is on the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate which has not required situating Morton Hall in any particular area.

After this I also attended one of the Executive Committee meetings (by this time I was no longer an Executive Committee member myself) to discuss my research. At this point I officially apologised for the problems over consent and assured everybody that my work would be as anonymised as is possible. I furthermore gave my assurance that those who had withdrawn their consent would not be used in the research, or any future work. I also gave an assurance that I would only be concerned with the transgender debate and that I would not be concerned with the other business of the organisation.

I cannot comment in great detail about the motivations of those who withdrew their consent, partly though fear of revealing their identities, which I have no desire to do. However, I do believe that the issue was wider than simply that of consent. In the Executive Committee meetings, as will become apparent in chapter 8, I advocated strongly for widening the remit of Morton Hall to include trans people. Further, my method of analysis is one that deconstructs the debate in a way that can be challenging. I do not think it is a coincidence that the Executive Committee members who raised the issue of consent were individuals who were arguing forcefully for the exclusion of transgender in the Executive Committee meetings. I suspect that, had I been supportive of their political position, either the issue of consent would not have been raised, or if it was that it would have been resolved more amicably and without the threat of legal action.

This demonstrates some of the problems of researching a group of which you are an active participant. First, if I was a researcher entering the organisation solely *as a researcher* then there could have been no doubt that someone was researching Morton Hall. As it was, the only difference between before and after I started fieldwork was the presence of a minidisk recorder in front of me, which will not necessarily be noticed by other Executive Committee members. Second, the situation was made more complex because the focus of the research was a debate with strong views on both sides. I was not researching an organisation that had shared beliefs on the subject. Therefore, arguably, whichever side of the debate I personally sided with there could have been the potential for problems. Ironically, this demonstrates the importance of the research topic; the very reasons that this was such a sensitive and emotive research topic, from which some people withdrew, are the same reasons that the trans inclusion/exclusion debate has been so illuminating in explicating the identity beliefs and practices of the Executive Committee members and Morton Hall as an organisation. Third, my participation in what was a politically and emotionally charged debate presented problems for some people. It is easy to understand that someone may be concerned about how they will be represented by someone with opposing political views. I made every attempt that every point I make in the analysis can be backed up by evidence from either the Executive Committee meetings or interviews, however, this was not felt to be the case by some of those who withdrew consent. However, my active participation in Morton Hall had a fourth, beneficial impact. Were I an ‘outside’ researcher the argument could have been made that I was not supportive of the organisation and that I was trying to destroy its credibility; this could have led to the organisation as a whole withdrawing their support for the research. However, my active participation in the activities of Morton Hall was cited as evidence that I was supportive of the aims of the organisation and that I was not trying to discredit it.

Epistemology

I now turn to a discussion of the epistemological foundations of the research. I compare standpoint and queer/poststructural approaches given that they are probably the two most common epistemologies in gender and sexuality studies. I also consider what an ethnomethodological perspective can bring to the study.

The argument of feminist standpoint epistemology is that 'there is a distinctive perspective or reality which pertains to feminists or to women' (Tanesini 1999: 138). According to this perspective, it is possible for (only) women to speak from the oppressed position of womanhood, which is not only different to a masculine account, but is privileged over it. This can be seen as a rejection of the foundational claim to universal knowledge, as having a standpoint places a value on subjective experience. Cartesian dualisms are also questioned in this account because being and knowing are conflated, in contrast to the traditional separation of mind and body. 'Consequently, knowledge produced from an acknowledged subjective standpoint is less distorted than knowledge that does not reveal its partialities' (Webb 2000: 41). Feminists have also criticised the disengagement of mainstream research; the belief that the researcher and researched can remain separate, thereby obtaining 'objective' data. It is a fallacy to contend that one's self can remain immune from the research process, as 'researchers should be aware of the ways in which their own biography is a fundamental part of the research process' (May 2001: 21). Similarly, a gay standpoint epistemology would argue that there is a distinctive perspective on reality that pertains to gay people.

Using such a gay standpoint epistemology I could claim that as a bisexual man, writing on issues of LGBT identity, that my understanding would be privileged over those of heterosexual researcher. I could construct an argument that because I am both bisexual and a former member of the organisation studied that my biography was inextricably connected to the research project. Furthermore, I could argue that in order to research the LGB 'community' one needs to have a certain amount of what could be termed subcultural capital in order to fully comprehend the knowledges, practices and beliefs of lesbian, gay,

bisexual and transgender people. Such a position is, however, largely untenable, particularly given my theoretical positioning. Whilst it is possible that a gay and straight researcher may well have different findings, this is not to say that the differences are because of the sexuality of the researcher. My perspective should not be privileged, or seen as more objective, simply because I happen to share an identity with those I am researching. Furthermore, Tanessini claims with regard to feminist standpoint epistemology that 'to claim that there is a unique cognitive style or set of experiences which pertain to women seems to presuppose that women have essential features and to ignore the many important differences between women' (1999: 45). Moreover, my analysis of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate centres on problematising the definitions of gender and sexual identity by, for example, claiming that there is nothing about having an LGB identity that makes one particularly suited to joining an LGB lobbying organisation. Therefore, it would not make sense for me to claim a standpoint epistemology because it would go against my ontology. For this reason I now turn to a discussion of queer epistemology and consider how it was productively employed in my research.

Whilst feminist epistemology tends only to look at male/female inequality in the sex/gender system, 'queer theory is ... an analysis of the hetero/homosexual figure as a power/knowledge regime that shapes the ordering of desires, behaviours, and social institutions, and social relations' (Seidman 1995: 128), and does not see the hetero/homo binary as distinct from male/female. Central to queer theory is a belief that 'the original identity after which gender fashions itself is an imitation without an origin' (Butler 1999: 175). Dilley has claimed that there are three main tenets of queer research that are transdisciplinary, the primary one being an 'examination of the lives and experiences of those considered non-heterosexual' (Dilley 1999: 462). This chapter is not the place for a lengthy exposition of queer theory, as that is the task of a later chapter (4). For the purpose of this current chapter it is sufficient to note that queer is a way of looking at gay/straight and male/female binaries that attempts to deconstruct them. Under

this, the very definitions of gender and sexual identity are problematised and recognised as contested and contingent.

Postmodern and poststructural notions of performance and the self immanent in queer entail a more detailed analysis of the construction of LGB(T) identities, whilst simultaneously sustaining a critique of heteronormativity. The Foucaultian elements of queer also allow an analysis of power/knowledge regimes as they operate both on and inside LGB ‘communities’ and individuals.

Importantly for my research, although queer recognises that an individual’s identities are multiple and unstable, this does not, as some (Jeffreys 1994; Kirsch 2000; Spargo 2000) claim, make collective identity formation unviable under queer schematics, as chapter 4 argues. For example, Young (1997) has used Jean-Paul Sartre’s idea of seriality (1976) to argue for a contingent group identity. Epistemologically speaking ‘researchers who choose a standpoint of queer theory choose to contrast it with the metanarrative of compulsory heterosexuality’ (King 1999: 487). In keeping with other post-foundational and post-modern epistemologies, queer is a belief that the ‘grand narrative has lost its credibility’ (Lyotard 1984: 37), however, it also ‘houses the analytic tools used to examine what is “normal” and “abnormal,” primarily though deconstructing issues of sexuality in society’ (Dilley 1999:469).

Queer is, then, an epistemic perspective that allows a sustained and radical critique of gender and sexuality without recourse to the pitfalls of a standpoint epistemology. The ‘analytic tools’ of queer theory enable the deconstruction of the Morton Hall Executive Committee members, which allows a thoroughgoing analysis of the identity constructions of the organisation.

Lastly I consider the implications of using participant observation and interviews to work with queer theory. This is important as many of the key tenets of queer are central to this research, such as gender being an imitation of an imitation without origin (Butler 1999) and that ‘knowledge is not “discovered” by an academic sleuth who pretends to be an archaeologist uncovering pre-existing facts’ (Tierney 1999: 451). This affects the methods I would use, and furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, affects *how* I would use those

methods. Talburt claims that 'if taken seriously, a queer project would shift ethnography's purposes from representation of gay and lesbian subjects and experiences to analyses of practices as they are constructed in social and institutional locations' (1999: 526). The purpose of my research is not to document or represent lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender subjects as other, or as exotic, for example. Rather it is to attempt to explicate and explore the individual and institutional practices of LGB(T) people. The focus is on the as-it-occurs interactional methods that Executive Committee members employ in constructing a valid and practical identity. For this reason I now turn to a discussion of ethnomethodology and what that perspective brings to the study.

Ethnomethodology seeks to understand the ways in which people make sense of the world around them. Furthermore, because of its phenomenological roots, ethnomethodology also can be used to question the foundations of everyday life. These aspects made ethnomethodology particularly suited to my research as I was attempting to discover the means by which Executive Committee members make sense of their, and others, gender and sexual identity. Furthermore, ethnomethodology can provide a greater understanding of the ways in which people use categories to make sense of everyday life than some other branches of sociology. On this subject, Durkheim argued that;

The sociologist ... must emancipate himself from the fallacious ideas that dominate the mind of the layman; he must throw off, once and for all, the yoke of those empirical categories, which from long continued habit have become tyrannical. At the very least, if at times he is obliged to resort to them, he ought to do so fully conscious of their trifling value, so that he will not assign to them a role out of proportion to their real importance (1966: 32).

However, the sense of these empirical categories remains important and is dependant on their use in everyday language. It is axiomatic that people, both sociologists and lay people, use categories to describe, understand and define everyday life. Moreover, sociologists' understandings of categories are dependant

upon their use by members of society, and it is often assumed that these categories are visible and identifiable. 'It is their seeability, their describability, their detectability which is of interest to ethnomethodology. ... And, more generally, how are identifications and categorisations done and how do they contribute to the construction of the social order?' (Benson & Hughes 1983: 6). These concerns are of fundamental importance for this research project; the categorisation of gender and sexuality and its relation to the order of Morton Hall is central to my work.

The phenomenological foundations of ethnomethodology also provided an excellent basis for a sustained critique of the identity work of Morton Hall Executive Committee members. The phenomenology of Husserl is deeply sceptical of any notion of truth, and takes up Descartes' quest for certainty. Descartes sought to 'accept nothing as true which I did not clearly recognise to be so' (Descartes 1997: 82). He however 'noticed that whilst I thus wised to think all things false it was absolutely essential that the 'I' who thought this should be somewhat, and that this truth '*I think therefore I am*' was so certain and so assured that ... I came to the conclusion that I could receive it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy for which I was seeking' (Descartes 1997: 92 original emphasis). Similarly, in the phenomenological tradition one cannot accept anything as a given, rather one has to '*establish* where the certainties lie and one must therefore withdraw allegiance from all suppositions that one can abandon' (Sharrock & Anderson 1986: 7 original emphasis). Having set aside any previously held assumptions about the world, 'phenomenological description aims to make explicit essential features implicit in the 'lived-world' – the world as we act in it prior to any theorising about it. The phenomenological method reveals that practical knowledge is prior to propositional knowledge – knowing *that* arises from knowing *how*' (Howarth 2000: 671 original emphasis). It should be recognised, however, that the end point of phenomenology is not Cartesian deductionism, but rather, 'the phenomenological exercise is done in the name of clarification, in pursuit of (among other things) a clearer conception of how theories relate to the world as we experience it' (Sharrock & Anderson 1986: 8).

It is primarily this refusal to take anything for granted that I take from ethnomethodology. This allows a rigorous and thoroughgoing analysis of the identity practices of the Morton Hall. What I am concerned with are the methods employed by the Executive Committee members to define and categorise gender and sexual identity, without recourse to any preconceived notions of how this is done.

Analytical Methodology

The tapes of the Executive Committee meetings and interviews were transcribed so that the transcripts could be analysed. The transcription noted long pauses (of which there were very few) and overlaps and interruptions in the talking. I chose not to use a highly technical method of transcription such as that employed by conversation analysis. This decision was made on the basis of what I wanted to use the transcripts for; that is, I was interested more in the actual arguments of Executive Committee members than the details of how they made them on a linguistic level. For example, I am not interested in the ways in which the turns at talk are managed in the institutional setting of an executive level meeting. This is not to say that I am uninterested in the rhetorical devices and flourishes that Executive Committee members have used to help sway the debate, but rather to say that using a conversation analysis transcription style would tend to eclipse the actual contents of the debate. For example, in his analysis of political speeches Atkinson (1988) is concerned not with the political content of the speeches but with the techniques used by the speakers, such as contrastive pairs and lists of three. My primary concern is with what is said rather than how it is said. This, however, does not prevent me from analysing the ways in which Executive Committee members make particular moves to further their aims in the debate. Notwithstanding this, my analysis remains based upon a highly detailed textual study of the debate. To this end, 'like many other qualitative approaches, textual analysis depends upon very detailed data analysis. To make such analysis effective, it is imperative that you have a limited body of data with which to work

... Having chosen your dataset, you should limit your material further by taking only a few texts or parts of texts' (Silverman 2000: 828-829). This is what I have done. The Executive Committee meetings I attended lasted between three and three and a half hours, but the duration of the discussion of trans inclusion/exclusion in the meetings was much shorter, the rest of the meetings being taken up with other business of Morton Hall. To subject the entirety of the transcripts to a detailed textual study would have resulted in a body of work far exceeding the quantity required for this thesis. Moreover, I identified the trans inclusion/exclusion debate as the sections of the Executive Committee meetings that would provide me with the most useful data for my purposes. However, whilst it was only the sections relevant to trans inclusion/exclusion that were analysed in detail, the remainder of the transcripts provided contextualisation and situated the debate within the broader work and business of the organisation.

After the transcription of the interviews and Executive Committee meetings the transcripts were, for want of a better word, coded. This however, was not coding of the mechanistic sort. In reading and re-reading the transcripts I attempted to identify the particular ways in which Executive Committee members advocated either for or against transgender inclusion. For example, it became apparent very early on in the research that several Executive Committee members, in arguing for exclusion, were drawing a distinction between gender and sexuality; this therefore became something that I looked for in the other interviews and meetings. Other themes were also identified fairly early on in the research, such as the reaction of some Executive Committee members to the possible inclusion of heterosexual trans people in the organisation. This raised theoretical issues surrounding pollution and fear (discussed in chapter 6) which I sought to develop. This led me to think about the importance of transgression in the debate, so in re-reading the transcripts I began to look for situations where issues of transgression were relevant to the debate. Moreover, I did not wait until all the data had been collected before I began the analysis. After the first Executive Committee meeting I recorded I started the analysis immediately. I worked my way through the section of the meeting pertinent to trans inclusion/exclusion as a

whole. In doing so I drew out several key themes that are central to the thesis; this gave me something to build upon when analysing the remaining transcripts. This first analysis is not present in its original form in the thesis; rather sections of it represent the basis of the subsequent chapters.

In the methods literature, coding is usually paired with retrieving, implying that all sections of the data with a particular code are disaggregated from the whole to be retrieved when the time comes for writing up that particular code or theme:

This essentially means that recontextualised data needs to be displayed in such a way that they can be read easily. The data bits that relate to a particular code or category need to be presented together in order for the researcher to explore the composition of each coded set. ... This can be achieved by organising all the data under a particular code physically in the same place; by producing diagrams, matrices, and maps of the code; or by using a retrieval function on a microcomputing program (Coffey & Atkinson 1996: 46).

I felt that this would be inappropriate because it would lead to the decontextualisation of the data. Writing specifically about conversation analysis, but applicable to discourse analysis more generally, Silverman notes that one should 'look for particular outcomes in the talk (e.g., a request for clarification, a repair, laughter) and work backwards to trace the trajectory through which a particular outcome was produced,' and that one should not be 'trying to make sense of a single line of transcript or utterance in isolation from the surrounding talk' (1998 cited in Silverman 2000: 831). Were I to have looked at all the instances in which, for example, an Executive Committee member exhibited pollution behaviour regarding transgender (see chapter 6) in isolation I would have lost sight of the context of that behaviour. Further, removing and reordering coded sections of the data from the whole would have made it very difficult to trace the development of the debate as the chronology would be lost. Instead, each line of the transcripts were numbered allowing me to note down the precise

location of each theme in the transcripts. This meant that when doing the analysis I could easily find the sections of the data I wanted and see them in the context of the debate. Therefore I was able to see what lead into, and came out of, any particular section of the data in a manner that would have been more difficult had the coded data been put somewhere for retrieval. Further, several extracts from the meeting and interview transcripts are relevant to more than one theme. It is for this reason that there are some extracts that appear in more than one chapter, as they are being analysed on several levels.

One of my methods of analysis is to look at the language games that the Executive Committee members play and a study of their ‘moves’ (Lyotard 1984). Language games are predicated on a belief that social relations are agonistic. As Latimer (2004:759) argues ‘this position presumes that under some circumstances it is not enough just to express a position; rather in order to settle matters social actors are called upon to be persuasive.’ This was particularly evident in the discussions in Executive Committee meetings, especially the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate as Executive Committee members tended to occupy polarised positions. In this situation the actors voice their opinions in a series of moves that attempt to persuade others, often by invoking shared understandings and with recourse to materials (such as business plans or terms of reference). Counter-move on counter-move then follows until an acceptable conclusion is reached.

Lyotard notes that in language games there are rules which ‘are the object of a contract, explicit or not, between players’ (1984: 10). These rules define the game and altering a rule alters the game and moreover ‘a “move” or utterance that does not satisfy the rules does not belong to the game they defines’ (1984: 10). It will become clear that there are rules that define the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall; for example, it would be outside the rules to express transphobic opinions or prejudice when arguing for exclusion – such a move would not belong to the game in hand.

Regarding counter-moves Lyotard writes, ‘each language partner, when a “move” pertaining to him is made, undergoes a “displacement”, and alteration of

some kind that not only affects him in his capacity as addressee and referent, but also as sender' (1984: 16). In the analysis in the foregoing chapter it will become apparent how the Executive Committee members are displaced, and that some displacements are more effective than others. Lyotard also notes that conversation is different to institutional talk in that institutions all have their own discursive frameworks in which the language games take place, however, he also argues that 'the limits the institution imposes on potential language "moves" are never established once and for all' (1984: 17). Furthermore, these limits are the results of previous language games and these limits are only coherent when they are no longer part of the game. This is particularly evident with regard to the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall. The ad hoc inclusion of trans was the limit of previous language games; however, these boundaries are now themselves being moved and will only become stable when all the moves in the inclusion/exclusion debate have been made.

I now turn to a discussion of the relationship between my data, analysis and theory. Coffey and Atkinson claim that 'we do not use the literature in order to provide ready-made concepts and models. Rather, we use ideas in the literature in order to develop perspectives on our own data, drawing out comparisons, analogies, and metaphors' (1996: 110). This is however, only one side of the coin; the other being the use of ideas in the data and analysis to develop perspectives on the literature. To a large extent I have viewed the data through the lens of queer theory; that is, a belief that gender and sexuality are both connected and constructed. (This should not be taken to imply that I have attempted to 'force' the data to fit with queer theory.) This has allowed me to identify those accounts which are consentaneous with queer, as well as those which are not. This, however, was only the first stage in my theorising. As stated in the introduction one of my main aims in this thesis is to discover ways in which some Executive Committee members are operating in an identity politics mode and how they conceptualise collective sexual and gender identity. It is not enough, therefore, merely to identify the accounts that were at variance, or otherwise, with queer theory, rather a more sophisticated analysis needed to be built up which was

capable of explaining the Executive Committee members understanding of identity. This necessitated a move away from queer theory because whilst it critiques identity politics and essentialist identities, it is inadequate for theorising the creation and sustenance of an identity politics organisation. At this point however, two defining themes in the research became apparent; those of pollution and transgression. Therefore I decided to bring various theories on pollution and transgression to bear on the data. This was not in an attempt to get the trans inclusion/exclusion debate to fit any particular given theory, but to use various theorists' understandings of pollution and transgression to further my understanding of the organisation. This is also another ethnomethodological influence in the research; ethnomethodology's phenomenological influence ensures that research is faithful to the phenomena under study and furthermore, that theorising is closely tied to the observation of the phenomena. This led to a two-way relationship between theory and data. Theory was used to critique the data, whilst the data was also used to critique theory; this symbiotic comprehension of the relationship between theory and data increased my understanding of both the theory and the data. For example, in Chapter 7 I apply Hegel's theory of dialectics to the trans inclusion/exclusion debate. In doing so, I use the data to critique the idea that there is some particular end that the dialectical movement with reach, whilst also using the theory to gain understandings of the data. The fact that it was problematic to map a dialectical perspective onto the data is not relevant, because attempting to analyse the data in terms of dialectics demonstrated some of the complexities of the decision making process that have been explored in more detail with regard to other theoretical perspectives.

TRANSGENDER IDENTITY AND POLITICS

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the multiple types of transgender identities and politics with regard to Morton Hall's transgender inclusion/exclusion debate. Ekins and King (1996) note that before the nineteenth century categorisations of sexual perversions 'gender blending could be written about in terms of simple descriptions of enjoyable experience and preferred behaviour' (Ekins and King 1996: 5). This is far from the case today; to this end I attempt to define the terms transgender, transsexual and transvestite, whilst noting that all three terms are contested. I elaborate some of the concerns within transgender politics; here I am less concerned with the actual political aims of transgender politics and more concerned with political philosophy of transgender activism although it is often the philosophy that defines the aims. This replicates arguments in the wider LGB and feminist communities concerning building identity versus deconstructing identity. Thirdly this chapter will begin to consider the relationship between transgender people and the LGB community.

Defining Trans

The definitions below are taken from the Gender Trust website (<http://www.gendertrust.org.uk/index1.htm>). It is these definitions that the organisation under study employed in their debate on transgender inclusion/exclusion.

Transsexual. A person who feels a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition and fulfill their life as a member of the opposite gender. Most transsexual people actively desire and complete Sex Reassignment Surgery.

Transvestite. The clinical name for a crossdresser. A person who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex. Generally, these persons do not wish to alter their body.

Transgender. A term used to include transsexuals, transvestites and crossdressers. A transgenderist can also be a person who, like a transsexual, transitions - sometimes with the help of hormone therapy and / or cosmetic surgery - to live in the gender role of choice, but has not undergone, and generally does not intend to undergo, surgery.

However, these are not definitions that all transgender people would agree with. For example, the categories of transvestite and transsexual are presented as discrete, whilst Halberstam (1998) writes of a transgender continuum (specifically for women, but also, I think, applicable to men) on which one may remain in a static position or move along (in both directions) at different times. The above definition of transgender is particularly problematic in that it first states that 'transgenderists' may have cosmetic surgery, but then states that they do not generally intend to have surgery! In this context I think the latter surgery can be seen as castration/penectomy/phalloplasty/vaginoplasty, that is, surgery that focuses on the alteration/removal of the genitals. Other transgender writers such as Stone (1991) and Bornstein (1995) advocate a much wider definition of transgender to include all gender deviants.

So let's reclaim the word "transgendered" so as to be more inclusive. Let's let it mean "transgressively gendered." Then, we have a group of people who break the rules, codes and shackles of gender. Then we have a healthy-sized contingent! It's the transgendered who need to embrace the lesbians and gays, because it's the transgendered who are in fact the more inclusive category (Bornstein 1995: 134-5).

This, then, broadens the category of transgender to anyone who acts against traditional gender stereotyping and, importantly, recognises the fact that many

transgender people have not thought of ever taking hormones or having surgery. It is this wide definition of transgender that I advocate in the executive meetings of the organisation and is discussed further in chapter 8. The inclusion of lesbian and gay people in the definition of transgender will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

Bornstein's definition of transgender has parallels with Garber's (1992) delineation of the 'third' as the realm of possibility and potentiality. As a term, 'the third sex' has been in circulation over a hundred years, often signifying hermaphroditism or androgyny as distinct from male and female, however, Garber employs the term in a slightly different manner. For her, the 'third' is something that problematises dichotomous thought by illustrating its insufficiency; in this instance, the third is that which demonstrates that the division of individuals only into the categories male and female is inadequate. 'What is crucial here ... is that "third term" is *not* a *term* ... the "third" is a mode of articulation, a way of describing a space of possibility' (Garber 1992: 11). Again, this conceptualisation of the third goes far beyond the Gender Trust's use of transgender with its focus on transition. One must recognise, however, that the 'third' does not necessarily describe the gender of all transgendered people; for instance, in her study of transsexuals in Perth, Western Australia, Wilson (2002) found that most of those she studied wanted to be seen as 'normal', therefore the space of the third was inappropriate. This problem of normality versus transgression is discussed further in the next section.

In this thesis I shall be using the term 'transsexual' to define those who have had, or wish to have, some kind of hormone treatment or sex reassignment surgery. I shall use 'transgender' to define all those who transgress current gender norms. The term 'trans' is used as shorthand for transgender. The definition of the term transgender by the executive members of the organisation is rendered problematic in the following chapters (specifically in chapter 5), particularly as many appear to use the word transgender, when transsexual would be more appropriate.

When writing on the subject of transgender, pronouns are highly problematic. For example, when referring to some one who has transitioned from a man to a woman (MTF), should they be called a female transsexual (or transwoman) or a male transsexual (or transman)? For the majority of the transgender community the answer would be 'female transsexual' (or transwoman) because the person is presenting as female and believes themselves to be female. However, some radical lesbian feminists such as Raymond (1980, 1996) and Jeffreys (2003) would call such a person a male transsexual as they believe that it is impossible to change sex as it is chromosomes which define sex, and they cannot be altered. Jeffreys writes, 'I will refer to FTMs with female pronouns and to MTFs with male pronouns in order to highlight their sex class of origin. Use of the pronouns of the political class to which these people wish to reassign makes political analysis very difficult' (2003: 123). The situation would be relatively simple were it only critical and prejudiced non-transsexuals who would call a MTF a male transsexual, however, Webb, a MTF transsexual also uses the term. Even as a transsexual, Webb believes it erroneous for a MTF transsexual to claim to be a woman, and that such a claim is detrimental to both women and transsexuals. He claims that 'I cannot see that we will ever strike a chord with others in society if we insist that it is the world that has misunderstood us, rather than us having chosen a particular method of coming to terms with our feelings' (Webb 1996: 194). In such a situation, I think the most satisfactory way forward is to refer to individuals by the gender which they would rather be referred; this is what I do throughout the thesis.

This also raises the question of the nature of the transvestite and transsexual. Does a male-to-female cross-dresser have male or female subjectivity? Does a pre-operative female-to-male transsexual have male or female subjectivity; what about post-operative? What is the relevance of body parts and clothing to subjectivity? Garber (1992) asserts that a passing cross-dresser, even when called by a female name, does not have female subjectivity, rather it is male subjectivity in drag; the man's idea of womanhood. The gender identity specialist, Stoller, claims that,

The transvestite fights this battle against being destroyed by his [sic] feminine desires, first by alternating his masculinity with the feminine behaviour, and thus reassuring himself that it isn't permanent; and second, by being always aware that even at the height of the feminine behaviour – when he is fully dressed in women's clothes – that he has the absolute insignia of maleness, a penis (1968, cited in Garber 1997: 96).

In this account, biology is everything; a man cannot have female subjectivity because he has a penis. However, if, following Butler (1999), there is a discontinuity between sex and gender, and if sex itself is constructed, male and masculine could just as well signify a man or woman, and female and feminine could signify a man or woman as well. This destroys Stoller's thesis because it illustrates that the penis is not the 'absolute insignia of maleness'. This overrules Stoller's synechdochal collapse of the penis into masculinity, and provides a more radical theory of cross-dressing that opens up possibilities of subversion unavailable in the earlier account. This question of subjectivity can be seen in the debates between radical feminists and transsexuals discussed in the following section.

Politicising Transgender

Broad (2002) highlights some of the divisions within transgender politics, indicating that 'transgender politics' is not unified, and is as complex as LGB and feminist politics. Furthermore he argues that transgender can be seen as just another separate identity politics grouping and campaign, but it can also be seen as part of queer politics. Importantly, Broad notes that there are both 'identity-producing' (2002: 245) and deconstructive elements to transgender politics; he shows 'that many in the transgender community were quite invested in adopting a transgender identity and consciousness, creating transgender group boundaries, and claiming that identity through everyday negotiations of it' (2002: 245). However, Broad also argues that there are transgender activists who are concerned

with disrupting those boundaries and identities and who celebrate their outsider status.

These differences make it especially hard for an LGB organisation to decide whether to widen its remit to include transgender as there are multiple politics. This is evident in the fears and concerns of some Executive Committee members. It is generally the case that it is post-operative transsexuals who have the greatest investment in the identity constructing strategy, although there are exceptions, because they have invested so much time and effort into changing sex. Consequently it is transsexuals whom the Executive Committee members seem most supportive of, whilst not wishing to be associated with the more deconstructive elements of transgender politics.

Related to this is Roen (2002) who sees transgender as a postmodern position relating to fluidity whilst regarding transsexual as more modernist; 'a state of being that assumes the pre-existence of two sexes between which one may transition' (2002: 501-2). Roen also identifies a hierarchy of crossing and passing, claiming that political and academic pronouncements can often prioritise crossing, whilst trans communities often prioritise passing. Referring to her research participants who politicised their transgendered identities Roen claims that 'they effectively accused those who wish to pass of false consciousness' (2002: 504) for believing in a binary construction of gender. She argues that the expectation for transsexuals is that they wish to pass as *either* women *or* men and that those who do not are not seen as transsexual. Roen conceptualises this dichotomy as 'both/neither' and 'either/or' where '*both/neither* refers to a transgender position of refusing to fit within categories of woman and man, while *either/or* refers to a transsexual imperative to pass convincingly as either a man or a woman' (2002: 505 original emphasis). This is a useful conceptualisation that extends Broad's (2002) distinction between identity production and deconstruction. Roen also refers to Bornstein's (1995) labelling of passing transsexuals as engaging in 'gender terrorism.' For Bornstein, the gender terrorists are those in society who seek to uphold and defend normative gender roles against their transgression; this can often be an unholy alliance between the religious right, radical feminists and

some sections of the transsexual community. Passing transsexuals are placed in this category because of their focus on a binary switch from male to female or female to male and the 'right gender, wrong body' discourse. Morton Hall privileges transsexual identity over transgender identity as evidenced by its using definitions from the Gender Trust, an organisation specifically for transsexuals and those suffering from gender dysphoria, and a focus on legislation solely affecting transsexuals, such as the Gender Recognition Act 2005 (see chapter 5 for a more detailed analysis of this piece of legislation and its place in the debate). Given this it could be argued that those in the organisation advocating the exclusion of transgender are, under Bornstein's view, gender defenders, in that they do not wish to ally themselves with those who cross gender boundaries.

Having said this, Roen notes that there are other factors that affect the extent to which one can adopt a both/neither or either/or identity. Crossing is dependant on the extent to which one can safely be out without fear of intimidation and harassment, whilst passing depends on one being in a position to access the medical technologies that facilitate a transsexual passing. 'This suggests that both ... are problematic in terms of their exclusivity and their failure to account for socio-economic factors' (Roen 2002: 511). This is an important recognition of the fact that whether one crosses or passes can be about more than just what the individual concerned desires. However, within the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall there was no discussion of any socio-economic factors that could impact upon transgendered lives, rather the central focus of the debate was specifically on identity; whether a transgendered person could count as lesbian, gay or bisexual and the extent of their knowledge of LGB issues.

Ekins (2005) traces the developments in the work of the endocrinologist Harry Benjamin, a key figure in the development of transsexual surgery. He identifies a shift in Benjamin's work from a focus on diversity in the beginning to a greater focus on heteronormativity in his later work. Significantly,

His frequent later emphasis on the ‘normality’ of his transsexual patients and their emergence as unremarkable members of their reassigned sex, typically heterosexual and conventional, led inevitably to a privileging of a certain sort of transsexual experience and outcome at the expense of other kinds (Ekins 2005: 310).

This privileging of the ‘normal’ postoperatively heterosexual transsexual could be a reason why several Executive Committee members thought that transsexuals should not be in an LGB organisation. The focus on a heteronormative outcome leaves intact the male/female binary and does not question a transsexual’s sexual orientation as the ideal outcome is unproblematically heterosexual. Moreover, the medical discourse on transsexuality stresses the ‘independence of sex and gender identity and the immutability of the latter’ (King 1996: 94); gender identity is fixed, whilst biological sex can be altered via surgical means. This is the only discourse in which transsexuality can make sense. If one follows a performative or constructionist account of gender there is nothing essential about being male or being female, which problematises what a sex change actually means. The only way in which one can theoretically conceptualise transsexuality is by viewing male and female as discrete categories with specific attributes. This is the basis of the diagnostic criteria for Gender Identity Disorder (GID) in the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV (DSM-IV). The DSM-IV states that ‘there must be a strong and persistent cross-gender identification ... there must also be evidence of persistent discomfort about one’s assigned sex or a sense of inappropriateness in the gender role of that sex’ (APA 2000:576). For cross-gender identification to take place there has to be a difference between male and female. The idea of an ‘inappropriate gender role’ also presupposes an appropriate gender role with which the transsexual is at variance with. Therefore gender roles must be viewed as fixed. The diagnostic criteria for GID in childhood is farcical; for example, boys ‘avoid rough and tumble play and competitive sports and have little interest in cars and trucks or other nonaggressive but stereotypical boys’ toys’ (APA 2000: 576), whilst girls ‘prefer boys as playmates with whom they share interest in contact sport, rough

and tumble play and typical boyhood games' (577). The diagnostic criteria rest upon a failure to conform to traditional gender stereotypes which only make sense in a particular social and cultural context. As the references to 'stereotypical' and 'traditional' in the above quotes illustrate, there is a lack of biological or neurological basis for GID; it is purely based on a psychiatrist's view of how men and women should behave.

The heteronormative construction of transsexuality is one of the main critiques of transsexuality made by both non-transsexuals and some transsexuals themselves; that transsexuality is a method of social control employed by the medical establishment to reinforce gender role. It is this debate to which I now turn. Billings and Urban show that 'transsexualism is a socially constructed reality which only exists in and through medical discourse' (1996: 99). This is analogous to Foucault's claim that after 1870, whereas 'the sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species' (1998: 43). As evidence for their claim, Billings and Urban cite the fact that people who wish to have sex change surgery have read all the literature on the subject and present themselves to the medical establishment as textbook cases. They also note that physicians can often prompt their patients into giving the 'correct' answers to their questions as this quote demonstrates (1996: 111);

Physician: 'You said you always felt like a girl – what is that?'

Patient: [long pause] 'I don't know.'

Physician: 'Sexual attraction? Played with girls' toys?'

This illustrates the physician disciplining the patient into presenting their story in a manner that fits the diagnostic criteria for GID shown above. Billings and Urban term this 'the con.' In all other circumstances, they claim, presenting to a clinician with textbook symptoms would be met with suspicion, however in the case of transsexuality there is no such suspicion, and as the extract above shows, physicians can collude in the con. This can also be evidenced in the autobiographical accounts of transsexuals, which often demonstrate a similar

narrative of playing with toys 'meant' for the other sex or having playmates of the opposite (biological) sex.

This aspect of transsexual surgery is often a major part of radical feminist critiques of transsexuality, such as Raymond (1980, 1996) and Jeffreys (2003). As mentioned above, Raymond refuses to refer to a male to female transsexual as a woman as she believes that the defining feature of sex is chromosomes, something which cannot be changed. For Raymond, patriarchy and its associated sex role stereotyping is the main cause of transsexuality; 'a patriarchal society and its social currents of masculinity and femininity is the *First Cause* of transsexualism' (1980: xviii original emphasis). The second major cause is the medical establishment as it has flourished around transsexual surgery; this is the 'transsexual empire', and has grown up since the 1950s. Raymond is also scathing of the MTF transsexuals who wish to become part of the women's movement;

As the [MTF] exhibits the attempt to possess women in a bodily sense while acting out the images into which men have molded women, the [MTF] who claims to be a lesbian-feminist attempts to possess women at a deeper level, this time under the guise of challenging rather than conforming to the role and behaviour of stereotyped femininity (Raymond 1980: 99).

It seems, then that the transsexual cannot win; either she is merely acting according to traditional stereotypes, or in attempting to challenge such stereotypes she is invading women's space and dividing 'real' women. Moreover, any women who are happy to work with transsexual women, such as the Olivia records company with Sandy Stone, are seen as colluding in their own oppression. Whilst Raymond's concern is with the MTF transsexual, Jeffreys' is with the FTM; she argues that 'FTM transsexualism is a vital issue for lesbian politics, because the vast majority of the women who transition have identified as lesbian, or at least lived with the lesbian community and conducted relationships with lesbians' (Jeffreys 2003: 124). She sees FTM surgery as destroying lesbians in favour of a

male heterosexual outcome, that is, the medical profession is indulging in the worst kind of surgical erasure of homosexuals.

Riddell (1996) attempts a critique of Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* (1980) on two levels, those of accuracy and theory. On the first level, for instance, she demonstrates that transsexual surgery did not begin in the 1950s but can be traced back to the 1930s and that gender identity clinics cannot be said to be the gender policing vanguard of the medical establishment given the hostility of the general medical profession to those working in such clinics. On the second level Riddell critiques Raymond's view that sex is biologically determined according to chromosomes and further argues that 'behind Ms Raymond's argument that sexual difference – biology apart – is exclusively a product of the male-defined values of a patriarchy, lies an absolutist view of sex difference' (Riddell 1996: 181). True enough. However, Riddell herself appears to have an absolutist view of *gender* difference; for example she concurs with (unspecified) sex researchers who claim that core gender identity is immutably fixed at the age of eighteen months. Furthermore, she argues that 'we [transsexuals] do not seek to change sex, but to modify a biological anomaly so that genuine human existence as the women or men *we are already* is possible' (Riddell 1996: 185 my emphasis). Here it is gender that is pre-determined, rather than sex. This is the 'wrong body' discourse, a position from which it is difficult to counter the arguments of those such as Raymond, given that the majority of 'wrong body' arguments are based upon the very stereotyped notions of masculinity and femininity that she is arguing against.

It is the case that in the inclusion/exclusion debate none of the Executive Committee members made similar pronouncements to Jeffreys or Raymond, however there are parallels between Raymond's claim that transsexuals' involvement in lesbian politics is harmful and the assertion by some Executive Committee members belief that including transgender in the remit of the organisation would dilute its purpose, particularly if the transgender person identified as heterosexual. In both cases one can see that for identity politics groups, the identity of those involved is more important than whether they are in agreement with the aims of the group. Just as Raymond claims that a male to

female transsexual cannot be a lesbian feminist because she does not have the experience of growing up female in a male dominated society, some Executive Committee members claimed that transgender people should not be in the organisation because they have no knowledge of being lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This is an issue I return to later in this, and other, chapters, particularly chapter 8.

It must be noted that it is not just non-transsexuals who mount the type of critique that Raymond does. Webb (1996), a transgender activist makes similar points, as he believes that 'male transsexuals [MFT] perpetuate misogyny when they indulge in a manipulative game of getting others to collude in their fantasy that they are women' (Webb 1996: 192). In addition, he also asks three questions that he thinks transgender activists should ask themselves (1996: 194);

- 'Should we admit that our sex reassignment was a mistake and do what we can to identify as the men we are?'
- 'Should we campaign for hormonal intervention and sex reassignment surgery to be terminated?'
- 'How can transsexual and transvestite inclination be channelled into challenging gender-role stereotyping rather than reinforcing it?'

The last question is probably the most significant in its implications for political action given that transgender activism, particularly transsexual, has a tendency to reify gender norms, as evidenced by the 'wrong body' discourse most organisations employ. This is aptly demonstrated by the webpage on the Press for Change website on Trans Equality Monitoring (<http://www.pfc.org.uk/node/1408>). Press for Change is a UK based organisation that claims to campaign for all trans people. The following is their introduction to trans equality monitoring:

Increasingly, organisations are wanting to monitor the number of trans people among their staff or client group. They feel this is becoming necessary in order to show that they are complying with new equalities law such as the Public Sector Gender Duty.

However, the monitoring of trans people is not a legal requirement and, where undertaken, does have certain pitfalls which need to be avoided and concepts that need to be understood.

This document is intended to point these out and ensure that organisations implement best practice methods in monitoring.

The document then goes on to state that questions on transgender status should not treat transgender as a third sex, or as a sexuality. PFC advocated that:

Questions on gender identity should always be in their own section.

Different trans people describe themselves with different labels and what one person adopts happily offends another. For this reason, we recommend the use of descriptive questions that do not rely on a particular terminological adherence:

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you live and work full time in the gender role opposite to that assigned at birth?

☐ Yes ☐ No



However, whilst this avoids the pitfalls as terming transgender a third sex or a sexuality, this sort of question assumes that those answering are transsexual. The questions have the assumption that there are only two possible genders that one could identify as and that one is *either* one *or* the other. These questions could ‘happily offend’ a trans person who saw themselves as having a gender that is either in between male and female, or as unrelated to male and female. These types of monitoring questions are only ‘best practice’ if one only wants to monitor transsexuals and not transgender people.

This also has implications for the inclusion/exclusion debate for the organisation studied. In its privileging of transsexual over transgender and its distancing from heterosexual cross dressers, the organisation can be seen to be upholding a belief in essential gender characteristics. Therefore one might question, on the basis of Webb’s opinions, whether transgender people would actually want to be part of the organisation in the first place. This, however, serves

to highlight the divisions and tensions within transgender politics and identity; it is clear that some transsexuals *do* wish to be part of the organisation, quite possibly, in part, for the very reason that the organisation does not really challenge gender-role stereotyping.

A major concern for both individual trans people and for transgender politics is passing. Passing is a person being read as the gender in which they are attempting to present, and, as such, is connected to the identity-making versus deconstructionist debate outlined above. Both Garber (1992) and Whittle (1996) have considered passing and its relationship to subversion and the gender-fuck. Garber uses the term 'marked transvestite' to designate a 'cross-dresser whose clothing seems deliberately and obviously at variance with his anatomical gender assignment' (1992: 354). This is the cross-dressing of those such as Boy George and Annie Lennox, who, whilst not attempting to 'pass,' nevertheless wear sartorial accoutrements of the opposite sex. In this instance, Annie Lennox does not have a prosthetic penis, nor does Boy George have prosthetic breasts. It is possible that because of this the marked cross-dresser has more subversive effects than the unmarked. One reason for this is that if the unmarked cross-dresser is successfully passing they are indistinguishable from everyone else. Conversely a marked cross-dresser, by their very incongruity, stands out. However, Whittle (1996) disagrees with this, below.

The relationship between the cross-dresser and passing, which in turn is related to being marked or unmarked, is important. Regarding a vestimentary guide for male-to-female transvestites Garber writes that 'this is advice for the passing male-to-female transvestite, not for the radical drag queen who wants the discontinuity of a hairy chest or moustache to clash with a revealingly cut dress' (1992: 49 original emphasis). This demonstrates that there are major differences within those who cross-dress, which render talking about cross-dressers as a unified category impractical. It also raises questions about the subversive potentials of different variants of cross-dressing; whether some are more radical than others. Here I would argue that the discontinuity between biological sex and clothes worn is the most likely to subvert gender norms. This performance has

radical effects that the passing transvestite does not have. In attempting to be of the opposite sex the passing transvestite can in some cases reify the notion of two asunder genders, rather than problematising binary genders, although this is not always the case. I believe that this is the case whether the passing transvestite is transsexual or otherwise.

Garber also shows how cross-dressing is part of the mainstream, citing historical figures, both male and female, who have cross-dressed. She also details the cross-dressed shows staged by male soldiers and sailors, and Harvard's Hasty Pudding Theatricals. That cross-dressing has been a normalised part of the mainstream demonstrates that the idea of drag as universally subversive, or transgressive, is highly contentious. As Garber claims, 'far from undercutting the power of the ruling elite, male cross-dressing rituals here seem to serve as conformations and expressions of it. Indeed, what is fascinating about the study of transvestism is precisely that it is outlawed in some circumstances, appropriated as a sign of privilege in others' (1992: 66). Further to these more socially privileged sites of cross-dressing, other subcultures have cross-dressing, and gender-bending, as normal and accepted practices. An example of this is the hard rock/goth/industrial/cyber music scene, both at the level of artists and club/gig goers. For instance, Brian Molko (Placebo), Brian Warner (Marilyn Manson) and Trent Reznor (Nine Inch Nails) are all gender non-conformists; sometimes wearing skirts and make up. Further it is common to attend a rock club and find a man or two wearing make up or a skirt. As Garber quips 'now, it's not unusual for one male rocker to say to another "May I borrow your eyeliner?"' (1992: 357). In this case the cross-dressing is marked, in that there is no intention to exactly look like, or be, a woman; it is merely the wearing of a skirt instead of trousers. However, the extent to which this is a conscious troubling of sex/gender norms, or part of the wider, slightly anarchic, anti-establishment nature of the genre is open to debate. In the trans inclusion/exclusion debate there was no real discussion of this kind of transvestite behaviour; the focus was solely on the sexuality of the cross-dresser. Transvestism was only discussed under the spectre of the heterosexual cross-dresser joining the organisation and diminishing the aims of the

organisation. The above type of transgender behaviour is also largely precluded by the definitions of transgender being employed by the organisation for the purpose of the debate. I advocated widening the definition of transgender to include all behaviour that transgresses gender norms, which would have included this marked transvestism, however this was not taken up. Here we can see that transgender as 'third', as a space of possibility and potentiality being refused by the organisation in favour of a far more normative rendition of transgender experience.

Whittle (1996) provides a different way of conceptualising the relationship between passing and the gender-fuck. He writes of Loren Cameron's presentation in his self-portraits. Cameron's (nude) self portraits show a muscular man striking bodybuilding poses, with a well defined chest, legs and arms, flame tattoos on the thighs, forearms and collar bone, with short hair and a styled beard. Also present is a vagina and very slight scarring providing evidence of a double mastectomy. Whittle notes that were Cameron dressed, he would pass, and therefore would become hidden, as one would not suspect his 'secret.' For Whittle, 'the gender outlaw is nearly always hidden in passing and, as a result, the gender defenders are fucked, in that their rules become meaningless because they are constantly broken, and nobody knows when or where or how that is happening' (1996: 212). Whilst it is true that by passing (successfully) one is rendering oneself invisible, I read Bornstein's (1995) term 'gender outlaw' to refer to those who decided to try to live outside of gender rather than to try to pass, although I think that Whittle has a different understanding of the term. Given that Bornstein claims that 'non-supporters of any movement to deconstruct gender would also, unfortunately, include those transgendered people who subscribe fully to the culture's definitions of gender and seek to embody those definitions within themselves' (1995: 132) it seems likely that those who would hide themselves in passing would actually be gender defenders rather than gender outlaws.

'Gender outlaw', for Whittle, appears to refer to all those who choose not to remain in their biological sex. In his analysis the passing transsexual is, contra

Bornstein, subversive by virtue of the fact that they do pass; one can no longer discover the gender 'truths' of a person by merely looking at them.

Remaining with Cameron's self portrait, Whittle goes on to remark, 'however, Cameron chooses not to pass. Normally the nature of 'not passing' means that head's aren't really fucked, because gender rules are not transgressed, they are only highlighted. ... However, if the gender outlaw who can pass, refuses to pass, then they once again, present the gender fuck' (1996: 212). I concur that refusing to pass when one can, like Cameron, is fucking with gender; however the assertion that not passing *per se* does not is problematic. Moreover, 'not passing' requires more clarification. If it is someone who wished to pass, but fails, then arguably 'head's aren't really fucked,' not least because the individual concerned *wished to pass* and therefore was not transgressing gender, but remaining in a binary model. However, if it is someone choosing not to pass, like Cameron, then gender rules are highlighted *because of* their transgression. As expanded upon in chapter 7 Foucault (1977) and Bataille (2001) show that the effect of a transgression is to reveal the limit. Significantly, the whole discourse of passing relies on binary constructions of gender (you must pass as *either* male *or* female) therefore to not pass then one is, almost by default, transgressing binary gender roles. For Whittle it appears that the only manner in which transgender can be transgressive is if someone who can pass refuses to do so; this eclipses all those who do not pass and have no desire to do so, even if they could. Whether one agrees with the specifics of with Whittle or Garber, it is clear that transgender does a significant amount of transgressive work; it can trouble stable notions of masculine and feminine and call those categories into question. As will become apparent throughout this thesis, these are not categories that many of the Executive Committee members want called into question. Moreover, the transgressive potential of transgender creates a problematic relationship between trans and LGB activism; it is this relationship to which I now turn.

Putting the 'T' in 'LGB'

Whilst a major focus of this thesis is the relationship between transgender and sexuality, this section will introduce some of the key themes in this debate in a wider context than the organisations debate, as well as to place this debate in its historical setting. Two quotes will serve to introduce this discussion; the second is from an interview conducted with a Executive Committee member prior to the debate reaching executive level. The views expressed, are, however, broadly representative of those who favoured exclusion.

Transvestites and transsexuals polarise the problems of gay activism. At one level they are accused of sexism because of their concern with traditional femininity, but it must be remembered that the masters are not supposed to dress as slaves, and men who dress as women are giving up their power as men. Their oppression is similar to that experienced by gay men and all women (Brake 1976: 187 in Ekins and King 1996: 168).

Lou: if you have a male to female transgender person and the male is still going through gender reassignment, then to all intents and purposes that individual is a woman because they self identify as a women. As regards their sexuality, if their sexuality is still that they're attracted to women that would make them lesbian, therefore they would be eligible, if they were attracted to men then to me they would be heterosexual, so what possible understanding of lesbian and gay issues would they have. That's not to say they don't have understanding of issues because of the transgender situation and the information and the learning people can get from transgender individuals is vast we all should learn from everyone else, but it's how wide do you cast the net in membership otherwise it could go down the road of heterosexual people with particular fetishes that are discriminated against wanting to join a lesbian and gay group? Would they fit in? Would they understand automatically what the difficulties are or can be of being a gay man or a lesbian or whatever? That's

where the difficulty is, it's not against them per se, but its about the issues and where they're coming from.

The first thing to note is that for Brake, transvestites and transsexual are, at least biologically, male; female transsexuals or transvestites are non-existent in his account. Notwithstanding this, he does counter claims that male transvestites and MTF transsexuals retain male (and heterosexual) privileges. Also, his claim that men who dress as women renounce their power as men is a response to those such as Stoller (see above) who argue that a male transsexual always has the knowledge that he retains 'the absolute insignia of maleness,' that is, a penis. The central point to take from Brake however, is the belief that the oppression of transvestites and transsexuals is in some way similar to that of women and gay men; this would tend to advocate a broad coalition politics encompassing all those who are disadvantaged by the current heteronormative sex/gender system. Lou, however, raises an oft repeated argument that transgender people should only be able to join LGB organisations if they, in their gender of choice, identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This relies on a separation of sex and gender that will be discussed further in chapter 5. Similarly to all those opposed to trans inclusion in the organisation Lou does not attack trans people for their choices, but rather questions whether they should be in an LGB organisation.

Whilst Brake argues that there are similarities in the oppression of trans people and LGB people, Lou claims that trans people would have no knowledge of the oppression of LGB people, indicating that he sees a difference between such oppressions. This, however, belies the fact that historically transgender and homosexuality have had a complex relationship. Magnus Hirschfeld invented the term 'transvestite' and argued that transvestism was not a sign of homosexuality and that the majority of transvestites were heterosexual, however this has not prevented a conflation of transvestism and homosexuality in the minds of a large section of the public. Writing of chat shows on which transvestites appeared Garber (1992) observes that many audience members question the guests' sexual identity and that this is something that both the hosts and the transvestites

themselves are at pains to refute. Moreover, cross gender behaviour (not necessarily cross-dressing) is often seen as a sign of homosexuality; such examples include boys not wishing to be seen as sissies for not playing games such as football or rugby. This, I believe, is related to what Garber terms 'transvestite panic'; that is, 'the fear on the part of some gay men today and some male homosexuals earlier in the century that they themselves will be coded, and dismissed, as effeminate ... and the correlative fear on the part of some lesbians that they will be coded as "masculine"' (1992: 137). It is clear therefore that the relationship between transvestism and homosexuality is a troubled one.

This is further complicated by the involvement of trans people in gay activism. Rivera (2002) tells of how she was involved with the inception of the gay liberation movement in America, charting her involvement in the Gay Activist Alliance (GAA) and the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and her subsequent sidelining in the organisations. She also remarks that the organisers of the celebrations for the fourth anniversary of Stonewall attempted to stop drag queens from performing; this leads her to say 'it really hurts me that some gay people don't even know what we gave for their movement' (Rivera 2002: 81). This would indicate that trans people have always been a part of the lesbian and gay movement, whether explicitly acknowledged by that movement or otherwise. I return to this regarding transsexuals below. Rivera states that the GLF was better than the GAA as it covered a broader spectrum of people; 'we're all in the same boat as long as we're oppressed one way or the other, whether we are gay, straight, trans, black, yellow, green, purple, or whatever. If we don't fight for each other, we'll be put down' (2002: 80). This forms a response to Lou's questioning of how far the net of membership should be cast; heterosexual people with particular fetishes who are discriminated against should be part of the organisation because of the similar roots of oppression.

The relationship between homosexuality and transsexuality is also a difficult one. Many of the pioneers of sex change surgery viewed transsexuals as heterosexual in their 'true' gender. Ekins writes that 'at the end of his [Harry Benjamin's] first of the three phases, he states that his patients are 'invariably

heterosexuals within the category of transgender (and non-trans heterosexuals) within the organisation. In saying that only LGB trans people should be in the organisation Ricky is excluding trans people who are heterosexual from the organisation on the basis that they have not experienced living as a homosexual and therefore have no knowledge of the issues. In Van Gennep's terms, trans people are on one rooms and do not move from one to the other. A heterosexual transsexual could, quite feasibly, have started their journey in the gay or lesbian room. Chapter 8 discusses some of the implications of this view with regard to rhizomatics and the construction of sexual and gender identity; this chapter focuses specifically on the exclusion of heterosexual trans people from the organisation.

I argue that Ricky's rejection of heterosexual transgendered people can be seen as pollution behaviour (Douglas 1991b). As already shown in the previous chapter one could argue that a heterosexual (post op) trans person would have an understanding of LGB issues because prior to transition they may have been perceived by others as homosexual, or self identified as such before deciding they were transgendered. Therefore the arguments against inclusion can be seen as an attempt to retain the purity of Morton Hall which would be spoiled by the addition of trans people and issues. It is also possible that Ricky is exhibiting the fear that widening the remit of Morton Hall to include transgender would radically alter the activities of the organisation as well as putting the organisation in a potentially problematic position of representing heterosexual people who may be homophobic. As Young (1997) argues, identity politics organisations rely on a distinction between us (the oppressed) and them (the oppressors) which dictates that the oppressors can never work for the benefit of the oppressed (see Chapter 5). The other point that Ricky raises could be termed the 'floodgate argument'; if heterosexual trans people are welcomed into Morton Hall, then other heterosexual sexual minorities may also want to be represented by the organisation, and soon every variety of sexual deviant would be clamouring to join the organisation. This evidences my claim in Chapter 4 with regard to Rubin's (1989) 'line' (dividing good and bad sexual behaviours and identities) that those on the deviant side of

seemed to be no other label to give my undiagnosed and apparently unique condition ... There followed a very stressful period after my fellow Wren discovered my feelings for her and threatened to report me to the Commanding Officer. Not long afterwards I was given medical discharge with the diagnosis of 'homosexual tendencies'. I knew this was wrong, but what was I? (1996: 30).

Although not particularly satisfied with the label of 'lesbian' Rees felt that it most appropriately described her situation, moreover, he was regarded as a lesbian by colleagues, resulting in discharge from the military. His fellow Wren and the Commanding Officer obviously had no knowledge of transgender identity and presumed that a woman attracted to another woman could only be a lesbian. Although his experience would differ from a 'real' lesbian in a similar situation, there would still be parallels that would give him ample understanding of the experiences of the discrimination suffered by lesbians. *He*, as a post-operatively heterosexual male arguably has a greater understanding of lesbian oppression than a 'real' lesbian who has not been dismissed from her job because of her sexuality.

Furthermore, in her discussion of female masculinity Halberstam (1998: 150) remarks that;

So while it is true that transgender and transsexual men have been wrongly folded into lesbian history, it is also true that the distinction between some transsexual identities and some lesbian identities may at times become quite blurry. Many FTMs do come out as lesbians before they come out as transsexuals (many, it must be said, do not). And for this reason alone, one cannot always maintain hard and fast and definite distinctions between lesbians and transsexuals.

Halberstam then goes on to cite several FTMs who were a part of the lesbian community, and continued to be so after transition. Assuming that these FTMs retain their attraction towards women, Lou's assertion that a heterosexual transsexual has no knowledge of homosexuality serves to eradicate the pre-

transition lives of these men (see chapter 8 for a discussion of how coming out narratives stabilise and fix identity). Halberstam notes that many transsexual men wish to retain links with lesbian/queer communities and cultures and that 'much transsexual discourse now circulating tries to cast the lesbian pasts of FTM as instances of mistaken identities' (1998: 150). This is essentially what the discourse articulated by Lou serves to accomplish; a heterosexual FTM was always male and therefore not a lesbian. Highly complex desires and identities are being forced into the narrow binaries of sex and gender in a move to obfuscate complexities that would problematise gay and lesbian identities.

Similarly to Rivera who argues for a broad politics, Bornstein employs a very wide definition of transgender, arguing that 'it's the transgendered who need to embrace the lesbians and gays, because it's the transgendered who are in fact the more inclusive category' (1995: 135). This is based upon the fact that lesbian and gay sexuality is itself transgendered desire; in this society women are meant to desire men, whilst men are meant to desire women, therefore those who do not are crossing heteronormative gender roles. In arguing this, Bornstein claims that gays and lesbians suffer more for violations of gender roles, as these are visible in daily life, rather than sexual behaviour, as this happens, generally, in private. Bornstein is aware that this is not an easy aim; it will appear to negate the gains of gays and lesbians, render bisexuals invisible and dilute transgender specific campaigns, however, 'it's the only point all these groups have in common, it's the only flag around which they all could rally' (Bornstein 1995: 135). The main problem with this, acknowledged by Bornstein, is that it requires gay and lesbian people to recognise their own 'transgressively gendered' position. As will become apparent in chapter 5 the Executive Committee members' separation of gender and sexual identity make this an unlikely outcome; so long as LGB politics employs an ethnic model of identity a broad coalition of transgender, including sexuality, will remain a distant hope.

The psychiatric discourse on transsexuality also reveals tensions between gender and sexual identity. The first version of the DSM (III) that did not contain an entry for homosexuality was also the first to contain an entry for 'Gender

Identity Disorder of Childhood'; something that Sedgwick sees as 'part of the same conceptual shift' (1993: 157). Butler (2004) also comments that some have argued that GID was a new way of pathologising homosexuality under the criteria of a misdirected gender identity. Sedgwick cites Richard Green who claims that 'parents of sons who entered therapy were ... worried that the cross-gender behaviour portended problems with later sexuality' (Green cited in Sedgwick 1993: 162). Cross gender behaviour in childhood, is then, seen by some as an early indicator of adult homosexuality; something which the psycho-medical establishment must try to prevent at all costs. Green also notes that parents may bring children to him because they have been bullied, this is analogous to Feder (1997) who cites a case study in which it is significant that a 'feminine' boys' classmates said to him 'you can't be a little girl' (Rekers and Varni cited in Feder 1997: 195). This illustrates that peer pressure is a disciplining force used on children with the approval of psychiatrists. There is no question that the children doing the disciplining should be seen as pathological for exhibiting non-acceptance of difference, for example. This is also similar to the diagnostic criteria for GID in girls; one of the criteria is that strangers may often misidentify a little girl for a boy (APA 2000). In this case strangers appear to know something of the girl's self of which she herself is unaware. Both are examples of social disciplining fostering a binary model of gender, which is supported by the medical profession. What is important to take from these examples is not whether cross gender behaviour in childhood is actually an indicator of homosexuality, but rather that many people believe that it is. Work done in primary schools by Renold (2000, 2005) demonstrates that there is pressure for children, particularly boys to conform to traditional gender roles to avoid being called gay. Furthermore the multi-agency Education for All campaign that seeks to eradicate homophobia in schools shows an awareness that it is not only homosexual pupils who suffer homophobic abuse, but that it can also happen to children exhibiting cross-gender behaviour. Given that the organisation is one of those involved with the Education for All campaign this problematises the organisation's exclusion of transgender; this will be explored in more detail in chapter 5.

Conclusions

This chapter has given an introduction to some of the complexities of transgender identities and politics and has begun to draw out several themes that will form the basis of successive chapters. It is evident that the question of transgender inclusion within the organisation is highly problematic because of the radically different types of transgender politics; the differences between identity-producing and identity-deconstructing politics, both trans and LGB, will be a central theme of this thesis. If the transgender community does not have a unified politics then it is difficult for the organisation to decide on inclusion or exclusion. Moreover, as will become apparent in the following chapters, those advocating the exclusion of trans people from the organisation tend to reference the identity-producing elements of transgender politics as this supports difference, whilst those advocating for inclusion tend to reference the identity-deconstructing elements of transgender politics as this supports similarity. As will become clear, the organisations responses to the prospect of widening its remit to include transgender will illuminate the particular models of identities that the Executive Committee members themselves use.

Furthermore, this chapter illustrates that there is no easy distinction between transgender and transsexual, nor is either of them inherently transgressive or subversive. Nor should transgender and transsexual necessarily be seen as being in opposition to each other. A significant line of analysis in this thesis concerns the differing treatment of transsexuals and transgenders by Morton Hall, and my claim that, in particular, the figure of the heterosexual trans person is transgressively defining for the organisation. However, this is not because this dichotomy is inherent, but rather because it is instituted by Executive Committee members during the debate. Much of the subsequent analysis demonstrates that the transgender/transsexual binary is, at the least, unstable.

LGB IDENTITY AND POLITICS

This chapter will situate the organisation's trans inclusion/exclusion debate within the context of lesbian and gay, and queer theories, and will prefigure claims in chapter 5 that the organisation is attempting to sustain an ethnic/essentialist model of identity against an ever increasing deconstructive impulse. I begin with an historical sketch of lesbian and gay identities and activism showing that gay politics operates on a spectrum between identity creating and deconstructionist/liberationist politics. In the following section I elucidate the queer critiques of identity, particularly those of Sedgwick and Butler, enabling me to be able to deconstruct the process of inclusion/exclusion in the organisation in latter chapters.

Mapping Gay Activism

The history of gay identity and activism can be seen as a struggle between universalising and minoritising views of homosexuality and between constructionist and essentialist views of identity. The minoritising view is 'viewing homo/heterosexual definition ... as an issue of active importance primarily for a small, distinct, relatively fixed homosexual minority,' whilst the universalising view is seeing it 'as an issue of continuing determinate importance in the lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities' (Sedgwick 1990: 1). There is a tendency for minoritising political strategies to rely on essentialist understandings of identity and for universalising strategies to rely on a constructionist understanding of identity. However, this does not have to be the case; one could view homosexuality as innate and of importance for everyone, regardless of sexuality. This section will map the history of the construction of a gay identity and gay activism from the Renaissance up to the present with

reference to these terms. This will contextualise the current debate with relation to the historical construction of a distinct homosexual identity.

It is now a generally well accepted fact that homosexuality as an identity is a relatively recent phenomenon, although the exact date for the foundation of a gay identity remains a site of dispute. For some, such as Foucault (1998) the time period is the late nineteenth century, whilst for others, such as Norton (1992) the date is much earlier and can be traced back to the molly subculture of the early eighteenth century. It is also often, accurately, said that one cannot use modern-day terms such as homosexual to refer to those who engaged in same sex sexual activity in the past. This is further complicated by the fact that words like 'sodomite' or 'bugger' that were used to describe such people conveyed more meaning than simply 'homosexual'; they were linked to debauchery more generally, as well as to the biblical destruction of the cities of the Plain - Sodom and Gomorrah. It is also worthy of note that at this time (late sixteenth century) that 'outside an immediately sexual context, there was little or no social pressure for someone to define for himself what his sexuality was' (Bray 1988: 70). Bray evidences this by citing trial records in which the defendants did not think that they had done anything wrong because they did not live up to the then current stereotype of a sodomite or catamite. Bray notes that at this time, although there were very strong legal proscriptions against homosexuality, buggery was to a large extent ignored, unless it also disturbed the peace and fell without patriarchal mores. At this time 'homosexual' was not an available identity, and what one did in bed was not a defining feature of oneself.

Norton (1992) claims that the beginnings of a gay subculture in this country can be traced back to the royal court at the end of the sixteenth century, and the court of James I, who himself was gay and wrote what is probably the first defence of homosexual love. However, one has to wait until the 1700s before one can see a visible gay subculture. This is largely due to the efforts (ironically) of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners that existed in the eighteenth century and aimed to reduce the vice and debauchery they saw in society. This echoes

Foucault's assertion that to prohibit something is to enable that something to also speak on its own behalf. For Norton

The attempt to suppress vice actually may have facilitated the expression of homosexuality. And the pressure of persecution may have persuaded gay men that it would be in their interest to form associations to meet in public places. Self preservation is a powerful impetus to the formation of a subculture (1992: 52).

This emergent subculture was that of the molly. This encompassed molly houses, rooms in inns or in private homes, where men could come and meet other men for friendship and/or sex, as well as 'sodomites walks,' where men would cruise for sex. Moreover, 'the molly subculture as a *unified subculture*, rather than simply a disparate collection of people and behaviour, was reinforced by the communal use of a specialised dialect' (Norton 1992: 92 original emphasis). This dialect included the use of 'maiden names' – female names by which the mollies were known.

This brings us to the topic of the effeminacy, or otherwise, of the mollies, which can be linked to the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall. They partook of much feminine behaviour; Ned Ward, a pamphleteer, wrote in 1709 that 'mollies "are so far degenerated from all Masculine Deportment that they rather fancy themselves Women, imitating all the little Vanities that Custom has reconcil'd to the Female Sex, affecting to speak, walk, curtsy, cry, scold and mimic all manner of effeminacy"' (cited in Norton 1992: 97). However, Norton notes that although they adopted many feminine habits in the privacy of the molly houses, the mollies did not see themselves as women trapped in men's bodies: this notion can be traced to the sexologists of the nineteenth century. Whilst I have no particular desire to impose contemporary terminology onto the mollies, I think their behaviour could usefully be termed transgender, as they adopted aspects of femininity, but were quite happy with being male. This demonstrates that cross gender behaviour is a long standing aspect of gay and bisexual history which the Executive Committee members of Morton Hall are seemingly unaware of. Much

of the anti-inclusion discourse in the debate centred on the separation of gender and sexual identity, with claims that the two are completely unrelated. However, 'effeminacy and transvestism with specifically homosexual connotations were a crucial part of what gave the molly houses their identity' (Bray 1988: 88). This shows that the construction of collective sexual identity is a culturally and historically specific phenomenon.

The reaction of the general public to the mollies was one of deep suspicion and fear. The relationship between same sex sexuality and naturalness was a paradoxical one. On the one hand homosexuality was seen as the most abominable sin imaginable, and was the vice that no-one dared name. On the other hand man was seen as having a natural propensity to vice, as well as being naturally superior to women; this led to the situation in which it was thought that men would seek out other men for sexual pleasure unless it was prohibited. A particularly frank and illuminating letter to the *London Journal* of the 14th May 1726 illustrates this point "“if the Legislature had not taken prudent Measures to suppress such base and irregular Actions, Women would have been a Piece of useless work in the Creation, since Man, superior Man, has found out one of his own Likeness and Nature to supply is lascivious Necessities”" (cited in Norton 1992: 123). This argument makes homosexuality, rather than heterosexuality, natural and evidences a very great fear that homosexuality will break out and destroy the fabric of society. This anonymous epistler appears to be in very great fear of homosexuality, especially given his pseudonym of 'Philogynus' (woman-lover); 'no enemy is so monstrous as that which one fears lurking within' (Norton 1992: 123). The concepts of fear and danger will be explored in relation to the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in chapter 6. At this point it is sufficient to note that the reasons of some Executive Committee members for advocating exclusion can be attributed to fear, and it is entirely possible that they are insecure in their own gender identity.

In the Victorian era there were no groups or organisations that advocated homosexual equality, however, there were those such as Havelock Ellis, J. A. Symonds and Edward Carpenter who wrote and worked on the subject of

homosexuality from a liberal perspective. For example, Carpenter wrote that ‘we call a man a criminal, not because he violates any eternal code of morality – for there exists no such thing – but because he violates the ruling code of his time’ ([1889] cited in Weeks 1977: 68). Ellis, whilst attempting to show that homosexuality is natural, and not synonymous with vice, decay and debauchery, distinguished between the invert and the pervert. ‘Inversion’ was a congenital condition and therefore natural, whilst ‘homosexuality’ was any physical or sexual same sex contact. Ellis was to write that one should make it hard to acquire homosexual perversity (1942). This ‘led to some peculiar distinctions between ‘inversion’, which was regarded as ‘natural’, and therefore unavoidable and tolerable; and ‘perversion’, which was vice adopted by weak natures and therefore to be condemned’ (Weeks 1977: 62). Although there tends no longer to be a division between invert and pervert as far as sexuality is concerned, it appears that there is with regard to gender identity. I argue that transsexuality can be seen as ‘inversion’ because it relies on medical discourses of gender and transition, whilst transgender is the ‘perversion’ because it is voluntary and not excused by recourse to biology/endocrinology.

The 1957 Wolfenden Report advocated the legalisation of homosexuality in certain circumstances; however the government was unwilling to act upon the report. This is, in part, one of the reasons for the foundation in 1958 of England’s first homophile organisation; the Homosexual Law Reform Society (HLRS). The HLRS was not a self help group, or a support organisation for homosexuals, rather it was specifically directed at legal change. Moreover, the organisation was searching for respectability and attempted to alert the public to the need for a reform of sexual offences legislation. The HLRS decided ‘to divert its primary work *not* at the homosexual community but at progressive public opinion, and ultimately, even more narrowly, at amenable M.P.s and other prominent public officials’ (Weeks 1977: 170 original emphasis). The organisation was not a community based one, and was largely prepared to work with whoever would further the aims of the HLRS; this made it successful in the short, but not long term. Furthermore, the HLRS evaded the question of the desirability or otherwise

of homosexuality; it is clear therefore, that they were working within a traditional liberal model in which the state should not interfere in people's personal lives. However, despite these traditional beginnings, the Committee for Homosexual Equality (CHE) grew out of the North-Western Committee of the HLRS; in 1967 they noted that they did not see homosexuality as a medical problem and that they thought the role of social workers in improving the lives of homosexuals was limited. This was the beginning (in the UK at least) of gay men and lesbians claiming that they were the best placed people to understand homosexuality, as opposed to external 'experts' such as lawyers, policemen and members of the medical profession.

In America, contemporaneous with the HLRS was the Mattachine Society (founded in 1951), which for many is the epitome of an assimilationist political strategy; it sought acceptance from the heterosexual establishment for homosexuals and relied on (heterosexual) 'experts' on homosexuality to dictate their understandings. This is similar to the HLRS, as both attempted to work within established political frameworks and sought assistance from heterosexual allies. However, this view ignores the radical beginnings of Mattachine. Henry Hay and the other founder members of the society were Marxists, and structured the society along communist lines, partly in order to work safely in the McCarthy era. However, their Marxism led them to develop a systemic analysis of homosexuality, focusing on structural oppression rather than simple prejudice; they 'rejected a narrowly pragmatic approach to the situation of the homosexual, focusing only on a set of reform goals, and ... [sought] a theoretical understanding of the homosexual's inferior status' (D'Emilio 1983: 64). It was only at a conference held in 1953 that the leaders of Mattachine changed and it began to follow the assimilationist politics for which it is better known. At this stage they 'urged homosexuals to adjust to a "pattern of behaviour that is acceptable to society in general and compatible with [the] recognised institutions ... of home, church, and state."' Furthermore 'their reliance on professionals as the agents of social change pushed them to abandon collective, militant action by the Mattachine Society' (D'Emilio 1983: 81). In Sedgwick's terms, the early

Mattachine Society was universalising as, for example, they saw the beginnings of oppression in heterosexual family life, whilst the latter focus on assimilation is far more minoritising, applying only to the homosexual him/her self. Homophile groups in Britain in the 1960s were far from devising a similar radical understanding of homosexual oppression, the focus remaining on reforming the law on homosexuality.

At the beginning of this period there was not much of a gay 'community' in the UK, however from the 1960s onwards a more easily identifiable gay community began to appear. Magazines for gay men, such as *Spartacus* and *Jeremy* were a major part of this development; however these magazines were never in production for long and were aimed at a specific type of gay man: pretty, young, well-off and fashionable. Also central to the formation of a more coherent gay community was the gay liberation movement, in particular the creation in 1970 in London of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) by two men who had met each other in America. For the GLF it was axiomatic that gay liberation 'could not be done by others *for* the homosexual, but only by homosexuals themselves, acting openly and together' (Weeks 1977: 186 original emphasis). Whilst the GLF suffered from internal struggles almost from its inception, this ideology permeated into other, more reformist, groups that were formed during the 1970s in Britain. It is to this time that one can trace some of the exclusionary practices employed by some of the Executive Committee members of Morton Hall. Central to these reform organisations was 'an allegiance to the belief that homosexuals themselves could best respond to specific problems and special needs' (Weeks 1977: 209). The converse of this is the belief that heterosexuals are not capable of understanding the problems and needs of homosexuals; it is this ideology the supports claims that heterosexual transgender people are not welcome in Morton Hall as they will not understand LGB issues.

This is, however, to oversimplify the situation. Although gay liberation and activism tended to assume that homosexuals were a separate and distinct minority within society, transgendered people were also included within that minority. It is worth quoting Weeks' explanation of this at length:

For, if gender identity is socially ascribed on the basis of cultural assumptions, and not inherent in individuals by nature of their biological appearance, then transvestites and transsexuals are obviously people on whom society has been unable to impose its conventional gender expectations. There is an obvious affinity in the causes of social hostility to both homosexuality and transvestism, and this was generally recognised in the early gay liberation movement (Weeks 1977: 224).

This demonstrates that arguments that rely on separating gender and sexuality as a reason for excluding transgender from Morton Hall are historically specific. Both in the recent, and more distant, past there has been a relationship between non-normative sexualities and non-normative gender performances. This, at the very least, renders claims that transgenderism and homosexuality are unrelated as historically contingent and problematic.

Gay liberation offered a more radical (and universalising) analysis of sexuality than that provided by reform organisations such as the CHE (in 1971 the 'C' was changed from 'Committee' to 'Campaign'). For liberationists 'the liberation of the homosexual can only be achieved within the context of a much broader sexual revolution' (Altman 1974: 72). Gay liberation showed an awareness of the interconnectedness of sexuality and gender and prefigured much of queer theory (Seidman 1997). Writing before Foucault and poststructuralism, Altman claims 'society has so defined us that homosexuality becomes a constant part of us rather than a role we can take up and discard when convenient' (1974: 231). However, during the 1980s, helped by the onset of the AIDS epidemic and (lack of) government response, identity politics began to replace the earlier gay liberation movement. Seidman argues that 'identity politics has strained either towards an interest-group politic aimed at assimilation or an equally troubling ethnic-nationalist separatism' (1997: 137); moreover, the interest-group politics is also often based upon ethnic/nationalist constructions of identity. I, therefore, briefly explain the ethnic/essentialist model of identity. One can trace the foundations of this model to the latter decades of the nineteenth century and

Foucault's claim that 'homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was a species' (Foucault 1998: 43). Those who engaged in same sex sexual activity were no longer merely doing just that, rather a whole new identity, that of the homosexual, began to coalesce around them. Through scientific, medical and juridical knowledges and institutions a homosexual identity was created; there was now a homosexual person, rather than a person who has same-sex sex. This is what was implicitly recognised by Altman in the above quote; however, whilst liberationists rejected this in favour a polymorphous perversity and innate bisexuality, those favouring identity politics fail to question homosexuality *as an identity* and, in fact, often reinforce this notion, as will become apparent throughout this thesis. Moreover, the growth of gay communities in cities facilitated identity creation; a modern gay man,

May migrate from rural Colorado to San Francisco in order to live in a gay neighbourhood, work in a gay business, and participate in an elaborate experience that includes a self-conscious identity, group solidarity, a literature, a press and a high level of political activity. In modern, Western, industrial societies, homosexuality has acquired much of the institutional structure of an ethnic group (Rubin 1984: 286).

Furthermore, Seidman (1996) argues that social constructionism also aided the foundation of an ethnic identity; 'as much as these perspectives challenged essentialist or universalistic understandings of homosexuality, they contributed to a politics of the making of a homosexual minority. Instead of asserting the homosexual as a natural fact made into a political minority by social prejudice, constructionists traced the social factors that produced a homosexual identity which functioned as the foundation for homosexuals as a new ethnic minority' (1996: 9). As the term 'ethnic' would suggest, this model of gay identity is based on racial minorities, that is, all gay people are seen as sharing the same subject

position and as experiencing homophobia in the same way regardless of other axes of difference.

The creation of homosexuality as a land of 'ethnic' identity led to a particular type of political ideology. In her work on bisexual identity and bisexual inclusion/exclusion from various pride marches and conferences, Young (1997) illustrates some of the key components of identity politics organisations. She notes that the inability to find a viable and sustainable definition of bisexual identity creates problems when attempting to work within the identity politics frameworks of the majority of lesbian and gay organisations. Similarly within Morton Hall there was much debate over the term 'transgender' itself; what particular definition would be used and how wide that definition would be. Young argues that 'identity based political movements have generally shared a common set of assumptions about the relationship between identity, ideology and behaviour, political commitment and trustworthiness' (1997: 34). Four key assumptions are that: first, people in the same identity group will have a common belief concerning the nature of their oppression; second, that particular oppression is the primary one for people within that group; third all members of an identity group are natural allies by virtue of their shared position and fourth that those in the category which 'oppress' those in the identity group all benefit from the oppression and that the 'oppressor' can never work for the betterment of the oppressed.

Young believes that these assumptions themselves originate from two foundational binaries; the split between us and them and the split between active oppressor and active resistor. Under the former 'identity politics movements represent people who share a common identity and who are oppressed as a group on the basis of that identity by people who share a different, "opposite" identity' (1997: 55). The second binary describes a situation in which those in the oppressor group are complicitous with the power system and will actively defend their position; against this the members of the oppressed group actively resist their oppression and build solidarity and partnerships with others in the oppressed position. However, because of the complexity of both oppression and identity it is

rarely, if ever, that simplistic. Not everyone who is queer shares the same relationship with non-queers because of the intersection of multiple other axes of difference and oppression. This has led some (privileged) organisations and individuals to speak on behalf of all queers in a way that ignores, for example, race, class, gender or age. Furthermore 'one of the most common – and most devastating – manifestations of these assumptions is an unwillingness to work sincerely to establish coalitions with people who share political goals even as they inhabit different subcultures' (Young 1997: 57). The four key assumptions outlined above can all be exemplified in the trans inclusion/exclusion debate; in illustrating this I argue that the organisation follows an ethnic/essentialist model of identity (see chapter 5)

Most salient for the purpose of this thesis is the fact that all gay people are believed to share the same view of their oppression and that the 'oppressor' can never work for the benefit of the 'oppressed'. For instance, when bisexual or transgender inclusion in lesbian and gay events is discussed a main argument against such inclusion is that there is infiltration of the 'oppressor' into the minority group; a bisexual is tainted by heterosexuality and is therefore unwelcome, whilst a male to female transsexual wanting access to women-only spaces is really a man and therefore also unwelcome, (Hemmings 2002; Gamson 1996). Of fundamental importance is the notion that 'underlying that ethnicity is typically the notion that what gays and lesbian share – the anchor of minority status and minority rights claims – is the same fixed, natural essences, a self with same-sex desires' (Gamson 1996: 396). Whilst this form of politics may be successful in achieving short term goals for a specific group of people, it will always be exclusionary, both towards sympathetic 'oppressors' (in this case, heterosexuals) and those who share a differing nature of oppression.

This model of identity has come under heavy criticism from those in both feminist and LGB movements; 'in the 1980s, there was a reaction to this ethnic/essentialist model by marginalised social interests (e.g., gay people of colour and sex radicals), by activists wishing to renew a more radical gay politics, and by a new cadre of scholar-intellectuals trumpeting the politics of difference'

(Seidman 1993: 110). This 'new cadre of scholar-intellectuals' are, amongst others, the queer theorist working in the wake of people such as Derrida and Foucault who began to critique the very idea of a sexual identity, thereby heavily problematising current political activism. Although the ethnic model was culturally dominant there were increasing calls from dissident voices within gay and lesbian communities that began to be heard, resultantly, 'from minor skirmishes in the mid-to-late 1970s to major wars through the 1980s, the concept of a unitary lesbian or gay male subject was in dispute' (Seidman 1993: 118). The achievement of queer was to shake 'the ground on which gay and lesbian politics have been built, taking apart the ideas of a "sexual minority" and a "gay community", indeed of "gay" and "lesbian", and even "man" and "woman"' (Gamson 1996: 395). The following section will elucidate some of major concerns of queer theory.

Queering Identity

Queer theory is less a matter of explaining the repression or expression of a homosexual minority than an analysis of the hetero/homosexual figure as a power/knowledge regime that shapes the ordering of desires, behaviours, and social institutions, and social relations - in a word the constitution of the self and society (Seidman 1995: 128).

Queer is by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers.* It is an identity without essence (Halperin 1995: 62 original emphasis)

"Queer" theories ... work to challenge and undercut any attempt to render "identity" singular, fixed, or normal (Hall 2003: 15)

The preference for "queer" represents, among things, an aggressive impulse of generalisation; it rejects a minoritising logic of toleration or simple political interest-representation in favour of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal (Warner 1993: xxvi)

Queer is, then, several things: first, it is defined against the normal, against Rubin's (1984) 'charmed circle' of heterosexual, monogamous and vanilla sex. Second, it rejects fixed and stable identities in favour of multiple, fluid identities. Third, it is a universalising political strategy that seeks to provide a thoroughgoing understanding of the position of sexual minorities in society. Importantly, queer is not restricted to those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual; anyone who rejects dominant sexual ideology can be queer. Queer critiques many of the pillars on which identity politics is based; if identity is fluid, then to what does 'gay identity' refer? Queer is not amenable to Young's (1997) understanding of identity politics, and, indeed, actually argues against some of them. Because queer is an identity without an essence those who identify as queer will originate from different subject positions and will have differing opinions on the nature of their oppression. Furthermore, queer's analysis of oppression is more sophisticated than that of identity politics; the oppressor is not heterosexuals *per se*, but rather a compulsory binary sex/gender system that attempts to divide individuals into the categories of male *or* female, straight *or* gay. Therefore one could be heterosexual and still reject the dominant sex/gender ideology, and be supportive of queer politics.

However, the situation is more complex when one considers Young's foundational binaries (between us and them, and between active oppressors and active resisters) and queer politics. The four quotations opening this section clearly place queer in opposition whatever is 'normal'. Whilst 'resistance to regimes of the normal' is arguably a more sophisticated analysis of homosexual oppression than that offered by identity politics it still institutes a split between queers (us) on one hand and 'normals' (them) on the other. Similarly queer can be seen as an active resistance to normative constructions of sexuality as exemplified by the celebration of non-normative sexualities within queer theory and politics. Queer also identifies active oppressors who work to uphold binary understandings of gender and sexuality, such as revisionist psychiatry and the definitions of medicalisation of gender identity (Butler 2004, Sedgwick 1993). This, however, is

not necessarily an insurmountable problem, rather it is recognition that 'in efforts to define a sexual identity *outside* the norm, one needs first to place oneself *inside* the dominant definitions of sexuality' (Namaste 1996: 199). The task then becomes to analyse the relationships between us and them, heterosexuality and homosexuality, maleness and femaleness, as well as the origins of such relationships.

Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's works of the early 1990's are often regarded as foundational of queer theory. The impact of *Gender Trouble* (1999 [1990]) was enormous, whilst *Bodies that Matter* (1993), if less groundbreaking, clarified some of Butler's ideas. *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) is also an oft cited text. However, whilst Butler and Sedgwick are similar in some ways, they differ in approach and understanding in some contexts. An obvious difference is the theoretical grounding of each theorist; Butler is a philosopher and is well versed in feminist theory and demonstrates an increasing desire to use psychoanalysis in her work; Sedgwick has a background in literary theory and often uses a more deconstructive method. The focus of both theorists also differs; Butler is concerned with the formation of identity, including gender and sexual identity; whilst Sedgwick shows more concern with gay and lesbian identity, often specifically gay male identity (Sedgwick 1985).

I now intend to compare Butler and Sedgwick in three broad areas that are of particular pertinence to my research. These areas are the relationship of sex to gender; issues of identity, including collective; and performativity.

Butler begins with the claim that gender is the 'cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes' (1999: 10), which suggests that there is no connection between sex and gender – masculine could identify a female body and feminine could identify a male body. The problem that Butler has with this argument is that this does not explain how a sex or gender is given, nor does it question the construction of the category 'sex'. She opines that 'if the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called "sex" is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all' (1999:10-

11). Therefore if sex is itself gendered it is nonsensical to term gender the cultural figuration of sex. Butler claims, furthermore, that gender is the means by which “sexed nature” or “a natural sex” is produced and established as “prediscursive,” prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts’ (1999: 11). This construction of sex in terms of gender stabilises the idea of binary sex as natural, with the consequence that those who transgress are regarded as not natural. Conversely, however, that sex is now not an immutable category raises the potential of radical change, of a radical destabilisation of ‘sex’. This argument would render the claims of certain Executive Committee members that sex refers to sexuality whilst gender refers to gender identity nonsensical. That Executive Committee members, including those advocating exclusion, appear more supportive of transsexuals than transgendered people is, in part, because they view sex as mutable whilst gender is immutable. In this way, transsexuals should be supported because their gender is fixed and their body requires altering to fit that gender. If Butler is correct, however, sex *and* gender are culturally constructed, rendering both open to transgression; the effect of this is that transsexualism cannot necessarily be seen as a normative upholding of gender norms, more worthy of support than transgender. This point is important to note, as there is a general dichotomy in the constructions of transgender made by the Executive Committee members between transsexuals (acceptable) on one hand and transvestites (unacceptable) on the other. However, Butler’s assertion shows that this does not have to be the case and that there is nothing inherent about transsexuality that makes it less radical than transvestism.

Sedgwick starts from a similar place to Butler, arguing that the traditional view of gender and sex was that sex was purely chromosomal, whilst gender was the cultural construct mapped in binary opposition onto sex, ‘in a cultural system for which “male/female” functions as a primary and perhaps model binarism whose apparent connection to chromosomal sex will often be exiguous or nonexistent’ (1990: 27-8). This analysis is, however, not satisfactory as ‘sex’ as a signifier is infinitely broader and more varied than chromosomal sex, and she cites the fact that sex and gender are often terms conflated by those not fully conversant

with feminist theory as only one problem. Sedgwick posits that many feminists in linking women's oppression to women's bodies (their sex) severely problematises the productiveness of the sex/gender distinction and further, that sex/gender delineates a site of struggle as opposed to a solid definition. Here Sedgwick makes a practical, but needed, distinction between sex and gender for the purpose of her book; gender relates to all the differences between men and women; sex relates to sexuality.

This points to further difficulties with the idea of a sex/gender, nature/nurture system, in that it is almost impossible to adequately map sexuality onto such a binary. On this basis, Sedgwick argues that whilst gender and sexuality are related, they are not coextensive. Nevertheless, Sedgwick does argue that in contemporary society 'sexuality' refers to an individual's preferred gender of object choice, rather than any of the other ways in which one could differentiate sexual behaviour. This brings her closer to Butler, as Sedgwick terms what for Butler is sex and gender solely as gender; this is 'to reduce the likelihood of confusion between "sex" in the sense of "the space of differences between male and female" (what I'll be grouping under "gender") and "sex" in the sense of sexuality' (Sedgwick 1990: 29). This is not to deny interconnections between gender and sex, but rather to distinguish them analytically. Central to this is the fact that Sedgwick views sexuality as being about more than just gender, although that is how it is currently constructed.

Much work critical of identity politics (Spelman 1990; Fuss 1989) has focused on the troubling of collective identity; all women, or all homosexuals do not share the same structural position, therefore it makes no sense for them to be grouped together as a cohesive body. I intend to consider the ways in which one can deliberate collective identity from a queer perspective. Here I am less concerned with causes of identity, be they constructed, essential, performative and so on. Rather I intend to look at whether one can conceptualise groups whilst maintaining a poststructural frame of reference. It is first necessary to discuss some of the ways in which it has been argued that poststructural/queer theory forecloses the collective.

Kirsch argues against Foucault's conception of power, claiming that, 'if we proceed beyond the philosophical or psychological level and confront the political as collective action, does it not make more sense to view power as a mechanism rather than a driver of social control' (2000: 24). He objects to the primacy Foucault gives to power as a discourse capable of controlling and shaping society, seeing it rather as an effect of agency. He further argues that 'it is certainly easier to *deconstruct* theories of social being than to *construct* modes of social action' (2000: 31, original emphasis), within the confines of the academy. This seems to miss the point that it might be necessary to deconstruct theories of social being before one can (re)construct modes of social action. One must understand one's identity before one can use it as a basis of collective action. As Hall argues, 'historicising and "deconstructing" are ways of differentially imagining our future as well as understanding our past. Identity is always fiction, in the sense that it must suppress complexity and isolate a defining characteristic (or a limited set of characteristics) from a wide range of possibilities, but to say this is in no way to deny the fact that I may be killed or imprisoned because of it' (2003: 46). Even Marx, whom Kirsch takes as exemplary of those who favour action over theory, first had to take apart the prevalent notions of the capitalist mode of production as the benevolent product of Enlightenment rationality, before he could propose the ways and means of overthrowing capitalism. It is important to remember that, for Butler, 'the category of women does not become useless through deconstruction, but becomes one whose uses are no longer reified as "referents," and which stand a chance of being opened up, indeed, of coming to signify in ways that none of us can predict in advance' (1993: 29). Deconstruction can, then, by questioning the referents, open up new forms of political action that have been hitherto un-thought of.

Furthermore, Kirsch argues that 'the use of "power" for queer theorists is itself reflective; you can subvert its hegemony by refusing to conform to its practices. In so far as being political involves the exercise of power, individual action is political, it is subjective' (2000: 36). The assumption Kirsch makes here is that because the political action of subversion is individual it cannot therefore

benefit the collective. However, if all queers practised individual acts of subversion all the time, would that not at the very least trouble regimes of normative heterosexuality? Whilst this probably would not solve all the problems, it would be a step in the right direction; it is a mistake to dismiss individual action as readily as Kirsch does. As will become clear, Kirsch's main problem is that he is unable to conceptualise modes of political action that fall outside the politics of the old left.

According to Kirsch, queer theory is an extreme, anti-political and highly relativist reaction to essentialising theories of identity and experience. He argues that 'claiming that categories, labels, and identities are restrictive has the same social effect as arguments against affirmative action which claim that all categories should be eliminated' (2000: 59), adding that the detrimental effects of anti-affirmative action theories are evident, however, sadly not providing any example of such deleterious effect. I would argue that whilst those who are categorised, labelled and identifies duly suffer discrimination, further reinscribing these categories in affirmative action plans can have a negative impact because specific groups are singled out for special treatment, rather than attempting to change the attitudes of the entire population.

Kirsch also posits that 'for those of us that believe alliances are necessary, identity is based on a commonality of experience. "Class" and "lesbian" and "homosexual" are categories of analysis precisely because they refer to the position of people in relation to others' (2000: 59-60). This is a highly problematic statement; the main point of much anti-essentialist work has been to show that, for example, all women or gay people do not have a commonality of experience. Moreover, Kirsch presumes that class, lesbian and homosexual are stable categories that refer to a stable other. This is not the case; partly because of the intersection of multiple categories, the members of a category, such as 'homosexual' have a differential relationship with others in the same category as well as those without. Ironically Kirsch himself implicitly recognises this; if he did not, 'lesbians' would not have been included in his list. If 'homosexual' was an adequate category of analysis then one would not require a second analytic

category of female homosexuals; it shows a (minor) recognition that not all 'homosexuals' share the same relations to others. However, Kirsch does not recognise this and treats identity categories as unproblematic markers of society. One of the central themes of queer politics is that identity politics is exclusionary; this problem is clear in Kirsch's work. If 'identity is based on a commonality of experience' that identity will exclude those who have not shared in the common experiences; political alliances are therefore based on personal experiences, rather than a shared political ideology for which common experience is not required. This is a theme that will be expanded upon in chapter 8.

Further evidence of Kirsch's misunderstanding of queer comes in his assertion that 'the self as non-conformist [the queer subject] becomes part of a stance that disengages politics as a reality of daily life' (2000: 79). I would argue the converse; taking a conscious non-conformist stance explicitly brings politics into daily life. Part of the problem here is Kirsch's unproblematic usage of the term 'politics;' he uses it to signify traditional oppositional politics and does not see the benefits of other forms of political action. Kirsch is, I believe, trying to institute a dichotomy into Butler's work, which I do not recognise. He repeatedly makes claims such as, 'the notion that women, people of colour or any other minority will be better off obtaining a consciousness that refuses to engage its oppressors ignores the people trying to make sense of their own subjugation' (Kirsch 2000: 90). He also poses the question that as performativity is an individual act, how can one move from that to collective action. I argue that a queer 'consciousness' is a means for people to make sense of their subjugation and furnish them with new a creative politics with which to counteract the oppressors; it does not negate the existence of heterosexist oppressors. At the risk of sounding trite, if there was no heterosexism and homophobia, there would be no queer theory. With regard to the individualistic nature of performativity, I do not see this as precluding collective action. Kirsch appears to be implying that all members of a group must be virtually identical for collective action to take place. This negates the fact that 'people are difference from each other' (Sedgwick 1990: 22), whilst they may share the same/similar relation to material effects. Kirsch

also does not recognise that there are queer groups (such as Queer Nation, ACT-UP, and Outrage) that take part in collective political action and see a belief in the performative/constructionist nature of identity as constitutive of their collective identity. Hall (2003) notes that ‘the intellectual energy of and perspectives on strategic alliance promoted by “queer theory/theories” have motivated many of us [academic queer theorists] to volunteer our time, to engage in protest marches, and to work strenuously in political campaigns and campus forums to challenge narrow notions of sexual “propriety”’ (2003: 83). In contrast to this there is no notion in *Queer Theory and Social Change* that Kirsch has partaken in any form of collective political action on issues around sexuality.

It should also be noted that Butler has not claimed that gender and sexuality became performative only since the writing of *Gender Trouble*. She was merely discussing and analysing how identities have been constructed up to that time, and beyond. If one accepts this, then the identities of all those involved in Kirsch-approved modes of collective action were performatively constructed as well. This heavily problematises the assertion that one cannot have a performative identity and partake in collective action. Butler’s point is not that gender identity miraculously became an identity without essence in 1990, but that it has always been so. Furthermore, to deny that gender has an essential basis is not to deny that it has material effects.

Kirsch claims that ‘the recognition of common goals can give rise to an identification based on a common purpose,’ and that furthermore, ‘nor is it necessary actually to *experience* the reality of your cohorts to identify with common causes’ (2000: 101, original emphasis). He argues that, for example gay men and lesbians should work together to fight homophobia and overcome gender differences. I would agree with this point, however, this is the complete opposite of what Kirsch claimed forty pages previously. However, whilst I do not believe that political identity requires shared experiences, for the majority of Executive Committee members shared experience appears as the definitive marker of collective identity. This is evidenced by the claims that heterosexual transgendered people would not be welcome in the organisation as they would not

know what it was like to be lesbian, gay or bisexual in a heterosexist society, and will be expanded upon in chapter 6.

The 1999 preface to the second edition of *Gender Trouble* helps to situate and clarify the earlier work; Butler writes of how she saw universality as a negative term, but later recognised that it has 'important strategic uses precisely as a non substantial and open ended category as I worked with an extraordinary group of activists first a board member and then as board chair of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (1994-7)' (1999: xvii). Here she realises that universality could be useful, if remaining unstable and historically contingent. Identity can be deployed so long as its contingency is recognised; this however relies on those employing identity categories actually recognising this – as will become apparent throughout this thesis many Executive Committee members actively refuse the indeterminacy of identity in the process of advocating identity politics. In order to deploy any form of strategic essentialism one must first realise that the essentialism is *strategic*, rather than foundational.

Butler heavily questions the traditional notion that there is a stable category called 'women' that feminism can claim to represent. This is different from claiming that feminism does not represent anyone and is therefore redundant. Butler, somewhat counter-intuitively, claims that 'the feminist subject turns out to be discursively constituted by the very political system that is supposed to facilitate its emancipation' (1999: 4), this is based upon Foucault's conception that juridical power operates to construct the subject it comes to represent, as well as Derrida's notion of supplementarity. Therefore, feminists must also try to comprehend how it is that the power structures that facilitate emancipation also come to create 'women' as a subject. Furthermore, on a more political level there is a major contention regarding who is signified by 'women', asking the important question 'is there some commonality among "women" that pre-exists their oppression, or do "women" have a bond by virtue of their oppression alone?' (1999: 7). Whilst this is something that remains largely unconsidered by Executive Committee members, it is analytically useful. If the LGB subject is discursively constituted by the organisation, then it is the organisation itself that is

excluding trans people, rather than there being any immanent reason why trans people should not be part of the organisation. The constitution of the LGB subject and the methods of its construction are central themes of this thesis and will be present in the following chapters.

Sedgwick is concerned with the minoritising logic of categorisation; she notes that the term 'sexual orientation' has come to refer solely to the sex of one's object choice, rather than any of the other axes available to distinguish one person's sexual practice from another's. Similarly, her 'Axiom 1' is 'people are different from each other' claiming that 'it is astonishing how few respectable conceptual tools we have for dealing with this self-evident fact' (1990: 22). She remarks that it is mainly axes of class, race, gender and sexuality along which people are divided, axes which are generally so crude that the resultant categorisation is often meaningless. Sedgwick believes that much recent thought has been a crusade for such a crude taxonomy, and that, furthermore, there is less facility to think about individual differences. Whilst this has arguably changed in the seventeen years since the writing of *Epistemology of the Closet*, the backlash against work which destabilises identity demonstrates that, for some, the taxonomic impulse is still strong. As will become apparent throughout this theses the organisation is attempting to enforce the crude taxonomy; the trans inclusion/exclusion debate is an attempt to rigidly define the boundaries of sexual identity. Regarding the 'traditional' axes of difference Sedgwick writes that 'Marxist, feminist, postcolonial, and other engagé critical projects have deepened understandings of a few crucial axes of difference perhaps necessarily at the expense of more ephemeral or less global impulses of differential grouping' (1990: 24). She then goes on to list many factors that complicate a simplistic definition of sexual orientation, such as a focus on particular body part; frequency; or the importance of 'sexuality' to an individual's self identity. These claims demonstrate the problematic, also identified by Butler and others, of universal accounts of existence. When looking at collective identity it illustrates the need for an understanding of the foundations of a collectivity that takes into account

that each member of the group will be different to each other; yet they are able to work together.

An area that Sedgwick covers which Butler does not is the fact that claims to hold a non-heterosexual identity are often disbelieved or questioned in ways that someone claiming an identity based on, for instance, race, gender or religion, would not be questioned. Sedgwick draws parallels with the Biblical story of Esther, and its Racinian rendition. Esther declares her Jewishness to Assuérus, and her Jewishness is not debated, or called a phase, nor is there a discussion that Assuérus is a Jew in disguise, or a repressed Jew. This demonstrates a uniqueness in sexual identity that is not evident in coming out as, say, black, female, fat or Jewish; indeed, it would be difficult to 'come out' in some of these situations, as they are, more or less, self-evident. This could possibly be because it is only relatively recently that 'homosexual' has taken on a meaning as an identity, rather than having people who engage in certain acts, who have certain desires, but are not defined by them. It is however, not enough merely to question the construction of homosexual identity to dismantle it. Further, many people do decide to self-identify as gay or lesbian, and feel that it describes their lives, beliefs and, indeed, existence. Here Sedgwick notes that 'even more at the level of groups than of individuals, the durability of any politics or ideology that would be so much as *permissive* of same-sex sexuality has seemed, in this century, to depend on definition of homosexual persons as a distinct, minority population, however produced or labelled' (1990: 83 original emphasis). Similarly I would argue that any politics or ideology that is not permissive of same-sex sexuality also relies on this minoritising logic, although contrived in negative terms. This again raises Butler's question (above) of whether the category of 'homosexual' is generally created by political expediency, by both anti-homophobic and homophobic groups, or whether it does suffice to describe a discrete and self-evident population. Sedgwick believes that 'the homosexual' has remained as a category, 'not in the first place because of its meaningfulness to those whom it defines but because of its indispensableness to those who define themselves as against it' (1990: 83). This poses challenges in explaining collective identity,

particularly, political groups. If the homosexual identity is being sustained by those who define against it, rather than homosexuals themselves, does the constant iteration of gay rights, with its consonant homophobic disapproval, further solidify a stable homosexual identity which may not be in the best interests of gay, lesbian and bisexual people. If this is the case, the question of how to break this destructive cycle remains. This view is further enhanced by the claim that 'the historically shifting, and precisely the arbitrary and self-contradictory, nature of the way homosexuality (along with its predecessor terms) has been defined in relation to the rest of the male homosocial spectrum has been an exceedingly potent and embattled locus of power over the entire range of male bonds, and especially over those that define themselves, not as homosexual, but as against the homosexual' (Sedgwick 1990: 185). Queer theory is itself implicated in this contradiction at the same time that it also studies this dilemma (Namaste 1996); I use this idea of complementarity as a means to analyse and critique the identity work of Executive Committee members, therefore I show that in strictly defining the remit of the organisation to exclude transgender they are (albeit inadvertently) solidifying heterosexual identity as the other.

Sedgwick identifies two ways in which gender has been used to understand same-sex desire. The first is inversion; homosexuals are seen as the inverse of their 'true sex' – gay men are sissy boys whilst lesbians are butch. Sedgwick notes that some claim that this delineates the heterosexual nature of desire. This view, however, produces a strange paradox; if a gay man is 'a woman's soul trapped in a man's body' (1990: 87), then the gay male couple would, according to this logic, be lesbians! The contrasting understanding is that of gender separatism; here the man-loving-man and woman-loving-woman are seen as at the very heart of that gender; there is no element of border crossing. Each view leads to very different political models. For instance, the gender-separatists would not condone actions that blurred the differences between genders. However, as chapter 5 on ethnic sexual identities will demonstrate, there is also another schema for thinking about gender and same-sex desire, that is, that gender and sexual desire are not connected. In this case gender identity is completely separated from and irrelevant

to sexual identity. The problem with this theory is that in contemporary society, as recognised by Sedgwick, sexual orientation is defined by gender.

I now turn to a discussion of drag, performativity and identity. Since *Gender Trouble* was first published in 1990, drag as a political act came to be seen by many as the paradigmatic example of performativity. This, however, is another of the many misunderstandings of Butler's work, as she writes that drag is merely an instance of gender performance; 'it would be a mistake to take it as the paradigm of subversive action, or, indeed, as a model for political agency' (1999: xxii). Furthermore, clarifying her earlier work she comments that 'if drag is performative, that does not mean that all performativity is to be understood as drag; ... [and] I never did think that gender was like clothes' (1993: 230-2). These comments address criticisms that Butler's work is individualistic and largely apolitical. The foregoing evaluation of gender performativity should be read with this in mind.

Butler's main contention regarding drag is that it '*implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency*' (1999:175 original emphasis). She believes that drag subverts the space between a 'true' gender and sex; further, it demonstrates an inconsistency between three factors: chromosomal sex, gender identity and gender performance. Butler's claim is not that gender parody is an imitation of an original, rather it is a parody of the very notion of an original. This substantiates the argument that there is no foundational referent to which gender refers. Whilst drag does, to some extent at least, imitate gender I would question its radicalism and subversion. This is based upon how one defines drag. Nowhere does Butler attempt to differentiate drag artists and transvestites. The *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions of the two words are pertinent here. Drag is 'feminine attire worn by a man; also, a party or dance attended by men wearing feminine attire' whilst a transvestite is 'a person with an abnormal desire to wear the clothes of the opposite sex'. Here drag is something that is normalised because it is mainly in a party/dance setting, whilst the transvestite is seen as a deviant because the cross-dressing is not carried out in the 'correct' setting. Drag artists are seen as almost mainstream entertainment; witness the success of Lily

Savage or Dame Edna Everage. People have indulged in (theatrical) drag for centuries; the seventeenth century molly houses, for example, or on the stage. This theatrical, hyperbolic performance has not entailed a radical reconfiguration of gender norms. However, with regard to wearing the clothes of the opposite sex as they would wear them, I believe there is a possibility for subversion; here the man (or woman) wears the same clothes that women (or men) wear, in public settings. This is an important point; Butler claims that drag imitates gender, however, drag only imitates some highly theatrical, stylised and hyperbolic version of gender, whereas transvestites, or indeed transsexuals, have the potential to imitate gender in a much more significant way. Nevertheless, there is something that many people find unsettling about those who wear the clothes of the opposite sex; this will be expanded upon in later chapters, especially chapter 6. Butler claims that drag reveals that gender is an imitation of an imitation *without origin*, however, one must question whether the drag artist, or a trans person more generally, realises this. For many people who wear clothes of the opposite sex, such as passing transsexuals or fetishistic transvestites, it is vitally important that there is an origin of the imitation. If there is no original 'feminine' which the passing MTF transsexual is attempting to imitate their entire transsexual project is rendered nonsensical. Similarly, for the fetishistic transvestite the arousal is caused by wearing *women's* clothes, not clothes that can be worn by anyone. I remain unconvinced that these practices reveal the imitative nature of gender in the way that Butler asserts that drag does. That Executive Committee members are more supportive of transgender behaviour that does not question binary gender will become clear in chapter 5.

This, however, does not negate the fact that 'because there is neither an "essence" that gender expresses or externalises nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires, and because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all' (1990: 178). Gender gains its materiality via the constant reiteration and repetition of gender acts; 'gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in exterior space through a *stylised repetition of acts*' (179 original emphasis). It

must be recognised that because gender is performatively constructed does not mean that gender does not have tangible and material effects. Much work on identity politics presupposes that they must be based on a foundational identity in order for collective action to take place. However, as Nietzsche (2003b [1887]) claimed over a hundred years ago, 'there is no "being" behind doing, working, becoming; the "doer" is a mere appanage [sic] to the action ... [people] make the same phenomenon first a cause, and then, secondly, the effect of that cause' (2003: 26). These theories merely indicate a different way of conceptualising identity and therefore opens up new ways of subverting gender; new modes of politics. As I have already commented, traditional identity politics can serve to reinscribe the heteronormative ideal: Butler agrees; she argues that the focus on binary opposition obscures the discursive formation of that binary. However, the 'reconceptualisation of identity as an *effect*, that is, as *produced* or *generated*, opens up the possibilities of "agency" that are insidiously foreclosed by positions that take identity as foundational and fixed' (1990: 187 original emphasis). This is the radical queer activism that authors such as Kirsch (2000) fail to see as politics.

Bodies that Matter clarifies and expands upon ideas of drag and performativity. Butler discusses the film 'Paris is Burning' which describes the lives of a group of drag queens. She claims that the film 'calls into question whether parodying the dominant norms is enough to displace them; indeed whether the denaturalisation of gender cannot be the very vehicle for a reconciliation of hegemonic norms' (1993: 125). Butler writes that there is no certain relation between subversive acts and drag; rather, the important part in claiming that gender is like drag is to reveal the mimetic structure of normative heterosexuality. This mimetic nature opens up possibilities for destabilisation, because there is no original that gender copies; however, drag may not be the best example of subversive activity. Notwithstanding this, 'drag is subversive to the extent that it reflects on the imitative structure by which hegemonic gender is itself produced and disputes heterosexuality's claim on naturalness and originality' (Butler 1993: 125).

Referring to Austin's claims that performative acts are a type of authoritative speech (I name this ..., I pronounce you ...) Butler argues that 'if the power of discourse to produce that which it names is linked with the question of performativity, then the performative is one domain in which power acts as discourse' (1993: 225 original emphasis). Butler further explains that performative speech gains its power not simply by its iteration, but through the conventions in which it is uttered; 'the citational legacy by which a contemporary "act" emerges in the context of a chain of binding conventions' (1993: 225). It is through the reiterative process of discourse that power is realised.

Butler opines that whilst drag is one way to theorise cross-gender identification, one must not conflate cross gender identification with homosexuality. She comments that most drag artists are, in fact, straight which complicates any possible link between drag and homosexuality. However, Butler claims that the use of this analysis is that it demonstrates the manner in which heterosexual genders formulate themselves 'through the renunciation of the possibility of homosexuality' (1993: 235 original emphasis).

Conclusions

In response to claims that those who question identity categories depoliticise theory, Butler argues that 'as much as identity terms must be used, as much as "outness" is to be affirmed, these same notions must become subject to a critique of the exclusionary operations of their own production' (1993: 227). Who are represented by different affiliational terms? Are the choices of terms affected by, for instance, class? Who is excluded by this taxonomic process? These are all questions that need to be asked before one can hope to understand collective identity. In this context Butler believes that the 'necessity to mobilise the necessary error of identity (Spivak's term) will always be in tension with the democratised contestation of the term which works against its deployment in racist and misogynist discursive regimes' (1993: 229). If political identity is then, a necessary error, whatever affiliatory term is used, be it queer, gay, or something else, it will have to remain contingent and flexible so that it can represent as

munch as is possible those it claims to represent. These themes will be present throughout the remaining chapters; the exclusionary effects of the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender will be considered.

This chapter has situated the inclusion/exclusion debate within the larger framework of LGB history and activism, which has demonstrated that the context of the debate is historically and culturally specific. Debates concerning inclusion and exclusion surrounding issues of gender and sexuality are nothing new, nor will they be resolved in the near future, however, this shows that Morton Hall's decision on the matter is unlikely to be the last word for the organisation. As subsequent chapters show, whilst Morton Hall has fixed the identity of the organisation for now, the fixing is precarious and likely to change.

ETHNIC/ESSENTIALIST IDENTITIES

In Chapter 4 on queer theory it was stated that the organisation tended to rely on an ethnic/essentialist model of identity; the current chapter will demonstrate this. Later chapters consider how transgender identities are seen as a polluting influence (Chapter 6) and as transgressive (Chapter 7), however, this chapter focuses on the separation of gender and sexuality. I argue that the separation of sexual identity from gender identity is central to the construction of Morton Hall's identity. This chapter also asserts that many Executive Committee members rely upon essentialist and minoritising views of gender and sexuality that tend to contribute to the ethnicisation (Seidman 1993) of sexual orientation. I elaborate on the ways in which Young's (1997) understandings of identity politics organisations fit Morton Hall and claim that all her criteria can be fulfilled, particularly with regard to the identity of the organisation as a whole, rather than the individual Executive Committee members. I also highlight several contradictions in the debate that are as yet unresolved. I demonstrate that whilst many Executive Committee members articulate views that tend to fix and essentialise sexual and gender identity they are also accepting of some other views that tend to destabilise identity to some extent.

As Chapter 3 has indicated, transgender identity can be very closely linked to sexual identity, to the extent that some have argued that sexual orientation is better conceptualised as cross-gender behaviour. This chapter will demonstrate how this perspective has been repudiated by the majority of Executive Committee members. Most Executive Committee members, throughout the debate, have referred to transgender people, however, in most cases it is apparent that they are actually referring to *transsexual* people.

Ethnic Homosexualities

This section seeks to understand some of the ways in which the Executive Committee members construct an ethnic identity politics model of sexual and gender identity (see Chapter 4 for more details on this style of politics). The following extract come from the final meeting where trans inclusion/exclusion was discussed and therefore represent the conclusions of the organisation. Evelyn was chairing this particular meeting, and is summing up many of the comments made by committee members earlier in the meeting.

Evelyn: can I suggest, I think, someone made a point to me that it is right that transgender issues are not exclusive to issues of sexuality, it would be a bit like saying lesbian gay bisexual and black people or lesbian gay bisexual and disabled people, a kind of added group on the end and I think that's very logical because I've had lots of difficulties, on one hand my heart is saying well this is a group that is oppressed has enormous difficulty and discrimination and shouldn't we support that because we understand some of that, if we can't always relate to it, on the other hand thinking we can't do that but I kind of I support the view that we make it clear that we are here to support transgender people who are lesbian gay or bisexual and then in any way we can help articulate the argument for transgender people in [area] to receive funding and perhaps support them as Ashley is suggesting seems to me a good way forward.

Here we have the oft repeated claim that transgender issues and sexuality are different; the difference between transgender and LGB is the same as the difference between LGB and disability or race. This could either be a real attempt to create distance between sexuality and transgender issues, or it could demonstrate an awareness of the difficulties of representation; adding the 'T' on the end would not be enough on its own to resolve the problem, part of a recognition that 'for all the name changes, queer politics has yet to reflect any real

transformation in analyses or agendas' (Young 1997: 51). As a way of circumventing this problem, Lauren suggested (in an interview) that Morton Hall could 'acknowledge that sexuality is an essentially contested concept and is based on gender of object choice, and that there might be people who don't fit neatly into these first categories [LGB], but we will still undertake to help them if we can'. This would mean that Morton Hall would define its remit as LGB, purely for the purpose of funding, but would retain an understanding that that definition was a simplistic one that obscured the realities of gender and sexual identities. Evelyn says that we (LGB people) understand some of the oppression suffered by transgender people, (even 'if we can't always relate to it'), leading her to think that the organisation should support trans people; this shows that she is aware that there are similarities in the experience of oppression and discrimination suffered by both lesbian, gay and bisexual people and transgender people, however, in saying that we can't always relate to the difficulties and discrimination of trans people she succeeds in putting enough space between the two groups of people to support trans exclusion. In saying this, Evelyn is giving support to one of Young's key assumptions (elucidated upon in Chapter 4) that people in the same identity group will share an understanding of their oppression.

Evelyn claims that we cannot always relate to the trans experience of oppression, and therefore by default cannot fully share an understanding of their oppression, however, the converse of this is the implication that all LGB people can relate to the difficulty and discrimination experienced by other LGB people. This move homogenises all LGB experience in an attempt to foster a sense of collective identity that excludes trans people. This move says that the experience of living in a heterosexist society is the same for gay men, lesbians and bisexuals and eclipses differences between those groups, furthermore, it denies the historical differences in lesbian and gay male politics. Evelyn then goes on to advocate the organisation supporting LGB trans people as well as helping non LGB trans people find funding for an organisation of their own. That Evelyn argues that one has trouble relating to trans experiences implicitly says that one must relate to a particular identity position, or political issue, to be able to campaign on it; Lauren

states that ‘I don’t believe that for a moment that everyone who campaigns for choice with regard to abortion has had, or will have, an abortion, yet they can campaign for those aims, so why do you need to be of a specific identity to try to further stated aims?’ However, as will become apparent (below) being of a specific identity is paramount for Morton Hall. This also evidences Young’s second claim regarding identity politics – that the oppression relating to that identity is the primary oppression for people in that group. This extract, from the first meeting in which trans inclusion/exclusion was discussed, reinforces this:

Lauren: So, for example, one is a transsexual lesbian – who do you go to for help?

Morgan: You are part of the LGB.

For the transsexual lesbian, then, their sexuality is of greater importance than their gender identity. They are part of the LGB organisation because of their sexuality rather than their gender identity. Similarly, Evelyn, in the above extract, states that Morton Hall is here to help lesbian, gay and bisexual trans people. However, this misses the point of Lauren’s question. This is not about an ‘ordinary’ lesbian, or an ‘ordinary’ transsexual, but about a lesbian transsexual, who may well have significantly different issues from other lesbians. For example, she could be having problems with a local lesbian community group because she is a transsexual. For most Executive Committee members there appears to be a complete lack of understanding that any of the oppressions suffered by transsexual LGB people could be because the person is a transsexual *and* lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Here we find support for Seidman’s claim that ‘gay identity politics moves back and forth between a narrow single interest-group politic and a view of coalition politics as the sum of separate identity communities, each locked into its own sexual, gender, class or racial politic’ (1993: 105). Evelyn’s statement institutionalises the separation of gender and sexual politics and defines separate organisations for each; although LGB transgender people will be supported, it will be on the basis of their sexual identity rather than their gender identity. She is

therefore advocating a coalition politics between two groups that are both locked into their own specific sexual and gender politic, and both presumably having a shared sense of their oppression, and so on. In this separation of gender politics from sexual politics we can see one of the differences between the ethnic identity politics mode of organising and the earlier gay liberation politics examined earlier. For gay liberationists, the movement was not only about sexuality but also about gender; 'gay liberation is more than a movement to liberate eros; it is a gender revolution. The struggle against the homo/hetero dichotomy is intertwined with the struggle against a sex role system that views masculinity and femininity as mutually exclusive categories of gender identity' (Seidman 1993: 113-4). It is therefore evident that some of the queer arguments for trans inclusion employed in the debate are not particularly new, as gay liberation was articulating them thirty years ago. In part one can see identity politics as a reaction to earlier gay liberation discourse that viewed the self as essentially polymorphously perverse and inherently bisexual (Altman 1974), and as an attempt to fix identity in more static terms, partly in response to the AIDS crisis. Moreover, queer can be viewed as a return to some of the ideas of gay liberation, although without its 'millennialism and vanguardism' (Seidman 1993: 114). This is part of ongoing debates in gay politics between those that advocate assimilation and inclusion in heterosexual society or difference and critique of that society; in essence debates over what being gay, lesbian or bisexual means. It is important to note that although excluding transgender people from the organisation, Evelyn (and the organisation as a whole) is still supportive of trans people, in that the desire to gain funding for a separate trans group is expressed. However, if and when a separate trans group is created, this would formally institute a categorical difference between sexuality and gender, with both organisations probably following an ethnic/essentialist model of identity.

On this point it is worth reinforcing the fact that, as Chapter 4 argues, whilst gay liberation was concerned primarily with homosexuality, transgender was generally included within the definition of homosexuality. As Weeks argues 'there is an obvious affinity in the causes of social hostility to both homosexuality

and transvestism, and this was generally recognised in the early gay liberation movement' (1977: 224 see Chapter 4). Homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals are all people on whom society has failed to enforce gender normative behaviour, therefore they can often suffer the same fates. This means that an argument for trans inclusion can be made on the grounds that similar issues affect both LGB and trans issues; this point is made by Mel in an interview. In response to a question asking why she became involved with Morton Hall, she replied 'to bring the common issues between transgenderism and the gay community forward. There are a lot of common issues as far as hate crime, housing, adoption and marriage are concerned.' However, for the majority of Executive Committee members the only issues that were mentioned with regard to trans people related to transition and gender recognition, as will be elucidated in the following section. This is to illustrate that an identity politics or ethnic model of identity would not necessarily have to exclude transgender from the organisation. In Chapter 8 I touch upon how 'queer' could also operate in a similar fashion.

In the concluding meeting on the subject of transgender inclusion/exclusion there was a short discussion concerning the need for some kind of public pronouncement, so that (heterosexual) trans people do not put themselves forward for election onto the Executive Committee.

Jackie: just in terms of the elections is there going to be some statement made, so the transgender community know because some might put themselves forward for election, to make it clear they need to be lesbian gay or bisexual

Jerry: I think we probably need a more general statement that says Morton Hall is involved in campaigning on equality for lesbian gay and bisexual people whether they are older younger transgender BME [black and minority ethnic] disabled you know

Evelyn: we do need to make that absolutely clear that people are seeking election on the basis of their sexuality not their gender

This clearly demonstrates that Morton Hall relies upon ethnic, essentialist and minoritising understandings of gender and sexual identity. The boundaries of the organisation are being sharply defined by Jackie, Jerry and Evelyn given that it relates to the necessity of a public statement on trans exclusion from the organisation; such a statement needs to be made so that transgender individuals do not put themselves forward for election onto the Executive Committee. In essence, the 'transgender community' need to know that they are unwelcome in the organisation; moreover, this quote demonstrates that Jackie thinks that such a 'community' does exist. In the area covered by the organisation, whilst there are obviously transgender individuals, there is not a transgender community in the same sense that one could speak of a gay community. This does however, perhaps reveal that Jackie thinks that a transgender community could, or should, exist. This is comparable to the third of Young's key assumptions about identity politics – all members of an identity group are natural allies by virtue of their shared position – all transgender people should be natural allies and form a community by virtue of their shared identity. This negates any difference between transgender people; between male-to-female and female-to-male transsexuals; between pre-op, post-op and non-op transsexuals; between transsexuals, transvestites, transgenders and other genderqueers who have no desire to change gender; between those who think gender is essential and those who think gender is fluid. It ignores the multiplicity of, and differences in, transgender identity and politics discussed in Chapter 3. Jackie also implies that such people are all either unproblematically lesbian, gay, bisexual, or by inference, heterosexual; this is perhaps more likely for a gender essentialist transsexual, however someone who is genderqueer will have far more difficulty in defining themselves as such.

In this extract one can clearly see the two foundational binaries identified by Young (1997) in operation, those of 'us and them' and 'active oppressors and resisters'. With regard to the first binary, 'there are only two main groups, for all practical purposes, and they are easily distinguishable from each other: we know who belongs in each group (e.g., blacks and whites, women and men, homosexuals and heterosexuals)' (Young 1997: 55). Jackie, Jerry and Evelyn are

all emphasising that the remit of Morton Hall is solely sexuality; it is sexuality which distinguishes the two groups from each other. The common identity for those who are part of the organisation is homosexuality and heterosexuals are clearly unwelcome. Jerry claims that Morton Hall is 'involved in campaigning on equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.' However, campaigning for LGB equality is something that can be done by anyone, regardless of their sexual preferences, as Lauren argues at several points in her interview (see Chapter 8). Here one can see that Jerry is deploying a minoritising understanding of sexuality; homo- and bi- sexuality are only of importance to those who identify as LGB. Those who identify as LGB are also seen as having a similar view of the causes of their oppression. That Evelyn says that people have to be seeking election on the basis of their sexuality, rather than gender, demonstrates a belief that there is something special about having a lesbian, gay or bisexual identity that will predispose people to sharing the aims of the organisation.

Furthermore, Jackie says that 'some might put themselves forward for election' which indicates a fear that the organisation would be corrupted and polluted by non-LGB trans people. This suggests that if such trans people were to join the governing body of the organisation, its direction would be materially affected in a detrimental way. This is an example of Young's fourth assumption about identity politics; 'those in the "oppressor" group all benefit directly, consciously, and equally from the subordination of the "oppressed" group, and thus are rarely or never allies of the oppressed (e.g. all men, regardless of race, class, etc, enjoy higher status and more power than do all women; there's no such thing as a heterosexual ally to queer movements); and so forth' (Young 1997: 55). Here we can see a fear that heterosexual people would be joining the organisation, and that heterosexuality, regardless of any other minority position, places them in the 'oppressor' class as opposed to the 'oppressed' LGB class, Jackie's point is reinforced by Evelyn, who says that people must be 'seeking election on the basis of their sexuality not their gender'. This clearly marks the organisation as solely about sexuality, and separates this issue from gender; only LGB people can campaign and work on LGB issues. This proclamation also effectively excludes

any heterosexuals, who may or may not be trans, who are supportive of LGB rights from being in the organisation. This relates back to the binary between active oppressors and active resisters that is so important for identity politics organisations. Under this categorisation:

Members of the oppressed identity group naturally resist the power structures that facilitate their oppression and that confer privileges upon those who belong to the other, opposite, oppressing identity group; unless they are suffering from extreme self hatred, they feel solidarity with others who share their identity and they act accordingly. Hence oppressed people need only mobilise “our own kind” in order to strengthen our movements and achieve our goals. (Young 1997: 55).

This assumption that all those who identify as LGB will share similar perspectives, and that Morton Hall need only have LGB people in the organisation, is evident in the above Executive Committee meeting extract. This further illustrates the minoritising nature of Morton Hall’s comprehension of sexual identity; the organisation can only have LGB members because non LGB members would be active oppressors who would work contrary to the aims of Morton Hall.

Sexuality, then, for the Executive Committee members is about far more than the sex of the person you fuck; it is a discrete, stable identity that means one will have certain opinions about one’s oppression. This, of course, raises the problem of defining sexuality; what does one have to do to be a good lesbian, gay man or bisexual? I posit that to be a good LGB individual for the organisation one has to believe that an LGB sexual orientation is the marker of an identity that is unproblematically separate from heterosexuality and therefore says something more about the individual than the gendered location of their desires. Moreover, there should be a shared understanding of homophobia and of the politics of eradicating it; that politics being traditional lobbying as opposed to, for example, forms of NVDA (non-violent direct action). Furthermore, the politics is assimilatory, that is, Morton Hall works within the existing parliamentary and

legislative frameworks and does not constitute a radical rethinking of heterosexual morality. This is, at least, the perspective of the organisation itself, for the individual Executive Committee members have varying opinions on the efficacy of more confrontational styles of activism. In interviews several Executive Committee members were supportive of the activism carried out by people like Peter Tatchell and Outrage!, and the Lesbian Avengers. Some people, such as Ricky claimed that the more extreme demands of Outrage!, such as equalising the age of consent at 14 made it easier for other organisations, such as Morton Hall to push for 16. However, some people interviewed were completely against the more confrontational activism and called it 'hot-headed'. This is by way of illustrating that the viewpoints on different modes of activism of the Executive Committee members vary widely. If there are such divergent views on this, then it is also highly likely that there are dissimilar opinions on what the direction of the organisation should be. As well as indicating that all LGB people do not have a shared understanding of their oppression and its resistance, this also could be used as an argument for greater inclusivity. The Executive Committee members have dissimilar views on activism and politics, yet are able to work together successfully, therefore sharing a common belief as to the nature of one's oppression is not necessary for the functioning of Morton Hall.

That people must seek election solely on the basis of their sexuality rather than gender is an indication that the organisation regards gender of object choice as the defining characteristic of sexuality. Seidman writes, 'the ethnicisation of gay desire has presupposed the privileging of gender preference to define sexual and social identity, which, in turn has been the basis upon which a gay community and politics are forged' (1993: 123). This is reminiscent of Sedgwick's oft quoted claim that 'it is a rather amazing fact that, of the very many dimensions along which the genital activity of one person can be differentiated from that of another ... precisely one, the gender of object choice, emerged from the turn of the century, and has remained, as *the* dimension denoted by the now ubiquitous category of "sexual orientation"' (1990: 8). It is therefore important that all members of the organisation, particularly the elected ones, are in agreement with



this view of sexuality. Gender of object choice must be seen as the most important, if not only, defining factor of sexuality; if other factors do exist, they must be viewed as of secondary importance. Paradoxically, the contrary, that gender is not the be all and end all of sexuality is embedded within the organisation, in that it does include bisexuality. Although not necessarily true for everyone, bisexuality can be the label of choice for those who think that 'love counts more than gender'; indeed this was the title of the 2005 UK National Bisexual Conference (BICON). I am unsure, however, that bisexuality is more than nominally included in the organisation, as nothing has been done specifically for bisexuals by the organisation. Bisexuality is not seen as being different from being gay or being lesbian in the way that, for example, being lesbian is seen as being different from being gay. When homophobia is discussed there is recognition that gay men and lesbians experience it differently, but no recognition that a bisexual man and bisexual woman might experience phobic responses differently from gay men and lesbians respectively. However, bisexuality and transgender are treated differently by the organisation. I was on the Morton Hall Executive Committee for three years, and identified as a bisexual. Throughout those three years I was in a monogamous relationship with a woman; there was no notion that I should not be in the organisation because, to some one who did not know me, I appeared to be in a heterosexual relationship. This therefore means that bisexuality must possess some quality that makes it acceptable to Morton Hall that transgender lacks. I suggest that this quality relates to the fact that bisexuality remains about who one chooses for a partner, whilst transgender is seen to be about gender identity. Notwithstanding this, it is still evidence that a man can be in a relationship with a woman, but still be permitted in the organisation. There is nothing inherent about being in an opposite-sex relationship that bars someone from membership of Morton Hall, or being on its executive body. I argue that a heterosexual transgender person would be in a similar position. It should also be borne in mind that bisexuality has not always been unproblematically linked with lesbian and gay. Many lesbian and gay organisations (not Morton Hall) have been

exclusive of bisexuals over accusations of retaining heterosexual privilege and general fence sitting.

This all leads to the, somewhat perplexing, conclusion that for the organisation's identity gender is simultaneously of definitional importance and completely unrelated to sexuality. Without gender, the definition of sexuality employed by the organisation could not exist, however, this has not led to a recognition that sexuality and gender, whilst not the same, are interconnected in ways that, for example, sexuality and class or sexuality and race are not. By this I do not mean that race or class do not affect sexual identity, but suggest that few would contend that a particular class or racial position would predispose one to homosexuality. However, there are many that believe that cross-gender behaviour in childhood is an early indicator of possible homosexuality later in life (Sedgwick 1993; Butler 2004; Swidey 2005). Sedgwick notes that 'the same DSM-III that, published in 1980, was the first that did not contain an entry for "homosexuality", was also the first that *did* contain a new diagnosis, numbered (for insurance purposes) 302.60: "Gender Identity Disorder of Childhood"' (1993: 156 original emphasis). Sedgwick suggests that this is a subtle way of dealing with the problem of feminine boys (although supposedly gender-neutral, it is easier for a boy to be diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder than a girl), which in the psychoanalytic model means attempting to eradicate homosexuality. This demonstrates close, albeit constructed, connections between gender and sexuality that could have been profitably employed by the organisation. Interestingly, there is a partial acknowledgement of these connections by the organisation in that it is part of the Education for All campaign, which recognises that it is not only gay pupils who can suffer from homophobic abuse and bullying. The campaign's cornerstone document states that 'the effects of homophobic bullying are not limited to lesbian, gay and bisexual young people. An educational culture where homophobic bullying exists can affect anyone singled out as different' (Stonewall 2005: 2). In order for a pupil who does not identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual to be the victim of homophobic bullying there is a likelihood that they have exhibited some form of cross gender behaviour that has been interpreted as a sign of

homosexuality. All it takes, as the campaign realises, is for someone to be (or be seen to be) 'different'. So far, this chapter has shown that several of the Executive Committee members believe that only homosexual people can have any understanding of what it is like to live in an homophobic society, however, if 'homophobia affects all pupils and students – lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight' (Stonewall 2005: 2) then this is plainly not true. A straight pupil who was bullied throughout school because he or she was perceived to be queer may well have more knowledge of homophobia than a queer pupil who was not bullied. Moreover, Chapter 8 shows how the majority of Executive Committee members rely on an understanding of sexual orientation that fixes sexuality as an immutable truth. If sexual identity is a truth then it should only be those people who possess that truth who would become victim to homophobic bullying. The Education for All campaign, then, introduces some level of confusion into the final decision of Morton Hall to exclude transgender from its remit. Notwithstanding this, the connections between gender and sexuality have been largely marginalised by the conception of transgender as transsexual, as a subsequent section (below) explains.

Jerry comments that a statement is needed that makes it clear that the organisation is there to campaign for equality for LGB people, regardless of age, race, disability or gender identity; this also admits that the difference between sexuality and race, disability, age etc, is the same as the difference between gender and sexuality. Transgender people (or BME's, the disabled, older or younger people) are only welcome in the organisation if they are also lesbian, gay or bisexual. Also the notion of 'campaigning for equality' suggests an assimilatory approach to politics; the aim is equality with heterosexuals. This is in opposition to both gay liberation and queer politics, both of which advocate an end to the current sex/gender system whereby people have to confine themselves to male/female and gay/straight dichotomies. This is evidence of the perception that 'people who belong to the same identity group have more or less the same political analysis of (at least) the oppression they share (e.g., that all women share a feminist analysis of women's oppression)' (Young 1997: 54). However, I would

take this one stage further: not only is it necessary that all members of an identity group share the same understanding of their oppression, but also for them to share an understanding of the means to end that oppression. In the case of an identity politics organisation, such as the one studied, the 'means' tends to be assimilatory, and based upon a civil-rights discourse. In her work on choice and sexual identity, Whisman (1996) also finds this tension between the minoritising and deconstructive logics of identity, and is worth quoting at length.

On the one hand is a minority-model approach that seeks equality and civil remedies for a (presumably clearly defined) homosexual minority in a world dominated by a heterosexual majority. This approach represents exactly what a good number of gay men – and lesbians – want: the ability to go about their daily lives without being variously encumbered, to say nothing of endangered, by a range of negative social responses to their sexual preferences. They neither have nor see the need for a radical and critical analysis of the underlying structure of the society that oppresses them. On the other hand are a number of so far only loosely connected approaches that are highly critical of the underlying structures of sexuality, gender, and family that characterise contemporary Western societies. This approach includes, though is not necessarily defined by, a critique of the heterosexual-homosexual binary that the minoritising approach rests upon (Whisman 1996: 123).

The problem rests in the fact that, as shown by Gamson (1996), both approaches are valid and neither are fully tenable. That both sides of the debate make some sort of sense means that decisions such as on trans inclusion or exclusion are about far more than simply widening, or not, the remit of the organisation, rather they can illuminate, and define, the political strategies employed by an organisation. Both the minoritising and deconstructive logics can be seen in operation in Morton Hall. The minoritising approach relies upon the complete separation of gender identity and sexual identity; in part this is accomplished by viewing transgender as transsexual, which is the subject of the following section.

Reading Transgender as Transsexual

One of the key signs that Executive Committee members tend to appear to mean transsexual when they say transgender is that of Gender Recognition. Throughout the meetings there have been several references to the Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA), with various Executive Committee members claiming that Morton Hall does not have the capacity to help individuals through the process of legally changing their gender, for example. Furthermore the GRA has been used to separate gender and sexuality, as it is only applicable to transitioning trans people. Therefore, this section will explore the GRA in greater detail, to illustrate that it only deals with transsexuals and is of no relevance to other trans people.

The *Explanatory Notes* to the GRA state that ‘the purpose of the Gender Recognition Act is to provide transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender’ (www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/en2004/2004en07.htm). Section 2 of the GRA enacts that:

(1) In the case of an application under section 1(1)(a) [living in the other gender], the Panel must grant the application if satisfied that the applicant-

- (a) has or has had gender dysphoria,
- (b) has lived in the acquired gender throughout the period of two years ending with the date on which the application is made,
- (c) intends to continue to live in the acquired gender until death, and
- (d) complies with the requirements imposed by and under section 3.

Section 3 sets out the medical evidence required by the Gender Recognition Panel:

(1) An application under section 1(1)(a) must include either-

- (a) a report made by a registered medical practitioner practising in the field of gender dysphoria and a report made by another registered medical practitioner (who may, but need not, practise in that field), or
- (b) a report made by a chartered psychologist practising in that field and a report made by a registered medical practitioner (who may, but need not, practise in that field).

(2) But subsection (1) is not complied with unless a report required by that subsection and made by-

(a) a registered medical practitioner, or
(b) a chartered psychologist,
practising in the field of gender dysphoria includes details of the diagnosis of the applicant's gender dysphoria.

(3) And subsection (1) is not complied with in a case where-

(a) the applicant has undergone or is undergoing treatment for the purpose of modifying sexual characteristics, or
(b) treatment for that purpose has been prescribed or planned for the applicant,

unless at least one of the reports required by that subsection includes details of it.

It is therefore clear that only those who have had some kind of sex reassignment surgery are covered by this act. The documentation provided by the Gender Recognition Panel (the body constituted by the GRA to adjudicate on gender reassignment applications, hereafter GRP) provides further information. The criteria outlined above are for Standard Track applications. Fast Track applications also exist (with slightly different criteria), but are only available in the first two years of the GRP and are specifically for those who transitioned more than six years ago. Here the medical evidence required is slightly different – it can be having, or having had, gender dysphoria *or* having had surgery to modify sexual characteristics. Setting aside the fact that getting such surgery without a diagnosis of gender dysphoria would be problematic, the definition of surgery is interesting. ‘Surgery’ is not specifically defined, but includes changes to external primary genitalia, however, ‘surgical changes to the interior and/or secondary sex organs (such as sterilisation, mastectomy or hysterectomy) without any other modification may be sufficient *but the report will need to explain why no further surgery was undertaken*’ (Gender Recognition Panel 2006a: 14 my emphasis). It is clear that primary sex organs are the signifier of one’s true gender; if there is discontinuity it must be explained. Furthermore, if one’s claim is that one has gender dysphoria (which has to be proven for the Standard Track, but not Fast Track, applications (Gender Recognition Panel 2006b)) then this has to be evidenced by either a registered medical practitioner or a chartered psychologist

working in the field of gender dysphoria; a list of such acceptable specialists being provided by the GRP. This demonstrates that it is only those who undergo transition within a particular medical model that will be affected by the GRA.

However, even using the GRA as a means to institute the separation of gender and sexuality, intentionally or otherwise, as several Executive Committee members did, is not without its problems. This is because 'to receive a full Gender Recognition Certificate, a transsexual person must be unmarried and not in a UK civil partnership' (Gender Recognition Panel 2005: 2). In this country a marriage can only legally occur between a man and women, and a civil partnership can only legally occur between two people of the same sex, therefore if the man in a marriage gained a full Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) they would be female in the eyes of the law, and therefore in a lesbian marriage, which is illegal. If someone fulfils all the criteria for a GRC, but is married, they receive an interim certificate which can be used to annul the marriage. After the annulment and granting of a full GRC, they could then have a civil partnership ceremony, which, as a lesbian couple, would bring them within the remit of Morton Hall. The issue of transsexuals and marriage raises also raises questions around same sex marriage and civil partnerships. A male-to-female transsexual who identifies as a lesbian and who has not applied for a Gender Recognition Certificate remains, in the eyes of the law, male and is therefore able to marry another woman, raising the possibility of same sex marriages, as opposed to civil partnerships. This has not been thought through by the Executive Committee members, and is further evidence that there are some issues that will effect LGB identified trans people that are not applicable to non-trans LGB people.

In order to apply for a GRC, the person has to have been living in their acquired gender full time for a minimum of two years (six for the fast track applications), for which evidence has to be shown. This further demonstrates that transgender individuals, who do not live full time in the opposite gender, for whatever reason, cannot apply for a GRC. Moreover, in applying for a GRC the transsexual stabilises and fixes their gender identity. As section 2(1)(c) of the GRA states (above) the applicant must intend to live in their acquired gender for

the rest of their life, thus allowing for no future changes. Secondly, obtaining a GRC means that the person can have their birth certificate altered to show their, new, legal gender. Whilst someone with a GRC is not entitled to claim that they have not been through the gender recognition process, to all intents and purposes the history of the transsexual in their birth gender is obliterated. This relates to the discussion in Chapter 8 on the ways in which transsexuality, as opposed to transgenderism, expresses an ultimate truth about identity and being.

The extracts below illustrate how the GRA has been deployed in the trans inclusion/exclusion debate. They are from two different meetings (the last and penultimate on the subject), but concern the same subject

Robin: Generally speaking the discussions have gone round the fact that with the gender reassignment act, which firmly comes under the Equal Opportunities Commission, we have a capacity issue in terms of the number of staff that are there to be able to pick up and run with, and train and answer all the questions round that. It would be quite difficult.

Jerry: I feel that around the gender reassignment issues and the policy changes there really needs to be an organisation which thoroughly understands that law and has a capacity to, you know, work with policy members and the community to develop peer support and advice services around a certain law which does legally belong the Equal Opportunities Commission. We don't have the community resources for that area, I don't have enough resource for LGB.

Here one can clearly see that the Gender Recognition Act is being used to distance transsexuals from Morton Hall. It is framed in the language of capacity and resources; Morton Hall does not have the expertise to deal with queries from the public with regard to the legislation and process of gender recognition. This, as I have said elsewhere (Chapters, 5 and 7), ignores the fact that were Morton Hall to include transgender within its remit it would be possible for them to apply for

extra funding on that basis. Transgender is being conceptualised as transsexual, as the above analysis demonstrates; issues of gender reassignment and recognition are only applicable to transgender people who intend to transition, or have transitioned. The needs of those who are transgender, but have no wish to transition from one gender to the other are left without recourse to any organisation.

Both Robin and Jerry claim that the GRA legally belongs to the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC), a move which further serves to distance it from Morton Hall. This is a successful attempt at excluding transgender from the organisation. If the legislation is the responsibility of another organisation, then there is no need for Morton Hall to do anything about it. Given that for most Executive Committee members, transgender appears to mean transsexual, this effectively removes transgender from the possible remit of the organisation. However, I am unsure as to why both Jerry and Robin are of the opinion that the GRA 'belongs' to the EOC. If the legislation could be said to belong to any organisation, then it would be the Gender Recognition Panel, which is a government body with no official link to the EOC. There is not even a link to the Gender Recognition Panel website from the EOC website (www.eoc.org.uk as of June 2006). The EOC is able to provide support for transsexuals who have suffered discrimination under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, but they have a paucity of information on gender recognition. Whilst on the subject of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) it is worth noting that this also only applies to transsexuals; section 2A(3) states that discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment occurs 'if he treats B less favourably than he treats or would treat other persons, and does so on the grounds that B intends to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone gender reassignment,'. Section 82(1) defines 'gender reassignment' as 'a process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex, and includes any part of such a process.' Although a slightly wider definition than the GRA (e.g. not having genital surgery does not have to be justified), the SDA only applies to those

transgender individuals who undergo a process of transition; those who do not are, at the time of writing (June 2006), without legal protection. Regardless of the accuracy of Robin and Jerry's claims, the argument that the GRA comes under the EOC was effective at distancing transsexuality from the remit of Morton Hall.

When interviewing Lauren, (after the meetings from which the previous extracts come from), the subject turned to this conflation of transsexual with transgender, and she summarised the main points succinctly:

I think the argument really runs along the lines of 'we deal with issues of sexuality not transsexual transition or gender reassignment'. It seemed to be a very extreme differentiation; it was 'we're not going to deal with the medical profession and gender reassignment surgery but we are going to deal with sexuality', they weren't actually looking at the grey areas in between of transgender. I mean one of the participants said that there were seven types of transgender – I thought that just underlined a misunderstanding of what the concept of transgender is, as opposed to transsexuality. Providing sort of categories of transgender that seemed so fixed to my mind, to my understanding of transgender, was completely wrong because the whole point of transgender to me is to question and query perceived or common understandings of gender per se.

For most Executive Committee members, then, transgender means transsexual, which in turn means gender reassignment and medical issues. This defines transgender solely as not identifying with one's body; rather than being something that can potentially destabilise the categories of gender, the only understanding of transgender that has been drawn upon by Morton Hall to any extent is one in which gender is not troubled. This notion is further discussed in Chapter 6 when considering the polluting effects of the heterosexual transvestite. In the same way that sexual identity is seen as defining some kind of truth about a person, transgender identity is seen as doing the same, so much so that for one member there are seven types of transgender. This was a highly specific claim employed by someone advocating trans exclusion; however it served to situate them as

someone knowledgeable on trans issues in the meeting. Notwithstanding this, I cannot fathom what these seven types of transgender are, it appears to be, as Lauren suggests, another example of Executive Committee members not fully comprehending the meaning of transgender. The only connection between transgender and the number seven that I can find relates to the seven criteria established by John Money for correct sexual development in the foetus after conception (Money 1986). Also, by suggesting that there are seven types of transgender suggests that all transgender people fit in one of seven boxes that express the truth about themselves.

Once again, this extract illustrates the disjuncture between the stabilising and deconstructive understandings of trans identity explored in Chapter 3. Lauren's view of transgender is that it does not express an immanent truth about a person and is something that questions the very nature of gender in society; this is the type of view that was met with much hostility by several Executive Committee members. It is clear, therefore, that Morton Hall is an identity politics organisation founded upon an ethnic understanding of sexual orientation that relies upon a crowbar separation of gender and sexuality. I now turn to the formation of an identity politics grouping in order to consider what the identity refers to.

From Series to Groups

The foregoing has shown that Morton Hall follows an identity politics model; the identity of the Executive Committee members is of paramount importance for the organisation. However, this does not address the question of what it is that causes these people to come together in the first place. In other words, what is the subject of the organisation? For Fuss, under the 'identity politics' theory, the category 'women' only exists in the context of feminist politics; the politics does not represent, but *creates* the unity 'women.' Furthermore, 'many anti-essentialists fear that positing a political coalition of *women* risks presuming that there must first be a natural class of women; but this belief only masks the fact that it is a coalition politics which constructs the category women in the first place' (1989:

36 original emphasis). This fits with the understanding of identity politics outlined above; the split between 'us' and 'them' demonstrates that sexuality is an oppositional identity, whilst the 'active oppressor' and 'active resistor' binary demonstrates it is oppression which is the basis for the identity (Young, S. 1997 (NB I am using initials here to differentiate between two authors with the same surname being used in this section)). It is the 'power structures that facilitate their oppression' (Young, S. 1997: 55) which define Morton Hall; it is LGB groups that generate the category.

This theory provides part of the answer to the problem of collective identity, but it is by no means entirely satisfactory. Firstly, as the foregoing analysis shows, 'identity politics' does not solve the problem of essentialising LGB(T) people, some group within the categorisation will invariably be privileged in any political grouping of LGB(T) people. As Butler claims, 'feminist critique ought to ... remain self-critical with respect to the totalising gestures of feminism' (1999: 18-19), similar claims can be made regarding LGB/queer theory and politics. However, the primary objection to this conception of identity politics is that there is no discussion of what *causes* the formation of a coalition 'which constructs the category of women.' This view also leaves those who choose not to act politically on the basis of an identity out of the construction of the group. 'These questions all point to the need for some conception of women [or non-heterosexuals] as a group prior to the formation of self-conscious feminist [or queer] politics, as designating a certain set of relations or positions that motivate the particular politics of feminism [or queer activism]' (Young, I. M. 1994: 722). I. M. Young posits Jean-Paul Sartre's theory of seriality as a solution to the impasse. In *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1976) Sartre defines different gatherings of people from an ensemble to a class, largely dependent on the level and type of interaction between group members. It is the terms 'series' and 'group' which I am interested in with regard to explaining the basis of collective action. Sartre 'uses the term series to signify an ensemble each of whose members is determined in alterity by the others ... [whilst] a group is an ensemble each of whose members is determined by the others in a relationship of reciprocity,'

(McGee 1989). Here 'alterity' signifies a relationship among strangers whilst 'reciprocity' indicates that the parties each know something about the other, and that, contra alterity, they care about the relationship.

The idea of seriality provides a way of understanding collective sexual identity in a way that allows one to move away from the problematic nature of identity politics. For a few Executive Committee members the central aim of the organisation is to campaign for equality on LGB issues, rather than build or support an LGB community. This perspective will be analysed with regard to seriality, below. First, however, I will explain the series in greater detail.

'Groups arise from and often fall back into a less organised and unself-conscious collective unity' (Young, I. M. 1994: 724): this is the series. Members of a series are defined as such because they share their position with others in a similar context. This Sartre calls the practico-inert reality; the constraints and resistance to material and social objects. Furthermore 'a series reveals itself to everyone when they perceive in themselves and Others their common inability to eliminate their practical differences' (Sartre 1976: 277). It is important here to note that membership of a series mainly denotes an individual's circumstance with regard to the external world; as such it is not the foundation of an identity. Similarly there is no need for every member of a series to possess the same qualities, indeed their *only* link is their relationship to a particular practico-inert structure, nor is it necessary for each member to be aware of others in the same situation.

For gender or sexuality to be properly considered a series one must, at least partly, define what practico-inert structures these series relate to. With regard to women, I. M. Young claims the constitution of the series is enforced heterosexuality. She argues that 'the material practices of enforced heterosexuality serialise women as objects of exchange and appropriation by men, with a consequent repression of autonomous female desire' (1994: 729). I would also contend that non-heterosexuals are serialised as such by the 'material practices of enforced heterosexuality,' but in a different way to that of women. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals &c. are defined as other to heterosexuals, and suffer

discrimination and oppression at the hands of compulsory heterosexuality. All those who do not identify as straight, in my opinion, share the same relation to the practico-inert structure of enforced heterosexuality and therefore constitute a series.

Importantly, claiming membership of a series says nothing about a person's characteristics or identity; it is merely 'the name of a structural relation to material objects as they have been produced and organised by a prior history' (Young, I. M. 1994: 728). However, this is not to say that an identity group cannot emerge from a series, indeed one comes out of the other. The central point is that 'women need have nothing in common in their individual lives to be serialised as women' (Young, I. M 1994: 735). This avoids the philosophical problems generated by either essentialist or anti-essentialist theories illustrated above. Sartre describes a fused group as being the immediate result of a collection of members of a series. Any activity is largely disorganised and it is easy for the group to fall back into seriality. To indicate a group where there is a fully-fledged sense of reciprocity the term pledged group is used; 'a pledged group is a group which develops from a fused group through an organised distribution of rights and duties enforced by a pledge' (McGee 1989). It is largely at this level, or higher, that political action takes place. It must also be remembered that not all groups of women, queers &c. are political groupings. Furthermore, groups can arise out of a multiplicity of series, such as gender, class, sexuality and race. However, as a generalisation a group will refer back to the series whence it came, as 'feminist organising and theorising always refers beyond itself to condition and experiences that have not been reflected on, and to women whose lives are conditioned by enforced heterosexuality ... who are not feminists, and are not part of feminist groups' (Young, I. M 1994: 738).

The social collective of LGB people can, then, be conceptualised as a series, from which different types of groups may rise up. Lauren's opinion, in her interview, on identity claims is exemplary of this:

Any identity claim is always already a political assertion which has a context and a purpose, because otherwise why would you make an identity claim, you know. If you weren't in a context where you needed to define yourself in relation to someone else you wouldn't have an identity, because you wouldn't need one, so your identity only becomes important or necessary to be stated or whatever, it only becomes necessary as an identity claim in relation to someone else or some other people, context or situation.

In describing the series, Sartre (1976) uses the example of people waiting in a queue for a bus. These people are part of a series because they all share a relationship to the practico-inert structure of the public transportation system. Aside from this they would not think of themselves as a group of 'bus users', however, Sartre argues that if the bus was late then they may start talking to each other and decide to do something about the lateness of the bus (sharing a taxi, delegating one of the number to phone the bus company &c.). This would result in a fused group, which may well just fall back into the series after the problem was remedied. If, however, bus lateness was an ongoing problem they may decide to create a more formal group to lobby the bus operator for a more efficient service, which would be a pledged group. Whilst this is a fairly mundane example, it does exemplify the relation between the series and group. One can also see this in Lauren's extract. In Sartre's example the context of the identity claim of 'bus user' is the lateness of the bus, whilst the purpose is to remedy that lateness. A similar claim can be made with regard to sexual or gender identity; everybody is in some way part of a series relating to gender and sexual identity, but a group will only form under certain circumstances.

The idea of seriality is useful because it provides an explanation of how many people, with different perspectives on LGB(T) identity and politics can come together. In the series, there is nothing about sharing the same relationship to the practico-inert reality which means that identity, beliefs or practices are shared. Groups then form when members of a series pledge their support to a particular end, thus resulting in a group that should be more focused on aims than

identity. This therefore illustrates how Executive Committee members can work together regardless of individual differences. Further, the series goes some way to explaining the exclusion of trans; transgender people are in a different series, sharing a different relationship to their material surroundings. Whilst this may explain the current behaviour of the Executive Committee members, it is not a wholly satisfactory theory. It cannot explain Lauren's belief that anyone (regardless of identity) who supports the aims of Morton Hall should be welcomed. Sartre's idea of the series fails to take into account the fact that one may support a cause that they have no personal relationship to. Although some of the problems of minoritising/essentialising logics are solved, ultimately the series(s) from which one originates is of primary importance when defining the group. To return to the analogy of the bus passengers, someone may wish to join the group to campaign for a better service, who is not actually a bus user, but who nevertheless feels that it is a worthwhile campaign to be a part of. Thinking through the complexities of this position forms part of Chapter 8.

Conclusions

This chapter has considered the notion of identity as employed by Morton Hall, arguing that it relies on a separation of gender and sexuality that fosters an ethnic/essentialist/minoritising LGB identity. It has been shown that this is aided, in no small part, by the fact that for many of the Executive Committee members transgender is conceptualised as transsexual which serves to further distance transgender from the potential remit of the organisation. Having described the type of organisation that Morton Hall is, the following chapters consider ways in which transgender generally, and heterosexual cross dressers in particular, are definitionally important for the organisation.

POLLUTION/DANGER/FEAR

This Chapter considers the responses of certain Executive Committee members to the wide definition of transgender employed by Morton Hall in the course of this debate. The definitions of transsexual, transvestite and transgender used by Morton Hall are those provided by the Gender Trust, and I quote them again here:

Transsexual. A person who feels a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition and fulfil their life as a member of the opposite gender. Most transsexual people actively desire and complete Sex Reassignment Surgery.

Transvestite. The clinical name for a cross dresser. A person who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex. Generally, these persons do not wish to alter their body.

Transgender. A term used to include transsexuals, transvestites and cross dressers. A transgenderist can also be a person who, like a transsexual, transitions - sometimes with the help of hormone therapy and / or cosmetic surgery - to live in the gender role of choice, but has not undergone, and generally does not intend to undergo, [sex reassignment] surgery (<http://www.gendertrust.org.uk/index1.htm>)

It is interesting that these are the definitions adopted by Morton Hall as they tend to exemplify a particular discourse of transgender identity which seeks to normalise such behaviour and does not challenge essentialist gender norms. These are explored further in other chapters (3 and 5); in this chapter I am concerned primarily with the effects that the inclusion of transvestites and cross dressers in the definition of transgender has on certain Executive Committee members' discussions.

The chapter seeks to understand the ways in which identity is accomplished through interaction, and views the creation of identity and

community as a collective social activity. It is interaction *between* the Executive Committee members that constitutes their being, their sense, or otherwise, of belonging, and of the borders. The point at which we make the other visible, the point at which we create or destroy the margins, is the point where our 'usness', our sense of belonging, becomes manifest (Cohen 1982, 1985). This is not a psychoanalytic problem, but rather one in which social practices of ordering and categorisation are made manifest. As Silverman (1993), notes, it is not possible to look inside people's heads, to know definitively what they are thinking or their intentions, however, what we can do is to look at the ways in which people attempt to classify others, to look at what lines are drawn where and how and tentatively explore what drawing lines in these particular ways accomplishes. The interactional construction of community studied in this chapter follows on from the previous chapter, because

...community as a concept ... is invariably fraught with problems, not least because it has invariably been invoked as a basis for an essentialist understanding of identity and belonging (Hetherington 1998: 50).

As Douglas claims,

...not only marginal social states, but all margins, the edges of all boundaries which are used in ordering the social experience are treated as dangerous and polluting (1991a: 56).

These dangerous and polluting, but ordering, boundaries are the central subject of this chapter. I argue that transgender exists in a state of liminality and, because of this, is a source of pollution, danger and fear for some people. Furthermore in attempting to situate such transgender individuals as outside Morton Hall, the boundary and remit of the organisation as solely LGB is constituted and sustained.

From Liminality to Pollution

Following Van Gennep (1960), society is like a house with rooms and interconnecting corridors; whilst it is safe in the rooms, the passage between them is dangerous. This is a narrative of rites of passage from one ordered and structured world to another involving release and separation from one and

reaggregation and acceptance into the other. Furthermore the site between the two stages is a state of nihilistic free-fall in which anything can happen; this is the limen or margin. This model can usefully be applied to transition and transgender identity. One can see a transsexual's transition from man to woman as just such a rite of passage; the individual moves from the ordered world of the man, through the limen via hormones and sex reassignment surgery, to the ordered world of the woman. This is the model of transition that is most often advocated by 'transgender' groups such as the Gender Trust, Transgender Wales and Press for Change, (see chapter 8). However, for a transgender individual, such as a cross dresser, the situation is not so clearly defined; there is not a transition from one world to another, rather the individual remains in the state of liminality. This positions them as outside of, and other to, the ordered worlds of male and female and 'danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable. The person who must pass from one to the other is himself in danger and emanates danger to others' (Douglas 1991b: 97). The person who decides not to pass from one side to the other and remain in a state of transition, is, therefore an even more dangerous person as they are not performing the rite as is expected. This person can, then, be a polluting influence on others, given that 'a polluting person is always in the wrong. He has developed some wrong condition or simply crossed some line which should not have been crossed and this displacement unleashed danger for someone' (Douglas 1991b: 114).

The following two extracts are from an interview with Ricky conducted before the trans inclusion/exclusion debate came up for Morton Hall in which he explains his views on transgender inclusion. This is an eloquent elucidation of some central concerns which are also shared by some others within the organisation.

If the person is a transgendered individual whether male-to-female or female-to-male they would be able to join the LGB group if they identified as L, G or B, whether it be pre op or post op. Does that make sense?

Referring back to Van Gennep's idea of rooms and corridors one can see that, for Ricky, trans people can join Morton Hall if they are situated in one of the rooms marked 'lesbian', 'gay', or 'bisexual', but not 'heterosexual'. Ricky continues:

So if you have a male-to-female transgender person still going through gender reassignment then to all intents and purposes that individual is a woman because they self identify as a women. As regards to their sexuality, if their sexuality is still that they're attracted to women that would make them lesbian therefore they would be eligible. If they were attracted to men then to me they would be heterosexual, so what possible understanding of lesbian and gay issues would they have. That's not to say they don't have an understanding of issues because of the transgender situation and the information and the learning people can get from transgender individuals is vast, we all should learn from everyone else. But it's how wide do you cast the net in membership? Otherwise it could go down the road of heterosexual people with particular fetishes that are discriminated against wanting to join a lesbian and gay group. Would they fit in? Would they understand automatically what the difficulties are or can be of being a gay man or a lesbian or whatever? That's where the difficulty is. Where I have an issue is with people who are transgender being involved it's not against them per se but it's about the issues and where they're coming from does that make sense?

This quote was useful when analysing the separation of gender and sexuality in chapter 3 that has played a large part of the debate, however, in this chapter I use this quote again to focus on themes of pollution and contagion, having considered the gender/sexuality topic in Chapters 3 and 5. This is exemplary of the arguments put forward in favour of exclusion in that no transphobic views are expressed; in fact, such a position is explicitly repudiated by Ricky at the end of the extract. Rather the question is whether it is appropriate that Morton Hall should represent transgendered people. As Chapter 5 demonstrates the dominant argument is that trans people are only represented if, in their gender of choice, they identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Central to this chapter is the inclusion of

heterosexuals within the category of transgender (and non-trans heterosexuals) within the organisation. In saying that only LGB trans people should be in the organisation Ricky is excluding trans people who are heterosexual from the organisation on the basis that they have not experienced living as a homosexual and therefore have no knowledge of the issues. In Van Gennep's terms, trans people are on one rooms and do not move from one to the other. A heterosexual transsexual could, quite feasibly, have started their journey in the gay or lesbian room. Chapter 8 discusses some of the implications of this view with regard to rhizomatics and the construction of sexual and gender identity; this chapter focuses specifically on the exclusion of heterosexual trans people from the organisation.

I argue that Ricky's rejection of heterosexual transgendered people can be seen as pollution behaviour (Douglas 1991b). As already shown in the previous chapter one could argue that a heterosexual (post op) trans person would have an understanding of LGB issues because prior to transition they may have been perceived by others as homosexual, or self identified as such before deciding they were transgendered. Therefore the arguments against inclusion can be seen as an attempt to retain the purity of Morton Hall which would be spoiled by the addition of trans people and issues. It is also possible that Ricky is exhibiting the fear that widening the remit of Morton Hall to include transgender would radically alter the activities of the organisation as well as putting the organisation in a potentially problematic position of representing heterosexual people who may be homophobic. As Young (1997) argues, identity politics organisations rely on a distinction between us (the oppressed) and them (the oppressors) which dictates that the oppressors can never work for the benefit of the oppressed (see Chapter 5). The other point that Ricky raises could be termed the 'floodgate argument'; if heterosexual trans people are welcomed into Morton Hall, then other heterosexual sexual minorities may also want to be represented by the organisation, and soon every variety of sexual deviant would be clamouring to join the organisation. This evidences my claim in Chapter 4 with regard to Rubin's (1989) 'line' (dividing good and bad sexual behaviours and identities) that those on the deviant side of

the line do not show solidarity with one another but are desperate to cross the line into acceptable behaviour, often at the expense of other (more) deviant sexualities.

Ricky has had previous experience of trans inclusion/exclusion debates in another lesbian and gay group of which he was part:

When I was involved in [company LG group] we had a major discussion on bisexuals and transgender issues because every time there was a problem within the company that they received from an individual who identified as transgender they were always referred to the lesbian and gay group, without any thought as to whether we were the best group for the transgender individual.

However, one can see a difference between the two organisations. One can see that referring trans individuals to a group not able to support them could be problematic, however, the purpose of the debate within Morton Hall was to decide whether the remit should be widened so as to include trans issues. When asked whether Morton Hall should take a similar line to Ricky's previous organisation, he replied:

Morton Hall shouldn't be exclusive at all, but I think it would be useful to have Morton Hall Transgender and have a group for transgender individuals. A group like [national trans group], a group of intelligent individuals who have got something to give; share knowledge; share experience. Have each [organisation] working on the issues that are of relevance to them because there are some trans issues which are not, as far as I can see but my knowledge on transgender issues is not 100% brilliant, but there are some issues that trans people have that have no relevance to lesbian and gay lifestyles. And even although, yes, lesbians and gay men have come a long way with, you know with, equality of opportunity there is still lots to be done and are we watering down what we're doing by trying to encompass every discriminated minority.

The essence of Ricky's viewpoint is that heterosexual (trans) people are 'coming from' somewhere that could be detrimental to the work of Morton Hall. In this extract Ricky's pollution behaviour is more explicit than in the first; he specifically states that widening the remit of Morton Hall would have a damaging effect on the campaigning ability of the organisation. This does not consider some of the ways in which LGB and trans issues (including transition) can be connected. For example, Halberstam writes of a 'masculine continuum' from 'androgyny – soft butch – butch – stone butch – transgender butch – FTM' (1998: 151), stressing that some FTMs identify as lesbian butches prior to transition. Furthermore, as Chapter 3 states, some lesbian feminists view transsexuality as an oppressive machine that works to the destruction of lesbians (Raymond 1980; Jeffreys 2003). This shows that there are issues of transsexual transition that are of relevance to LGB people. This is one of the many examples of transgender being conceptualised as transsexual; the only trans issues that I can think of that are not of direct relevance to LGB people centre on the medical and legal aspects of transition. One can view the (heterosexual) trans person as a dangerous contagion who will disrupt and challenge both the ontological and political security of Morton Hall. This raises several points. First, that heterosexual transgender people would actually disrupt or oppose the work of Morton Hall. Second, that all LGB people share a vision of what Morton Hall should be doing. Third, it presupposes that one has to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to advocate for LGB rights and equality. And fourth, that encompassing every discriminated minority in one organisation would 'water down' rather than strengthen equality campaigns. Also immanent within this view is the notion that heterosexual people (transgender or otherwise) do not suffer from homophobic abuse; given the prolific use of homophobic terms of abuse to signify anyone who is not sexually or gender normative this position seems untenable. This argument is expanded upon in Chapter 8 when Morton Hall's involvement in the Education for All campaign is discussed. Ricky is specific about the possible polluting effects of allowing heterosexual transgender people into the organisation as he claims that this could reduce the effectiveness of Morton Hall, thereby situating transgender

people as a group with aims contrary to those of Morton Hall. In the above extract, Ricky also positions Morton Hall as an organisation that follows a particular philosophy of equality of opportunity that tends to focus purely on gaining specific rights for specific groups of people, rather than producing a radical overhaul of the binary construction of gender and sexual identity. This is particularly important because the view of the danger that heterosexual transgender people present could only pose a problem for, and be accepted as a polluting influence by, those upholding the former view of equality.

Ricky is advocating a politics based on identity and difference. Such a politics has been shown to have a detrimental effect on equality by Lasch-Quinn (2001) specifically in the field of race relations. Her central contention is that the American civil rights movement brought great advances, however this was hijacked by a new paradigm of race relations in the 1960s which argued that one needed to treat whites and blacks differently because of the history of segregation and discrimination; 'the identity tack made it nearly impossible to move beyond a simplistic polarisation between white oppressors and the black oppressees (recast as heroic resisters)' (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 120). Training groups and sensitivity training has changed the focus of the ideals of the civil rights movement from one of liberality to a focus on the differences between blacks and whites. Whilst Lasch-Quinn focuses on questions of race, one can see parallels with sexuality. Whilst there have not been large amounts of psychiatric training sessions on sexuality, contemporary diversity training in employment focuses on difference, with employees being taught to appreciate the differences of their co-workers, be it on the grounds of sexuality, race, gender, disability *ad infinitum*. This has served to perpetuate the notion that there are fundamental and irrevocable differences between gays and straights, whites and blacks, and so on. A more useful approach could be to adopt a model that advocates treating everybody, regardless of identity and status with respect and decency. I wish to be clear that I do not mean the mere toleration, or assimilation, that a liberal approach can often degenerate into. Parken (2003) has shown that many lesbians at work try to avoid talking about their home life because it would involve coming out. However, why

should a woman saying, for example, ‘last night I went out for a meal with my girlfriend’ be treated differently from a woman saying ‘last night I went out for a meal with my boyfriend’? My argument is that one does not reach equality by treating gay and straight people differently. To illustrate this with the club scene, there are gay clubs and straight clubs which tends to result in the ghettoisation of gay identity. Many of the clientele of gay clubs would not go to straight clubs, even though similar music would be played. Similarly, on arriving at a gay club with a woman, I have been informed that it was a gay venue by bouncers. I do not see that having separate venues for gay and straight people is equality. Rather, should not anyone, regardless of identity, be able to go to any club and not be treated differently by anyone because of who they are? Should not a same sex couple be able to hold hands and generally *be a couple* anywhere, rather than only in gay venues and spaces?

This is *not* assimilation or normalisation, which would involve queers striving to be part of the heterosexual majority, who do not always look kindly upon public displays of same-sex affection; it is a re-evaluation of what is considered ‘normal’. I wish to be perfectly clear that I am not advocating the obliteration of difference by wanting everyone to act, think, or look alike. Sedgwick’s axiom 1 is that “‘people are different from each other’ (1990: 22) and this should not be forgotten. Without difference or division between people life would be a very boring thing. The problem arises not with the existence of difference or division per se, but rather arises when they are used as the basis of a hierarchy.

The Problem of Transgendered Heterosexuals

In the meetings few people attempted to problematise the exclusion of transgender on the basis of identity and difference. One of them was myself:

Alex: I want to come back to the idea of transvestites and that kind of thing; heterosexual people being involved in transgender. From my experience if you were to go down that route it’s a minefield, I mean

I've gone out in town wearing skirts, that kind of thing, been out with my girlfriend, we've been walking down Queen Street and been called lesbians, dykes, queers all that kind of thing, now we're quite blatantly not lesbians so ok you might have a heterosexual cross dresser but they can still have transphobic abuse, they can still have homophobic abuse, the fact they are not gay or bisexual doesn't stop that happening so why can't we cover them; so my suggestion is that on pretty much all grounds that we should include transgender.

In this extract I try to directly address some of the exclusionary concerns; rather than try and construct the debate in terms of identity, I explicitly concentrate on some of the actual discrimination that might befall a heterosexual cross dresser. This was done because it probably would have been futile to argue for the interconnectedness of sexual and gender identity on theoretical grounds. In making my case, I drew on my own experiences in a move to give my account more authority; I have experienced this conflation of homophobic and transphobic abuse and therefore am in a position to articulate these concerns, and have them listened to. The main point I was concerned to address was the implicit assertion that straight people cannot be victims of trans- or homo- phobic abuse and discrimination; whilst some appear to believe that the only criterion for such abuse is sexuality I wished to demonstrate that issues of gender and sexual identity are in fact far more complex than that. Therefore having made my case, with the use of my experience to give it more authority I make my recommendation to include transgender in the organisation, using the broad definition of the term. A central focus of this debate was that whilst one should articulate ones concerns on transgender inclusion/exclusion, one should also make a recommendation as to what the organisation should do.

The following extract is from an interview with Lauren, and refers to the first meeting in which the issue of heterosexual cross-dressers was raised:

Lauren: They're [some Executive Committee members] saying if you're a heterosexual man who's a transvestite then you can't [be part of Morton Hall] ...

Alex: What do you think motivates those that were arguing against inclusion?

Lauren: The only thing I can think is that it's the same thing that motivates homophobic people, that they're insecure in their own sexuality simply. Why would you be so vociferous in policing borders of your own identity if you didn't have a vested interest in doing that yourself? You don't say 'you can't be in my gang' unless you're protecting something and if your protecting your own identity, why? You should be secure in your own identity to deal with all manner of people and it shouldn't affect your own identity to be associated with other people. ... I think ... people who are insecure in their own identity or identities will be the most vocal in policing the borders of those identities.

Much of the pollution behaviour and fear analysed in this chapter, and exemplified in the above extract, is a preface to transgression. This chapter demonstrates that for Morton Hall the dangerous contagion that has to be contained and expelled is the heterosexual transgender person. Chapter 7 considers the ways in which transgression, or perceived transgression, works to police the borders of Morton Hall, and therefore fosters a sense of collective identity – the specific transgression considered is that of the transgender individual (as differentiated from the transsexual). As stated earlier, a transgender person occupies a liminal space because the rite of transition is not completed, and is therefore causing someone to exhibit pollution behaviour. The ensuing analysis will illustrate the ways in which the transgender person is construed as a dangerous and polluting influence on the organisation. In the above extract the dreaded spectre of the heterosexual cross dresser is raised. Morton Hall was clearly named by some as an organisation that was solely dedicated to improving the rights of lesbian, gay and bisexual people to the exclusion of all others. This constituted a very definite understanding of the

purpose of the organisation, which could indicate that those who are against including heterosexual cross dressers believe that lesbian, gay and bisexual people form an easily identifiable and discrete minority group who share a collective understanding of their oppression. Furthermore, this sets up an opposition with heterosexual people in a move which homogenises heterosexual people as well as homosexual people, creating an 'us and them' ideology (see Young 1997). (Homo)sexuality is seen as something immanent that defines both personal identity and politics. Underlying this is the notion that *all* heterosexual people possess rights that *all* LGB people do not; moreover, instituting this division reinscribes the differences between gay and straight people; in invoking the binary it is strengthened. This is the detrimental effect noted by Lasch-Quinn (2000) with regard to race relations. For several Executive Committee members the main problem with the inclusion of transgender in Morton Hall was that the definition includes cross dressers, expressing a concern that the organisation would find itself representing heterosexual people. At no stage in the debate did these members indicate having a problem with LGB identified transgender (read transsexual) people being part of the organisation, therefore one can see that the heterosexual transgender person occupies the limen and represents a danger to the organisation. Part of the issue here is that, as discussed in greater detail in chapter 5, for the majority of the Executive Committee members 'transgender' is actually conceptualised as 'transsexual', therefore transgender people are seen as crossing from one world to another safely, and therefore causing as little danger as possible to others. However, the heterosexual cross dresser problematises this as they do not perform the crossing, choosing rather to remain in a state of transition. Continuing Van Gennep's metaphor of rooms and corridors, the transsexual simply moves from one room to another without incident, whilst the heterosexual cross-dresser loiters in the corridors between rooms causing trouble for everyone else. Therefore, it is clear that as well as having a discrete and stable definition of gay and straight, those advocating exclusion had a discrete and stable understanding of male and female; one is either one or the other, never something in between.

Douglas argues that 'pollution behaviour is the reaction which condemns any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict cherished classifications' (1991b: 37). In response to my questioning, Lauren recognises this, claiming that it is those who are insecure about themselves who will attempt most strongly to strengthen the boundaries. The exclusionary reaction to the wide definition of transgender can be seen as pollution behaviour and is an attempt to exclude such polluting and dangerous people from the remit of the organisation, thus allowing Morton Hall to continue its work in safety. Lauren makes it very clear that she thinks that trans exclusion is advocated because of fear; the fear that one's own identity will be troubled in uncomfortable ways – being associated with people who are other to you should not affect you – there should not be guilt by association. However, those supporting exclusion, particularly of heterosexual trans people, appear to view transgender as especially threatening. Moreover, vociferous exclusion illuminates what is allowable; 'a rule of avoiding anomalous things affirms and strengthens the definitions to which they do not conform. So where Leviticus abhors crawling things, we should see the abomination as the negative side of the pattern of things approved' (Douglas 1991b: 40). Therefore in the complete repudiation of heterosexual trans people one can see the approval of homosexual (trans) people.

The fears surrounding possible contamination of Morton Hall by transgender has parallels with some of the fears exhibited with regard to homosexuality in times past. As far back as the 1700s some believed that one had to provide strong measures to suppress homosexuality, because man would naturally revert to the state in which he prefers the company of other men, (see Chapter 4). Regarding the suppression of the molly houses, one can see that 'no enemy is so monstrous as that which one fears lurking within oneself' (Norton 1992: 123). Similar views are also present in more recent times. During the period of gay liberation, much was made of the idea of polymorphous perversity, or inherent bisexuality (Marcuse 1969; Altman 1974), as being liberating from the constraints of normative sexuality. However, this was also considered with fear earlier in the century. For Freud 'freedom to range equally over male and female

objects as it is found in childhood, in primitive states of society and early periods of history, is the original basis from which, as a result of restrictions in one direction or the other, both the normal and inverted types develop' (Freud 1949: 25). Taking this further, West argues that 'no progress can be made in the search for an understanding of causes without first recognising that homo-erotic propensities are a part of man's natural biological inheritance ... the capacity for homo-erotic responsiveness is not, however, completely eradicated; it remains dormant, and can awaken given special circumstances' (West 1955: 61). The special circumstances West refers to are all male social situations, such as boarding schools, prisons, the military and so forth. In this account one can clearly see that homosexuality is hiding below the surface of every 'normal' man and is waiting to break free given half an opportunity. Given that, as Chapter 4 demonstrates, queer theory claims that gender is not natural, but a performative and cultural construction, one could make a case that it is only internal repression of the opposite gender which sustains a binary model of gender. Therefore one could argue that introducing transgender into Morton Hall would be a dangerous and polluting influence which would expose a repressed gender identity, just as West claims that certain all male social situations will expose a repressed homosexuality. Lauren's claim that it is only those who are insecure in their own identity who would oppose the inclusion of transgender reinforces this. If one is not in fear of what is lurking under the surface one would have little need to segregate LGB activism from transgender activism. It is also possible to argue that those advocating exclusion are afraid that widening the remit of Morton Hall would expose queer claims that gender is not natural.

This is to illustrate that fear and pollution behaviour around sexuality is nothing new, rather than to attempt to provide psychological explanations of the Executive Committee members' behaviour. As stated previously, one can never truly know the personal beliefs and emotions of another; however, their reactions to a disordering influence can nevertheless be illuminating. It is clear that, for some Executive Committee members, there is a level of fear associated with (heterosexual) trans people, but it seems over simplistic to argue that it is because

they fear personal contamination, especially given that LGB trans people are still welcome in the organisation. There is a high level of insecurity over the potential effects of including straight trans people in Morton Hall, but I think this is more concerned with the effect on the *organisation* rather than the individual. The pollution behaviour appears to be more directed at the disadvantageous effect on Morton Hall that the inclusion of heterosexual trans people would have, whilst the fear is more a fear of the unknown. The Executive Committee members' fear is concerned with the fact that they perceive that including transgender (on a broad definition) will materially alter Morton Hall and make it less effective at campaigning for lesbian, gay and bisexual equality, combined with the opinion that someone who is straight will have no knowledge of LGB issues. The 'unknown' in this debate is what straight trans people would actually bring to Morton Hall, be it positive or negative.

As Chapter 5 argues, for most of the Executive Committee members, transgender means transsexual, with a resultant emphasis on the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and other transition issues. This means that there has been little discussion of the needs of trans people (gay or straight) who have no desire to change their sex. Those in such a position, especially if they are heterosexual, are immediately placed in a position that defines their needs as contrary to those of the LGB membership of Morton Hall. I was the only Executive Committee member to suggest that there might be areas of commonality between heterosexual trans people and LGB people (see extract above). Mel makes similar claims vis-à-vis transgender as a whole and LGB, discussed in Chapter 8. Moreover, in the Executive Committee meeting, no-one directly responded to my opinion, and heterosexual trans people remained an object of pollution behaviour.

In the context of Douglas' ideas of pollution and danger, both Lauren and I did not see the heterosexual transgender person as a polluting influence, or as presenting a danger to ourselves or Morton Hall itself. Therefore we attempted to mitigate some of the danger felt by others by attempting to bring such individuals into the fold. However, this attempt was unsuccessful. Douglas argues that 'ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as

their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the differences between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created' (1991b: 4). I believe there is a fundamental difference between the trans excluders and both Lauren and me in that they desperately wanted that semblance of order created and maintained, whereas we had no such desire to impose order on 'an inherently untidy experience', for, as Douglas rightly maintains, such order is only a semblance, given that the definition of 'semblance' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is 'an appearance or outward seeming of (something which is not actually there or of which the reality is different from its appearance).' It is clear that in Ricky's extract he does exaggerate the differences between a heterosexual transgender person and an LGB one; it was this type of exaggeration that Lauren and I attempted to challenge by drawing on the similarities between the discrimination suffered by both heterosexual and homosexual transgender people. Also, as well as exaggerating the differences that Douglas describes, potential similarities are ignored as they would start to refute the differences that have been claimed.

In the following extract Terry questions the use of others' opinions of homosexual and transgender people as a basis for including transgender within the remit of Morton Hall.

Terry: all I was going to say was, working with diversity in the police, one of the things I see is transgenders and homosexuals have the same place in a bigots mind as paedophiles etc. If someone is issuing bigotry we are in the same little box in their head as paedophiles and there is no way we would be presumed to represent paedophiles, or have any interest in it.

Here Terry has responded to my claim that homophobic and transphobic abuse are connected. Rather than deny this, which would be very difficult, Terry instead claims that trans and LGB people are the same as paedophiles as far as a bigot is concerned. This moves to exclude transgender from Morton Hall and both

addresses my earlier statement and does not rely on a separation between gender and sexuality. Terry's account is further strengthened by the fact that he has this information from working with the police; this is therefore not just a theoretical connection but one that he has actually witnessed. One could make the argument that because homosexuality, transgender and paedophilia are linked in the bigot's mind there must be historical, social and cultural reasons for such a connection, therefore it would make sense to bring all the issues together. However, Terry is very quick to distance himself, and Morton Hall, from paedophilia: 'there is no way we would be presumed to represent paedophiles or have any interest in it'. It is rhetorically powerful to forge the link with paedophilia as there are few other things that can be guaranteed to induce such high levels of fear; there is no other contagion as dangerous. Moreover, Terry's definition of a paedophile is likely to be someone sexually attracted to young (probably prepubescent) children, rather than anyone having sex with someone under the age of consent; the reason for this is that in fighting for an equalisation of the age of consent laws Morton Hall was technically campaigning for those who would have been classed as, at the very least, sex offenders. This move also distances Morton Hall from other radical queer groups such as Outrage who campaigned for the age of consent to be fourteen for everyone.

Indeed, the effect of including paedophilia or man/boy love within an LGB umbrella has already proved definitionally problematic for the International Lesbian and Gay Association, and there are parallels with this case and Morton Hall. Gamson (1997) looks at the effects of inclusion and exclusion with regard to the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), and transsexuals and the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (MWMF). NAMBLA had been a member of the ILGA for ten years, but the major problems came when the ILGA was given a consultative role within the United Nations. Gamson notes that it is almost taken for granted that we define ourselves at least partly by what we are not, and that all social movements, to some extent, have exclusionary membership criteria; this is exacerbated when the social movement in question is one based upon identity.

This is not just defining against antagonists, but also against prospective protagonists; this is what happened in Morton Hall – transgendered people are not against the organisation, rather they are potential allies, but, apparently with enough differences from other Morton Hall members to make their membership an issue.

Gamson shows that it is not the participation of people in the movement that is the problem; NAMBLA members were involved in the ILGA, and after the exclusion of transsexuals from the MWMF, they were quietly allowed in again. He therefore suggests that ‘this gap between practice and public discourse suggests that internal movement debates over inclusion and exclusion are best understood as *public communications*’ (Gamson 1997: 180 original emphasis). Whilst the debate in Morton Hall has not arisen in the public domain the ‘public’ have been invoked by Executive Committee members as a rhetorical device; for example, it has been asked what the effect of explicit exclusion would be on the public image of Morton Hall. There is also a difference between practice and public discourse within Morton Hall. It has been decided that the organisation will not widen its remit to include trans people, nevertheless, Morton Hall is part of a national LGBT campaign and has promised to raise trans issues whenever possible and collaborate with a local transgender group. Furthermore, prior to the debate the organisation did not have a position on transgender and there was inclusion on an ad hoc basis which involved collaboration and partnership with the above local transgender group. Therefore there are already transgender people in the organisation; Mel claims that there are about 60 trans people in Morton Hall (just under ten per cent of the membership – her figure is unverifiable). Moreover, technically if heterosexual trans people are not allowed to join the organisation, any who are already in the organisation should be asked to leave. This has not happened, again demonstrating the exclusion of trans from Morton Hall is more symbolic than practical.

There are similarities between Morton Hall and the ILGA. The presence of NAMBLA became an issue because of public concern, but it had had a position in the ILGA in a time when the boundaries of lesbian and gay sexuality and sexual

minorities were less contested. The debate then centred itself on who can call themselves gay or lesbian. This is a large part of the discussion in Morton Hall, and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Gamson notes that NAMBLA's adversaries had three main arguments: they are child molesters; paedophilia is not a gay issue and NAMBLA is hindering the ILGA's political efficacy. This is a fairly standard effort to demonise one's opponents – claim the issues are different and then claim that policy reasons mitigate exclusion. These two tactics have been employed by Executive Committee members, although no-one has tried to demonise trans people. Regardless of whether one believes that transgender should be part of the remit of lesbian and gay organisations, it does form part of the current equality agenda, whereas man/boy love does not.

The ILGA claimed that NAMBLA was not a gay organisation; their central point being that '*you are not us*' (Gamson 1997: 185 original emphasis). This 'you are not us' discourse has been articulated by several Executive Committee members; only LGB trans people are welcome on the basis that heterosexual transgender people have no understanding of LGB issues. As analysed in Chapter 5 there is a very strong effort on the part of some Executive Committee members to separate sexuality from gender. In answer to this charge, NAMBLA claimed '*you are us and we are you*' (Gamson 1997: 186 original emphasis). They claimed that man/boy love was a part of homosexual history right from the Ancient Greeks and that similar practices exist contemporaneously in other cultures. They further claimed that NAMBLA has been long active in gay and lesbian campaigning. One can easily see a similar argument being put forward in favour of including transgender in Morton Hall, and indeed this was the case. Issues linking gender and sexuality have been ever present as Chapters 3 and 4 show; gay men have often been seen as effeminate, whilst lesbians have often been seen as masculine – the book often regarded as the classic of lesbian literature, *The Well of Loneliness* (Hall 1928) could perhaps more properly be seen as being about a trans man. Moreover as Mel has said, transgender people are already a part of Morton Hall, whether it is desired or not. Trans people have had a long standing part in LGB history and communities, be it in the centre or on the

margins, and will no doubt continue to be a part regardless of Morton Hall's final act of exclusion. In a sense this makes the exclusion all the more interesting because it goes against the general process of inclusion shown by other organisations in the past few years, such as the National Union of Students (towards trans people) and UNISON (towards bisexual and trans people). Furthermore, one can see that the previous basis of ad hoc inclusion masked a very complex and problematic debate that called the nature of Morton Hall into question.

Gamson argues that an organisation's loose boundaries are tightened 'when the communication environment changes, the fault lines bridged by loose boundaries are exposed triggering attempts to define the collective more purely' (1997: 187). This is an accurate description of Morton Hall; one of the catalysts to the debate was local trans people wishing to be part of the organisation, it was this demand for inclusion that revealed the loose boundaries of the organisation.

Having provided a rebuttal to myself by claiming that one should not rely on the oppressors' definition of sexuality or gender Terry proceeds to talk about heterosexuals being in Morton Hall:

That's extreme but how should I say, people who want to be involved probably have the same interests at heart, the heterosexual transgender wouldn't come within 50 miles of us, so in a lot of respect I'd go along with what Pat says if a case comes up which is obviously in our remit obviously we'd support it. It'd be very hard for us to go out and campaign for some people who have the transgender and for some reason are homophobic, that would seem to be a total betrayal of what we stand for. I don't know what the answer is that's the top and bottom of it but if we went purely on other peoples perception of us it's a different kettle of fish.

Here one can see Terry drawing on a collective ideology of the purpose of Morton Hall and assuming that everyone has shared opinions; those who want to be involved with Morton Hall 'probably have the same interests at heart'. Whilst

this is an attempt to foster a sense of a commonality of purpose, it does not sit easily with the fact that some transgender people do wish to be part of Morton Hall, whilst some Executive Committee members do not want such involvement; clearly those who want to be involved do not have the same interests at heart. However, it is most likely that Terry supposes that the only people who would want to be involved with the organisation would be lesbian, gay or bisexual, as he claims that heterosexual transgender people would not want to join Morton Hall. (This is a very strange argument that is also employed by others and is explored further in chapter 7 and the conclusion: Terry is using Morton Hall's present remit, that it is LGB, as an argument for why heterosexual transgender people would not want to join the organisation if it were to be widened to become LGBT, which using the Gender Trust's definitions would necessarily include heterosexual transgender people.) Terry then proceeds to support Pat's argument for a case-by-case basis of inclusion when the issue is 'obviously in our remit'. In saying this Terry assumes that the remit is obvious; that is, it is known to all the Executive Committee members, meaning he does not have to explain it – the organisation's remit is part of the assumed knowledge of Morton Hall. I am also unsure what in this context a 'case' actually is; Morton Hall is primarily a lobbying organisation and does not undertake service provision (for instance, the organisation does not support individual cases under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, or provide advice to those who have been victims of homophobia), therefore Morton Hall would not, for instance, be helping individual transsexuals negotiate the Gender Recognition Act 2004, or help them if they suffered transphobic discrimination. This therefore means that the 'case' will necessarily relate to some area of policy or community development that is of relevance to transsexuals; however, unless Morton Hall becomes an LGBT organisation, such cases would be *outside* its remit. Viewed from this angle it appears that the 'case-by-case' idea is merely a cover for exclusion, however, I cannot believe that this was the intention of Pat, who introduced the idea, as she advocated full inclusion of transgender people in Morton Hall.

Terry makes the connection between transgender, homosexuality and paedophilia, invoking paedophilia as the ultimate pollution, the danger of which must be avoided at all costs. This danger is made reference to, not because it is likely that Morton Hall will ever represent paedophiles but rather because it demonstrates that even though transphobic abuse is similar to homophobic abuse, transgender can still have a polluting influence on the organisation. This attempt to separate gender and sexuality, in response to my conflation of the two, is a move to strengthen the idea of the heterosexual transgender person as a dangerous influence, and thereby place such individuals beyond the pale of Morton Hall. Ricky gave one example of how the polluting influence of heterosexual transgender people would affect Morton Hall – it would detract from the issues that the organisation campaigns on – here Terry gives a second example; he raises the spectre of the homophobic transgender individual. Whilst I agree that the situation raised by Terry would be a difficult one, it is noteworthy that he does not also say that, if the remit was widened, it would be equally hard to campaign for transphobic LGB people. However, Terry says, ‘what we stand for’, defining the primary aim of the organisation as being about sexuality, therefore transgender would be a dirty outside influence betraying the (in his account, collectively agreed and supported) aims of Morton Hall. This relates to the confusion of the purpose of Morton Hall identified by Lauren and explored in greater detail in Chapter 8; should the organisation be made up of those who share a sexual identity, or those who share the same political ends?

This extract raises the issue of internal differences and prejudices between LGB and transgender people and in so doing assumes that there are no such internal differences or prejudices between lesbian, gay and bisexual people. It is feasible that some lesbian and gay people could be prejudiced against bisexuals, seeing them as still trying to claim heterosexual privilege; some (radical feminist) lesbians could be prejudiced against gay men, seeing them as hypermasculine; some bisexuals could be prejudiced against lesbians and gays, believing that they have not recognised everyone’s innate polymorphous perversity. These examples illustrate some of the potential internal differences between LGB people that are

not seen as problematic for the work of Morton Hall, firstly, therefore this questions whether a homophobic transgender person would pose a problem for Morton Hall (using Terry's logic, would such a person 'come within 50 miles of us' anyway) or not, secondly this illustrates that the symbolic ideas of pollution that Terry (and others) draw upon is based on a false unity of LGB people.

Conclusions

This chapter has illustrated some of the ways that the Executive members of Morton Hall constitute the heterosexual transgender person as betwixt and between, as neither fish nor fowl. This chapter has developed an understanding of some of the ways in which the figure of the heterosexual transgender person has been an object of danger and pollution behaviour for the Executive Committee members.

The multiple ways in which transgender has been excluded by this behaviour reveals the centre that is defined by the margins. Douglas claims that 'we can assume that the community, in so far as it shows a common culture, is collectively interested in pressing for conformity to its norms' (1991a: 53). This chapter shows that transgender does not (save LGB transsexuals) conform to the norms of Morton Hall. The heterosexual trans person particularly is of foundational importance to the debate, and that there is something about this figure that is seen by some members as troubling. The Executive Committee members' responses to the pollution of transgender represent what Bauman terms the phagic and emetic strategies:

The phagic strategy is 'inclusivist', the emetic strategy is 'exclusivist'. The first 'assimilates' the strangers to the neighbours, the second merges them with the aliens. Together, they polarize the strangers and attempt to clear up the most vexing and disturbing middle-ground between the neighbourhood and alienness poles. To the strangers for whom they define the life condition and its choices, they posit a genuine 'either/or': conform or be damned, be like us or do not overstay your visit, play the game by our

rules or be prepared to be kicked out from the game altogether (Bauman 1993: 163)

Most of the reactions seen in this chapter represent the emetic strategy; that which is disturbing is 'kicked out of the game'. Douglas provides an excellent understanding of the emetic strategy. While her analysis of pollution behaviour is excellent for considering adverse reactions to a contagion, it does not, however, provide the conceptual tools necessary to theorise why some people in a group do not exhibit such behaviour. That is she does not provides the tools to understand the phagic strategy, why some people opt for the inclusivist as opposed to the exclusivist path; this forms the subject of Chapter 8. Furthermore, Douglas has less to say on *why* an object of pollution behaviour occupies such a position, other than it being the subject of disapprobation by the group. It is to this that I turn in the following chapter which draws upon Morton Hall's construction of transgender (particularly heterosexual) as a transgression which further seeks to define the collective identity of Morton Hall.

COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES: TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES

This chapter considers the use of transgression and transgressive practices in defining the boundaries of Morton Hall. As already stated, for the purpose of Morton Hall the definition of transgender employed was that of the Gender Trust, and I quote it again:

Transgender. A term used to include transsexuals, transvestites and cross dressers. A transgenderist can also be a person who, like a transsexual, transitions - sometimes with the help of hormone therapy and / or cosmetic surgery - to live in the gender role of choice, but has not undergone, and generally does not intend to undergo, [sex reassignment] surgery
(<http://www.gendertrust.org.uk/index1.htm>)

This definition, although limited, is capable of including a significant number of people who transgress currently accepted sartorial convention. I argue that this transgression is central to demarcating the membership boundaries of Morton Hall. Furthermore, I analyse the, largely suppressive, reaction of the organisation to gender transgression. The following chapter (8) will demonstrate some of the problems with categorising gender variance into transgender and transsexual; for instance those who identify as something other to male and female and have no desire for surgery are largely excluded from these definitions. However, for the purpose of this chapter the defining transgression is that of the (heterosexual) cross dresser. Whilst there would have undoubtedly been a reaction against the above example, the situation did not present itself because, as will become clear, the limit is set much closer to the centre. I begin, however, by considering how transgression is a defining feature of collective identity, before discussing some of the ways in which Douglas (1991a, 1991b), Hegel (1991), Nietzsche (1969, 1974, 2003a, 2003b) and Bataille (2001) have conceptualised transgression. I relate

these theorists to the trans inclusion/exclusion debate and use them to illustrate the identity work of Executive Committee members.

From Transgression to Identity

For many of the executive members of Morton Hall, as Chapter 5 has shown, 'transgender' is largely conceptualised as 'transsexual' - that is, although in discussion most people used the word transgender, it is clear that they are referring to pre- or post-operative transsexuals (for example, there is much talk of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 which only pertains to transitioning transsexuals), rather than those who transgress gender norms, but have no intention of actually changing sex. I have suggested in the previous chapter that this is because, although transgressive, changing sex is an act that is normalised by having a finite end point. That is, the person undergoing the sex change does not remain in the liminal stage between genders, but rather crosses from one to another (van Gennep 1960; Turner 1974). However, when one transgresses gender norms and has no desire to leave the limen then one is in a far more dangerous position, and the transgression is all the more powerful for that. It is this particular transgression that is a central defining force in the arguments for transgender inclusion or exclusion within the organisation.

It should be noted that I am analyzing the transgression of transgenderism, and more specifically heterosexual transgenderism, not because they are immanently more transgressive than transsexuality but because it is the inclusion of transgender, using a broad definition, that is the shining light that illuminates the limits of Morton Hall most clearly. As stated in chapter 3, there is nothing inherently transgressive or subversive about transgender, but it is seen as such by several members of Morton Hall.

Jenks writes that 'the story which always precedes the commission or acknowledgement of a transgressive act is the constitution of a centre, a centre that provides for a social structure, and a structure of meaning that is delimited or marked out by boundaries' (2003: 15). In the context of my work, the 'centre' is the remit of the organisation, whilst the 'social structure' is the structure of

Morton Hall and the kinds of policies that it follows. Moreover, one can see the structure of meaning being created – the meaning of being lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Moreover, ‘logically, *inclusion* entails *exclusion*, if only by default. To define the criteria for membership of any set of objects is, at the same time, also to create a boundary, everything beyond which does not belong’ (Jenkins 2004: 79 original emphasis). This point is worth remembering, as much of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate is framed in terms of social justice and equality. However, this does not alter the fact that a certain group of people have been denied access to membership of Morton Hall. Further, the creation of a boundary creates the possibility of transgression which in turn provides the opportunity for a future re-evaluation of the boundary.

Durkheim’s (1947) notions of solidarity and repressive and restitutive sanctions provide a useful way of understanding the function of transgression in fostering a sense of collective identity. Whilst repressive and restitutive sanctions apply to different forms of solidarity, their function is essentially the same – that is, to preserve order. In a society with mechanical solidarity ‘a crime (or transgression) offends against the shared collective consciousness, it is therefore a crime (or transgression) against society itself,’ whilst in a society with organic solidarity ‘the symbolic response to transgression has to be an attempt at the restoration of the status quo and a declaration of difference’ (Jenks 2003: 20). Interestingly, in the arguments used in the trans inclusion/exclusion debate, one can see both forms of sanctions being employed, perhaps indicating that some Executive Committee members are attempting to foster a sense of mechanical solidarity onto what is arguably an organic community, given the diversity of the LGB ‘community’. To elaborate: I am defining Morton Hall and the LGBT community as a whole as an organic community; that is, it is made up of people who whilst able to work together, do not have shared belief and value systems. Therefore, the ‘correct’ response to a transgression should be a restoration of the status quo and a marking off of the transgressor as other. This type of response has occurred in the debate, such as the claims that gender and sexuality are two distinct categories discussed in Chapter 5. However, there have been responses to

the transgression that would be more appropriate to a mechanical community in which there was a shared sense of right and wrong, and of identity. Such responses include many of those detailed below and in the previous chapter (6). Such pollution behaviour and attempts at purification only make sense if one thinks that there is a shared collective conscience in the community. This argument is expanded upon in the conclusion. According to Durkheim 'criminal acts are those which *seem* harmful to the society that represses them, that penal rules express, not the conditions which are essential to social life, but those which *appear* such to the group which observes them' (Durkheim 1947: 73 original emphasis). However, as Durkheim is keen to stress, this does not tell us much on its own; what is of interest is why certain conditions *appear* as central to a particular group. In a non-judicial setting one can see that the acts, beliefs and values of a group, in this case an LGB organisation, are those which appear essential to the group's continued existence; therefore contrary acts, beliefs and values are those seen as harmful to the organisation. Further, in attempting to discover why certain criteria appear as central to a particular group one begins to gain an understanding of the constitution of the group as a whole.

Jenkins argues that 'community membership depends on the symbolic construction and signification of a mask of similarity which all can wear, an umbrella of solidarity under which all can shelter' (2004: 110) and furthermore that '*community is itself a symbolic construct upon which people draw, rhetorically and strategically*' (2004: 112 original emphasis). It is also possible to view communities as imagined. For Anderson, the nation is an 'imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (1991: 6). Although specifically writing on the nation, this definition can be productively applied to the LGB 'community,' especially given the reliance on ethnic homosexualities by several Executive Committee members (see chapters 4 and 5). Here the nation is imagined because the members of all but the smallest communities will not know one another and it is limited because it has boundaries – 'no nation imagines itself as coterminous with mankind' (Anderson 1991: 7). Lastly, 'it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality

and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship' (Anderson 1991:7). Considered in this fashion, community is imagined, in that it does not refer to anything solid, but is nevertheless something that the members will fight (in the literal sense when one considered nations) to protect. One can see therefore, that the criteria for membership of an organisation are constructed and are maintained by policing the transgressions that occur at the boundaries of membership.

Dangerous Transgressions

I now move to consider some of the theoretical analyses of transgression in order to understand the ways in which transgression, or perceived transgression, works to police the borders of Morton Hall, and therefore foster a sense of collective identity. This extract is from an interview with Lauren, referring to the first meeting in which the issue of heterosexual cross-dressers was raised:

Lauren: they're [some Executive Committee members] saying if you're a heterosexual man who's a transvestite then you can't [be part of Morton Hall] ... I think ... people who are insecure in their own identity or identities will be the most vocal in policing the boarders of those identities.

The particular transgression, as Lauren states, I am interested in is that of the transgender individual (as differentiated from the transsexual). As the previous chapter argues, a transgender individual, such as a cross-dresser, occupies a liminal position because s/he refuses to perform the rites of transition. The ensuing analysis illustrates the ways in which the transgender person is constructed as a dangerous and polluting influence on the organisation by the executive members, raising themes of transgression. Here the Executive Committee members have placed heterosexual transvestites outside the boundaries of Morton Hall. However, using the typology of 'gender defenders' and 'gender outlaws', introduced in Chapter 3, one can regard some transvestites as gender defenders because it is important that they are wearing women's clothes and

accoutrements, rather than those which can be worn by both men and women. Moreover, there is often a clear transition between male and female, at least for the duration of the cross-dressing. In chapter 3 I claimed that Morton Hall is more likely to support those trans people who uphold the idea of binary genders, however, it is not that simple. Whilst transsexuals and transvestites can both be seen to be gender defenders (see also chapter 8) the issue of sexuality is paramount. This is not to negate the fact that the heterosexual cross-dresser is transgressively defining for Morton Hall, but to acknowledge that this particular limit is contingent upon the Executive Committee members' construction of transgender issues and people, rather than an inherent division between transgender and transsexual. Therefore, it is clear that as well as having a discrete and stable definition of gay and straight, those advocating exclusion had a discrete and stable understanding of male and female; one is either one or the other, never something in between. In the second section of the extract, Lauren recognises that the exclusionary reaction could be because personal identities have been brought into question, claiming that it is those who are insecure about themselves who will attempt most strongly to strengthen the boundaries. The exclusionary reaction to the wide definition of transgender can be seen as pollution behaviour and is an attempt to exclude such polluting and dangerous people from the remit of the organisation, thus allowing Morton Hall to continue its work in safety. It is clear, therefore, that transgression can be a polluting influence that can induce pollution behaviour in individuals that serves to strengthen the definition of the collective.

Dialectics of Transgression

I now consider transgression, with its polluting influence, and the construction of collective identity as a dialectical movement, as the 'boundary can be seen as the dialectical synthesis of internal thesis and external antithesis,' (Jenkins 2004: 118). In these terms the transgressive act is the antithesis which destabilises the status quo of the organisation causing the re-evaluation of the thesis into a new synthesis. In saying that there is a dialectic of transgression, I am not employing dialectics as a process embedded in historicism, as Hegel does. For example *The*

Philosophy of History (Hegel 1991) illustrates one giant dialectical movement from the time of the Greeks to the present; furthermore, he saw that 'the history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom' (19). It is possible to see Hegelian dialectics as a totalising and deterministic form of thought that is in opposition to poststructural critiques of identity and difference. However, when one removes the historical impulse from dialectics, it is still the case that,

In the categories of our thought, in the development of consciousness, and in the progress of history, there are opposing elements which lead to the disintegration of what seemed stable, and the emergence of something new which reconciles the previously opposing elements but in turn develops its own internal tensions (Singer 2001: 103).

A dialectical analysis can illustrate some of the ways in which identity is formed through discussion and negotiation, as well as demonstrating the importance of transgression in the formation of identity. It is also important to note that although each dialectical movement will terminate in a synthesis, 'not every synthesis brings the dialectic process to a stop in the way that Hegel thought the organic community of his own time brought the dialectical movement of history to an end' (Singer 2001: 102). A synthesis may resolve the one sidedness of its thesis and antithesis. However it may still find itself one sided in another respect, and additionally it is possible that the original antithesis (particularly if it is a transgressive impulse) may still not be fully resolved.

In the context of the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate within Morton Hall, the thesis was the position of the organisation before April 2004, that is, that the organisation was for lesbian, gay and bisexual people only and therefore that transgender people would only be represented if they were also lesbian, gay or bisexual. The antithesis was the argument from certain people, both within and without the organisation, that the remit be widened to include transgender people. The synthesis was the final decision of the organisation; that it will continue to be LGB, as before, but will additionally attempt to support transgender activists

gaining funding to set up their own organisation. This is the overall picture of the dialectical movement; however, on closer inspection it is apparent that the situation is more complex. Moreover, as will become clear, the synthesis is precarious and will probably form the thesis for another dialectical movement – see chapter 8 for more on the probable re-evaluation of the decision. The reasons for this complexity are the multiple arguments for trans inclusion/exclusion that have been employed in the debate; there have been two main foci of debate; firstly practical considerations of such things as costs and staffing and secondly, considerations of identity. The effect of this was that there were almost two concurrent, but nevertheless interconnected, debates on trans inclusion/exclusion, one on the practical considerations and one on identity matters. The following two extracts demonstrate some of this complexity, and are situated at the very end of the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate, and thus represent its conclusion. Robin was chairing that particular meeting and was bringing the debate to a close.

Robin: generally speaking the discussions have gone round the fact that with the Gender Reassignment Act which firmly comes under the Equal Opportunities Commission, we have a capacity issue in terms of the number of staff that are there to be able to pick up and run with and train and answer all the questions round that, it would be quite difficult for Morton Hall to pick up [...] I think Evelyn you were saying that we have identified that there is the possibility of funding for either [local trans organisation] or for a transgender group to pick that up and we would certainly want to work with that group to support it, but at this stage it does seem to be over and above our remit to include the T as though Morton Hall is representing transgender people across [area] I mean I think that is the general feeling.

Robin: Can we then come to that conclusion, that it remains the status quo but with all those provisos that we continue to support alongside where we can and any campaigns that we are involved in may well include the transgender issue. So is that ok? Are you happy with

that? It would be worth I think, two years' time, three years' time, saying that we may want to revisit it if things change. We don't know what is going to happen with the commission and so on but to get this again and again would be counterproductive.

As with elsewhere in the discussion, transgender has been largely conceptualised as transsexual. Whilst it was claimed that those who have issues under the Gender Reassignment Act should be directed to the Equal Opportunities Commission (although as stated in Chapter 5, I think this argument is spurious), the situation for those who have issues unrelated to transition are in a far more precarious position. An example of this is the case of *Smith v Safeway Plc* (1995) at an Employment Appeal Tribunal which found that it was contra the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to have a requirement for men to have to have their hair not below the collar, whilst women were permitted to have long hair. However, on appeal (*Smith v Safeway Plc* 1996) it was held that 'rules concerning appearance will not be discriminatory because their content is different for men and women if they enforce a common principle of smartness or conventionality, and taken as a whole and not garment by garment or item by item, neither gender is treated less favourably in enforcing that principle' (*Smith v Safeway Plc* 1996: 457). This demonstrates the potential difficulty that a transgender person could find themselves in, and it is far from clear to whom such a person should go for help.

In Robin's summing up one can see the practical considerations in operation; it is questionable whether the organisation would have the resources to take on board trans issues as well as those of sexuality. Robin then went on to note that there was the possibility of funding for another organisation to take on these issues, and that Morton Hall would want to work with the new transgender organisation. However, this seems a rather tautological argument; the debate concerns whether the organisation should widen its remit to include transgender people as well as LGB people, therefore it seems illogical to use the fact that at present the organisation does not include transgender – and consequently does not

have the capacity to do so at present – as a reason for not widening the remit in the future and so being able to apply for funding on that basis. The only reason that it is ‘over and above our remit to include the T’ is that the remit has not been widened to include it.

This would appear to make this a very precarious synthesis that is liable to change in the future; this is acknowledged in Robin’s second extract. Here Robin indicated that this is not a once and for all decision; if the political situation changes (‘the commission’ refers to the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, coming into being in 2007) then Morton Hall may change its policy. This demonstrates that it is likely that the present synthesis will form the thesis for another dialectical movement; the unknown factor is the antithesis – it could, for instance be a change in the political climate, or further demands from trans people to be included in the organisation. This demonstrates a break with Hegel’s historical dialectics; there is no absolute to which the dialectical movement is directed; rather it is a constructed and fluid process.

Having said that the status quo remains, Robin says that some of the campaigns that the organisation is involved with may well include transgender issues, in which case they would work on them. An example of such a campaign is Education for All, which is a joint campaign run by LGBT Youth Scotland, FFLAG (Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays), and Stonewall, with nearly seventy coalition members across the UK. This is directly discussed by Jerry in the penultimate meeting that considered trans inclusion/exclusion:

Jerry: you know what is happening in many of the campaigns, for instance Education for All is an LGBT campaign so there is the involvement there. We are now talking to policy makers on lesbian and gay issues, if there’s an obvious link then we’ll talk about transgender issues to them. Morton Hall does obviously represent transgender people who are lesbian gay or bisexual; that is Morton Hall’s position, we are a lesbian gay and bisexual organisation and we include anyone who is LGB whatever ethnicity or transgender or diversity generally, so I think we are covering it.

The aim of the Education for All campaign is to tackle homophobia in schools. However, the campaign is LGBT, and there is a recognition that 'homophobia affects all pupils and students – lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight' (Stonewall 2005). Furthermore, when this campaign was launched for the organisation there was much talk of how homophobic abuse and bullying was a problem for both gay and straight students, as well as an awareness that 'gay' as a term of abuse was as much about signifying someone's break with accepted masculinity or femininity as sexuality itself. Jerry also says that when talking to policy makers that if there is an 'obvious link' with transgender issues then they will also be raised. This raises two points, the first being the nature of an 'obvious link'. The second point is that this presupposes that there is a potential pool of obvious links between issues affecting LGB people and issues affecting transgender people which appears contrary to claims made by some other Executive Committee members that the two issues are separate. Furthermore, it is rather a misnomer to say that because Morton Hall represents LGB people who are transgender that 'we are covering it.' A trans LGB person is being represented on the basis that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual, not that they are transgender. Jerry would not have said that because the organisation represented black and ethnic minority LGB people that 'we cover' the issues affecting black and ethnic minority people. Moreover, the organisation cannot truly claim to be 'covering it' when the business plan has no mention of transgender issues; however, this does not explain Robin and Jerry both paying, at the very least, lip service to representing trans issues. There are at least two possible explanations for this. The first is somewhat cynical and is that it is an attempt to pacify those, both within and without the organisation, in favour of trans inclusion. However, I favour the more sympathetic view that Morton Hall will attempt to raise trans issues when and where ever it can. This is because the organisation is involved in the Education for All campaign which does include transgender. Consequently I think the motivations are sincere, although I would dispute that 'we are covering it'. If Morton Hall is truly covering trans issues on the basis of its representation of trans

LGB people then there is little reason to exclude straight trans people. However, that this was not the case shows that the issue of sexuality remains of central import. Elsewhere (see chapter 8) Jerry states that Morton Hall does not have the expertise to, for example, guide people through the gender recognition process, therefore it seems clear that the only trans issues that Morton Hall will work on are those that have a clear and unarguable link with LGB issues. How such a link will be decided upon remains to be seen (especially given that the mere existence of such a link is anathema to many Executive Committee members), but the Education for All campaign appears to be one such example. These quotes show a more fluid understanding of sexuality than those used by Executive Committee members who claimed that sexuality is about sexual orientation and transgender is about gender. This means that the organisation will be operating with two competing understandings of sexuality simultaneously; referring back to Jenkins' (2004) statement on internal thesis and external antithesis (above), it also appears that there is an internal antithesis as well. These problems make a dialectical understanding of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate difficult; the synthesis is supposed to embody some kind of truth, the thesis and antithesis 'must be brought together, unified in a manner that preserves them, and avoids their different forms of one-sidedness' (Singer 2001: 102). It appears awkward to write of this debate as a complete dialectical movement – as I have tried to do, as the organisation has, for the time being at least, made its decision on trans inclusion/exclusion – as it is far from clear that the movement is complete. What this does demonstrate however, is that transgressive elements of transgender have found their way into the organisation even though the official stance of Morton Hall is to remain LGB.

Part of the reason that the above dialectical analysis seems somewhat forced is 'because dialectics substituted for the questioning of being and limits the play of contradiction and totality' (Foucault 1977: 38). Nevertheless the analysis is productive as it illustrates the fact that the debate cannot sensibly be reduced to thesis, antithesis and synthesis and shows that the problem is far more complicated and interwoven. Therefore I now move to question being and limits within the context of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate.

Of Madmen and Free-Spirits

Having looked at the debate as a whole I intend now to analyse specifically the transgression that has fostered the debate; that is, the non transsexual transgender person, who may, or may not, be gay. To this end I employ Nietzsche's theory of the will to power, and his deep suspicion of given values to understand the purposive effects of the transgression. Probably Nietzsche's most famous, and most misinterpreted, statement is that 'God is dead', and this is relevant here (Nietzsche 1969, 1974, 2003a, 2003b). That 'God is dead' is far more about morality than theology; it was the moral and philosophical aspects of the death of God that interested Nietzsche for it leads to a decentralisation and re-evaluation of values and morals. Religion no longer is the maker of morals, rather we are left with the will to power and the doctrine of the eternal return; 'the survival of the human spirit no longer rests in the hands of the collective but in the affirmation of the new triumphalist, the individual in the incarnation of the *Übermensch* (the overman). Humankind must escape from the protective and pacifying politics of order into a celebration of life as 'the will to power' (Jenks 2003: 70). It could be argued that this leads to a nihilistic freefall in which all is relative and there are no values, however, this would be to misread Nietzsche. He is not saying that values are inherent in the world (a rejection of Kantian a priori reasoning), nor is he saying that people create their own values, rather Nietzsche is claiming that values and morality are socially constructed and often have the appearance of being 'true'; the central concern is 'Under what conditions did Man invent for himself those judgements of values, "Good" and "Evil"? *And what intrinsic value to they posses in themselves*' (Nietzsche 2003b: 4 original emphasis). Further, he writes that 'it has been the good themselves, that is, the aristocratic, the powerful, the high-stationed, the higher minded, who have felt that they themselves were good, and that their actions were good, that is to say of the first order, in contradistinction to all the low, the low minded, the vulgar, and the plebeian' (Nietzsche 2003b:11). From this it is clear that Nietzsche was developing a

sociology of morals and values that sought to critique the existing (religious) moral systems, and also to transvaluate them.

Nietzsche, then, presents us with a call to the will to power, and to re-evaluate norms and morals, as their validity no longer resides with the judgement of God. The transgression of transgender exemplifies this call. Transgender is a rejection of the normative, binary construction of gender in society and as such represents a transvaluation of gendered values and morality. The will to power is about seizing one's life and destiny and being self-determining; 'to manage one's destiny is to refute, overcome and cast aside the values of others, they become barriers to true purpose' (Jenks 2003: 71). A transgender individual is clearly constructing their own identity and being, and is casting aside the judgements of others. This is the transgressive impulse that appears to be too much for Morton Hall to accept; the values (on gender at least) of the organisation are not, therefore, very different from those of wider society – male is male and female is female and never the twain shall meet. In *The Gay Science* it is a madman who after proclaiming the death of God, sees the looks of astonishment on his listeners' faces and continues;

"I have come too early," he said then, "my time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men ... deeds, though done, still require time to be seen and heard. This deed is still more distant from them than the most distant stars – *and yet they have done it themselves*" (Nietzsche 1974: 182 original emphasis).

This is an indication that the transvaluation of values and morality is a slow process; perhaps transgender individuals have accomplished a re-evaluation of gendered values that the rest of society (including some LGB people) are not yet ready to accept; the transgressive transgender madman has come too early! Interestingly Nietzsche says 'and yet they have done it themselves'; as was shown above, Morton Hall has already begun to accept that homophobic abuse can happen to straight people and that 'gay' as an insult is about gender as well as

sexuality. This, however has not yet manifested itself as a widening of the organisation's remit to include transgender. There are clear parallels between this and the idea of becoming-trans based upon Deleuze and Guattari put forward in the following chapter.

One must remember that, for Nietzsche, the death of God was undoubtedly a positive thing as it would open up new ways of seeing and thinking. It is worth quoting Nietzsche at length;

Indeed, we philosophers and "free spirits" feel, when we hear the news that the "old god is dead," as if a new dawn shone on us; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation. At long last the horizon appears free to us again, even if it should not be bright; at long last our ships may venture out again, venture out to face any danger; all the daring of the lover of knowledge is permitted again; the sea, *our* sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet been such an "open sea" (1974: 280 original emphasis).

The death of God is, then, fundamentally about breaking with old values and replacing them with something new. Proclaiming the death of God is a transgressive act itself that breaks down old boundaries and values. This drastic change (and it must be drastic) is a contributory factor that leads to the pollution behaviour identified earlier. It is clear, then, that the will to power of transgender is a transgressive force that has the (potential) power to transvaluate the remit of the organisation, and thereby define its membership; 'transgression is part of the purpose of being and is the unstable principle by which any stasis either sustains or transforms. This does not make all transgressions either 'good' or 'bad', it renders them purposive' (Jenks 2003: 81). Central to the defining effects of the will to power and the proclamation of the death of God are the reactions to this of the herd (the rest of society) – do they fall silent and look on in astonishment? Or do they welcome the transvaluated morality. In the case of Morton Hall it is evident that the former reaction proliferated as was elucidated when discussing dialectics, above.

The Taboo Holds

From Nietzsche we begin to learn that transgression is not inherently good or bad, rather it has a purpose. For Nietzsche the purpose is part of the eternal re-evaluation of values and the will to power; for Bataille (2001) and Foucault (1977) transgression is more about the taboo, or limit, that the transgression is part of. In Bataille, there is, however, still a sense of a 'will to transgression'; 'there is in nature and there subsists in man a movement which always exceeds the bounds, that can never be anything but partially reduced to order' (2001: 40). Life is inherently disordered, and it is the operation of transgression and taboo that bring order; furthermore it is two contrasting feelings that influence the transgression – 'men are swayed by two simultaneous emotions: they are driven away by terror and drawn by an awed fascination. Taboo and transgression reflect these two contradictory urges. The taboo would forbid the transgression but the fascination compels it' (2001: 68). There is then, a drive to transgress the taboo, however, it is important to note that Bataille is not arguing that the taboo should be abolished. Abolishing the taboo would remove the possibility of its transgression; similarly to Freud, Bataille believes that sexuality and eroticism are constructed by the operation of taboos, therefore to eradicate the taboos would also be to eradicate desire. To illustrate this, MacCabe, in his introduction to *Eroticism* writes that 'it might be possible to construct an argument that would see the ever-increasing production of pornography as relating to an ever-decreasing fading of desire' (MacCabe in Bataille 2001: xv).

The question of the eradication of the taboo, of the old values, is a point of contention between Nietzsche and Bataille as I now elaborate. In the context of my work, the taboo is gender, as exemplified by transgender, that is, the crossing of the boundary between male and female (or refusing to recognise the boundary in the first place). The Nietzschean transvaluation of values and morality would suggest that the whole edifice of traditional gender identity be brought down as the old god of gender dies; this necessarily leads to the future impossibility of gender as we know it and would abolish transgender, as well as male and female, as there would simply be no limit to cross. Contrastingly, as illustrated above, Bataille

would appear to refuse such an abolition of the limit. Central to this debate is the question, what would be lost if the taboos of gender were abolished? One's perspective on this will largely be defined by one's views on the desirability of gender categories. MacCabe's view that it could be possible to argue that increasing pornography leads to a fading of desire is predicated on the fact that such a fading of desire is a bad thing. However, it is questionable whether reducing or erasing the centrality of gender to identity is also a bad thing; as Chapter 3 illustrates, this is the aim of some trans theorists and activists. Part of the problem here lies in the difficulty of imagining what a world without gender would look like. It is possible, that if one were to follow Nietzsche rather than Bataille, that such a world would open up new possibilities for desire, rather than foreclosing it. Notwithstanding this, it is still the case that the relationship between the transgression and the taboo or limit is revelatory, even though the relationship is not a simple binary,

Rather, their relationship takes the form of a spiral which no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightening in the night which, from the beginning of time, gives a dense and black intensity to the night it denies, which lights up the night from the stark clarity of its manifestation, its harrowing a poised singularity; the flash loses itself in the space it marks with its sovereignty and becomes silent now that it has given a name to obscurity (Foucault 1977: 35).

Transgression is, then, a transient flash of light that illuminates its limit; moreover, in revealing the limit, the centre is also revealed. Continuing the lightening analogy, it seems that many of the Executive Committee members of Morton Hall to not want to be out in the thunderstorm; they do not wish to be confronted with the transgression.

Bataille notes that 'often the transgression of a taboo is no less subject to rules than the taboo itself. No liberty here. "At such and such a time and up to a certain point this is permissible" – that is what the transgression concedes' (2001: 65). One can clearly see this with regard to cross-gender behaviour. As Garber

(1992) (see Chapter 3) recognises, cross-dressing can be a sign of privilege and power in some contexts and a sign of opprobrium and perversion in other context. Only some people, in some circumstances can break the taboo in safety. In the context of the transgender inclusion/exclusion debate within Morton Hall one can see the regulation of the transgression. In the first instance, LGB transgender people are permitted to be in the organisation, although this is on the basis of their being lesbian, gay or bisexual, not because of their gender identity. This raises the difficult and highly problematic question of what being lesbian, gay or bisexual *and* transgendered means in terms of life experiences; there has been little discussion of the complexities of the intersection of non-normative sexual and gender identities. It also appears that transsexuality is a permissible transgression of gender, whilst transgender (particularly *heterosexual* cross-dressing) is not. As already noted in Chapter 5, for many Executive Committee members although the word 'transgender' is being used it seems apparent that they are referring to transsexuals, that is, people who have, or wish to have, sex reassignment surgery. For instance some have mentioned referring transgender people onto Press for Change if they come to Morton Hall for help; as Chapter 3 argues, Press for Change is a UK organisation that works primarily on issues affecting transsexuals and does not appear to do much for those who are transgender but have no wish to change sex. It is this latter group of people who are transgressing gender in a non-permissible manner. Bataille also notes that 'concern over a rule is sometimes at its most acute when that rule is being broken, for it is harder to limit a disturbance already begun' (2001: 65). Similarly, there is a far greater disturbance in the transgression of transgender as opposed to transsexual. In the case of transsexuality, although a rule is being broken, the rule is reconstituted on the completion of sex reassignment surgery. The idea that there are two discrete genders is not troubled, particularly if the 'right gender, wrong body' discourse is used; one undergoes surgery to construct one's 'correct' body. However for a non-operative transgender person the rule is broken and remains broken, consequently there is a far greater disturbance as there is not an end to the transgression, rather it is continuous.

Foucault also discusses the relationship between the transgression and the limit, arguing that ‘the limit and transgression depend on each other for whatever density they possess: a limit could not exist if it were absolutely uncrossable and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows’ (1977: 34). This indicates that the more rigid and inflexible the limit, the more powerful the transgression that crosses it, therefore the stronger the counter reaction to the transgression. Foucault also comments on what happens the moment the transgression crosses the limit, claiming that

The limit opens violently onto the limitless, finds itself suddenly carried away by the content it had rejected and fulfilled by this alien plenitude which invades it to the core of its being. Transgression carries the limit right to the limit of its being; transgression forces the limit to face the fact of its imminent disappearance, to find itself in what it excludes (perhaps, to be more exact, to recognise itself for the first time), to experience its positive truth in its downfall (1977: 34).

This sounds both immensely liberating (for the transgressors) and immensely frightening (for those within the limit) in equal measure. It is clear from this that transgression illuminates in a flash the limit and carries with it a violent and disruptive potential. It is interesting that Foucault argues that the transgression makes the limit recognise itself for the *first* time as this indicates that the transgression reveals a previously unthought-of limit; the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall is the first time that many Executive Committee members had thought about the similarities or differences between gender and sexuality. In the context of the debate, the transgression did push the limit (of the organisation) to the limit of its being, particularly given the wider definition of transgender being used, with the inclusion of heterosexual cross dressers. However, this did not lead to the downfall of the limit, rather the limit was defined again; ‘the transgression does not deny the taboo but transcends it and completes it’ (Bataille 2001: 48). The relationship between the taboo and the transgression is a symbiotic

one; each requires the other for its existence. Furthermore, the completion of the taboo by the transgression could lead to the strengthening of the taboo, rather than weakening it, but whatever happens, the taboo remains; 'it [transgression] opens the door into what lies beyond the limits usually observed, but it maintains these limits just the same. Transgression is complementary to the profane world, exceeding its limits but not destroying it' (Bataille 2001: 67). This conception of transgression is also reminiscent of Rubin's (1984) notion of both the sacred circle/outer limits and the line. The sacred circle/outer limits refers to a sex hierarchy in which the charmed circle consists of those acts and behaviours which are deemed 'good, normal, natural' (281) such as those that are monogamous, heterosexual, procreative and in a relationship which is contrasted against the outer limits which consists of acts and behaviours which are deemed 'bad, abnormal, unnatural' (281) such as those that are promiscuous, homosexual, non-procreative and casual. In this schema one can clearly see the demarcation between the outer limits and the charmed circle as operating along the lines of a taboo. Similarly, Rubin talks of the struggle over the line which one draws between 'good' and 'bad' sexual behaviour. Rubin places heterosexual reproductive monogamy on the 'good' side of the line, whilst the 'bad' includes transvestites, transsexuals and sado-masochists. Between the two Rubin places an area of contest which includes homosexuality, which has a degree of acceptability. With regard to the Executive Committee members, one can see that where to draw the line is not only a question for those on its 'good' side; those in the contestable middle ground are also seeking to draw a line between themselves and bad, unnatural sexualities.

Conclusions

This chapter has, then, explored the relationship between transgression and the construction of collective identity generally, and within Morton Hall particularly. The central conclusion to arise is that transgression always serves a purpose, although that purpose may not be exactly what the transgressor intended. Transgression is always in a relationship to the limit and helps define that limit.

Importantly, the transgression and the limit are not static; the definition of the limit, and thereby of what can transgress it, is ordered by social interaction. On reaching, and passing, the limit one feels both fascination and horror, much like the reader of *The Story of the Eye* (1987) or *Blue of Noon*, (2001) two of Bataille's deeply transgressive novels, feels the compulsion to continue reading as well as revulsion at the disturbing subject matter. When one crosses a boundary it is not destroyed, rather the power of the boundary is felt by the transgressor. According to Suleiman 'the characteristic feeling accompanying transgression is intense pleasure (at the exceeding of boundaries) and of intense anguish (at the full realisation of the force of those boundaries)' (1990: 75). It is this 'full force' of the limit that has been most in evidence in the trans inclusion/exclusion debate; those transgressing gender within a non bio-medical discourse are made to feel the full power of the organisations regulatory apparatus. Notwithstanding this, a study of transgression and limits also reveals the constitution of the centre; the, generally hostile, reaction of the Executive Committee to the transgression reveals the basis on which gender and sexuality are defined for Morton Hall.

This, and previous chapters have focused more on the arguments for trans exclusion, as these dominated the debate. However, in the following chapter I employ the work of Deleuze and Guattari to analyse the argument for trans inclusion, and draw comparisons with those for exclusion.

THE RHIZOME: ARGUMENTS FOR INCLUSION

This chapter will use some of the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari to think through Morton Hall's transgender inclusion/exclusion debate. Their focus on multiplicities make their work particularly appropriate for analysing the arguments put forward by Executive Committee members for inclusion, as these tend to rely on an understanding of gender and sexuality as fluid and/or multiple. I use the theory of rhizomatic and arborescent thought to argue that the rhizome advocates inclusion, whilst arborescence stabilises and defines identity as truth which advocates for exclusion. I then employ the concept of becoming minoritarian to consider some of the ways in which one can argue that transgender is already being included in the organisation to some extent. This section also argues that, as time moves on, it will become increasingly untenable to support trans exclusion. The concluding section discusses the ways in which the arguments for exclusion or inclusion can be viewed in terms of maps and tracings. This chapter tends to focus on explicating the ways in which the arguments in favour of inclusion rely on fluid and changing understandings of gender and sexuality, whilst the arguments in favour of exclusion employ understandings of gender and sexuality that fix and solidify these concepts.

Rhizomes versus Arborescence

This section will consider the trans inclusion/exclusion debate using Deleuze and Guattari's theory of rhizomatics. Furthermore I elaborate on their views on arborescent, radicle or fascicular, and rhizomatic multiplicities within this debate. I argue that the limited recognition of the plurality of gender by certain Executive Committee members is a pseudo-multiplicity of the fascicular type, whereas a rhizomatic understanding would argue for full inclusion of transgender within Morton Hall.

The first kind of thought described by Deleuze and Guattari is arborescent, that is, tree-like; linear, proceeding from the roots to the branches; one becoming two.

One becomes two; whenever we encounter this formula, even stated strategically by Mao or understood in the most “dialectical” way possible, what we have before us is the most classical and well-reflected, oldest, and weariest kind of thought. Nature doesn’t work that way, in nature roots are taproots with a more multiple, lateral, and circular system of ramification, rather than a dichotomous one. Thought lags behind nature (2004: 5).

Moreover, the logic of arborescence is binary ‘which is as much as to say that this system of thought has never reached an understanding of multiplicity’ (2004: 5). More amenable to multiplicity, but nevertheless not multiple itself is the radicle, or fascicular, root. This is a root which has been aborted or had its end cut, onto which other, lesser, roots have grafted themselves. This is a kind of non-interconnected thought system that, although it can recognise multiplicities and potentialities more than arborescence, it is not rhizomatic. Central to my argument is the fact that ‘multiplicities are rhizomatic, and expose arborescent pseudo-multiplicities for what they are’ (8). In other words, the complex reality of transgender and sexual identity exposes the fallacy of attempting to view gender and sexuality in binary terms. I argue that by supporting the perspective that the organisation should exclude trans people, but nevertheless continue to support them is a kind of coalition politics through which Executive Committee members are favouring an arborescent pseudo-multiplicity. This approach is multiple because it recognises that there is some level at which lesbian, gay and bisexual people and trans people can work together for the same ends. However, it remains arborescent as it remains trapped in a binary, categorising logic that institutes organisational separation between gender and sexuality.

Before continuing my analysis I shall elaborate some of the key features of a rhizome; ‘unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other

point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature ... the rhizome is an acentered, non-hierarchical, non-signifying system without a General and without an organising memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 23). The rhizome abhors structure; it has no central defining feature, nor does it seek to define others. Rhizomes are not authoritarian; they are multiple and heterogeneous. A rhizome can be broken, but will start up again on either old lines or new lines, never being totally destroyed. One can see, then, that a rhizome is truly interconnected and multiple.

Here I present two extracts from the same meeting I which the Executive Committee members advocate including transgender in Morton Hall:

Pat: one of my ex partners and very dear friend is a transsexual person and as far as I can see it's a quadrant model maybe your going to take your sexual orientation with you when you cross that divide, maybe your not, but either way the proportion of heterosexuals is going to be very small, the majority of trans people must by definition be, well I'd use the word queer but that's another debate.

...

Alex: yeah I pretty much agree with what Pat just and I want to come back what Jean just said about the idea of transvestites and that kind of thing, heterosexual people being involved in transgender, from my experience if you were to go down that route, it's a minefield, I mean I've gone out in town wearing skirts that kind of thing, been out with my girlfriend, we've been walking down the street and been called lesbians, dykes, queers all that kind of thing now we're quite blatantly not lesbians, so ok you might have a heterosexual cross dresser but they can still have transphobic abuse, they can still have homophobic abuse, the fact they are not gay or bisexual doesn't stop that happening so why can't we cover them, so my suggestion is that on pretty much all grounds that we should include transgender.

From the above, one can see that those who argue for exclusion tend to refuse the multiplicity of sexuality and gender, whilst those who argue for inclusion tend to advocate a much more multiple and interconnected view of sexual and gender identity. In contradistinction to earlier speakers who saw sexual and gender identity as discrete and distinct, both Pat and myself attempted to problematise that belief by demonstrating ways in which gender and sexual identity inter-relate. In order to increase the authority of our statements, both Pat and myself draw on our own personal experiences as evidence for our beliefs. In saying that a transsexual may or may not carry their sexual orientation across transition Pat shows an awareness that the majority of transsexual people will at some stage of their life experience same-sex sexual attraction, whether it is before or after transition; this is a realisation that does not appear to be shared by many of the other Executive Committee members. In saying that the proportion of those who would be heterosexual is very small Pat is attempting to down play the perceived threat of heterosexuals to the organisation: the potential threat from heterosexuals to the organisation is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6. Although, in the context of this debate, a sensible point to make, this could still reinforce the point that heterosexuals are not welcome in the Morton Hall. However, Pat is the only person in the debate who brings in the notion of queer, claiming that most transsexual people would be queer. This could, in theory, lead to the inclusion of all transsexuals in the organisation on the basis of sexuality alone; this is a move that could argue for inclusion, whilst still preserving a distinction between gender and sexuality. Morton Hall would still only represent sexuality and queer people, but would also include transsexuals as they have been (re)defined as queer. In some contexts this argument could succeed, however, I think that those on the Executive Committee arguing against trans inclusion would also argue against queer understandings of gender and sexuality. In saying 'but that's another debate,' Pat herself recognises this, and nothing more on the subject is said in the meeting. Here Pat is employing a very wide definition of sexuality that recognises the blurring effects of transgender on discussions of sexual identity; this definition shows that she believes that sexuality is a more complicated issue than simply one

of being unproblematically lesbian, gay or bisexual. In essence, she is illustrating the multiple nature of sexual and gender identity and is going some way to recognising the rhizomatic nature of those identities. Although, as with most of the participants in the debate, Pat is still only talking about transsexual people, she provides a response to those who claim that only transsexuals who are lesbian, gay or bisexual can be in the organisation. However, in this extract, Pat is explicitly referring to 'transsexuals' and not using transgender when transsexual would be more appropriate (see Chapter 5). This could be because Pat has realised that the focus of the debate has been on the exclusion of transitioning transsexuals above all else. The argument that only lesbian, gay and bisexual transsexuals are welcome in the organisation relies on a static definition of sexuality and does not recognise that one's gender identity problematises one's sexual identity, however, Pat's quadrant model, and belief that most transsexuals are queer, does demonstrate this problematisation. Furthermore, raising the issue of 'queer' is an indication that Pat would support inclusion under a broad definition of transgender as well. This renders the argument put forward by certain Executive Committee members that it is only non-LGB trans people who cannot join the organisation simplistic as it questions the very idea that such people exist in any large number.

In my extract, I agree with Pat, and like her am also arguing against earlier concerns that the wide definition of transgender being used by the organisation would allow heterosexual cross dressers to join the organisation and thereby in some way harm it. Whilst Pat refers only to transsexuals, my primary concern in the above extract was to put forward a case for widening the remit of the organisation to include (heterosexual) cross-dressers. I demonstrate that a cross-dresser in an opposite sex relationship can be the victim of homophobic abuse; indeed, in the situation I describe, the majority of the abuse is homophobic rather than transphobic, as I am more often read as a woman than as a man wearing women's clothes. My statement that 'now we're quite blatantly not lesbians' was a rhetorical device to reinforce the point that homophobic abuse can be directed on the basis of how one's gender is read, rather than on the basis of actual homosexuality. In the extract I am demonstrating the belief that the organisation

should not only represent people who are actually lesbian, gay or bisexual, but also those people who suffer from homophobic abuse but do not identify as LGB. This would obviously also include those who were not transgender, however, the point with cross-dressing is that it can form the basis of, or exacerbate, homophobia. It should also be noted that in an earlier meeting I put forward an even wider definition of transgender than that being used by the organisation:

Alex: transgender can encompass anyone who transgresses gender norms, which doesn't necessarily have to be wearing clothes of the opposite sex, or changing sex, it can be something in between; any kind of intermediate gender, third gender, any of those multiple positions. Another thing relates to the arguments against transgender that transgender is about gender and LGB is about sexuality – in this society sexual orientation is fundamentally about gender – it's about the gender of object choice, the gender of the person who you are attracted to, so to my mind it seems a complete nonsense to say that sexuality isn't about gender

This definition is wider than that used by the organisation as someone could deviate from gendered sartorial norms but not be a cross-dresser, for example a man having long hair, or a woman having short hair, furthermore, my definition is able to encompass a more androgynous gender identity than that used by the organisation. The main categories of people that have been discussed in this debate are transsexuals and transvestites, both of which involve a more or less simplistic switch from one gender to the other, although for differing lengths of time, whilst excluding those who look androgynous whether it be out of choice or otherwise. It is worth here revisiting, for the last time, the definitions used by Morton Hall; those of The Gender Trust:

Transsexual. A person who feels a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition and fulfil their life as a member of the opposite gender. Most

transsexual people actively desire and complete Sex Reassignment Surgery.

Transvestite. The clinical name for a crossdresser. A person who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex. Generally, these persons do not wish to alter their body.

Transgender. A term used to include transsexuals, transvestites and crossdressers. A transgenderist can also be a person who, like a transsexual, transitions - sometimes with the help of hormone therapy and / or cosmetic surgery - to live in the gender role of choice, but has not undergone, and generally does not intend to undergo, surgery.

So, transsexuals actively want to change sex, whilst transvestites wear the clothing of the opposite sex, without any body modification. Transgender is merely an umbrella category covering transsexuals and transvestites. This is a very different definition to that advocated by myself (above) and others (see chapter 3). The three categories defined by The Gender Trust all rely on someone living (full or part time) in their 'gender role of choice', which implies that one must choose what that gender role is, whereas my definition includes all those who have a non normative gender presentation and those who may not consider themselves as *either male or female*.

This definitional problem has also been recognised by androgynes, as the following quote from 'Androgyne Online' demonstrates:

The term transgender has led all too many androgynes to confusion in that generally, transgender is polarized into transvestite crossdressers on one side and transsexuals on the other. Setting the two categories up as opposites implies that transgender individuals either want to wear the other sex's clothes or else want to change their anatomy to match the other sex. Androgynes, however, may well want to wear the other sex's clothing, but they do not want to change their anatomy to match the other sex -- at least, they don't think about having the other sex's anatomy often enough to resolve to do much about it. What differentiates androgynes from transvestites and transsexuals is that they do not identify fully with either masculinity or

femininity: they are either somewhere in the middle of the two or consider themselves to be something else entirely (<http://androgyny.0catch.com/>)

The proliferation of gendered desires and identities that follow on from this would, I think, be too much for Morton Hall. Having said, up until now, that gender of object choice is the defining feature of sexual orientation for the organisation, it might be more proper to say *sex* of object choice. This is to distinguish 'gender' as a social construct and 'sex' as what is between someone's legs. In this theory, you are homosexual if you are attracted to someone with the same genitalia as you, regardless of whether you were born with that genitalia or not; this therefore renders one's gendered identity irrelevant to sexual orientation. This represents a rejection of gendered multiplicities in favour of the binary of sex. I am aware that intersexuality problematises the notion of binary sexes, however, this is something that was never discussed in the meetings. In fact, in the minutes of one of the meetings, a typing error lead to 'LGB' being typed as 'LGBI', to which I asked whether we had decided to represent intersex people. The chair's reply was no, and that they had not been able to think what the 'I' stood for. In my extract, I demonstrate that gender, like 'a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to the idea of genetic axis or deep structure' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 13). As the quote from Androgyny Online shows 'transgender' tends to get structured as transvestite or transsexual (as has happened in this debate); both categories are ones that often, although not always, reify the notion of two discrete genders; one must always 'pass' as the gender one is presenting as. I posit that it is the unstructured, rhizomatic nature of gender that causes so much trouble for some Executive Committee members, therefore they have attempted to argue for an arborescent understanding of gender, relying on binary logic. Deleuze and Guattari write, 'unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs and non-sign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple' (2004: 23). This indicates that there can be

significant differences within a rhizome; in this context there does not have to be a linear (arborescent) route from gender to sexuality, rather there could be cyclic, transversal, tangential lines of flight from one plateau to another.

The understandings of sexuality and gender of the organisation are arborescent and thereby linear. Arborescent thought, unlike rhizomatic, forces structure onto something that is not amenable to structure, thus ignoring multiplicities; 'The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction "and ... and ... and ..." This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb "to be"' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 27). The injunction 'to be' is of central importance to many members of the Morton Hall Executive Committee. One has to have an identity that is unchanging; one's sexual or gender identity is first discovered as an essence (via a 'coming out' narrative) and is then fixed for ever more. The oft employed argument that only LGB trans people should be allowed in the organisation serves this process of identity fixation. This argument relies on individuals (trans or otherwise) being unproblematically homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual; there is no place for multiplicity. Furthermore, many gays and lesbians, including some in Morton Hall have had heterosexual relationships or been married; one assumes that some of these relationships were happy and that they cannot all be attributed to attempts to sublimate homosexual desires. Therefore some of the Executive Committee members themselves have had either personal proof, or proof via friends, that sexual desires can change. However, this is stabilised by the traditional coming out narrative which present everything that came before coming out as an error. One can also see a similar process of coming out with regard to transgender – one lives one's life in one's birth gender until one realises that one is actually in the wrong body, leading to a trouble free transition (at least as far as gender identity goes – I do not want to say that *actual* transition is 'trouble free'). This is also coupled with an unproblematic inversion of sexual orientation at the point of transition. This is enforced by the Gender Recognition Act 2004; as Chapter 5 illustrates, to apply for a gender recognition certificate one must intend to live in one's new gender for life, whilst changing one's birth certificate obliterates a

transsexuals pre transition past. This process is arguably fine for transsexuals desirous of sex reassignment surgery; however this makes little sense for anyone with a transgender or androgynous gender. What would the situation be for a male transvestite who, when in masculine attire identifies as heterosexual, and when in feminine attire identifies as a lesbian. Under the 'you're only welcome in Morton Hall if in your gender of choice you identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual' argument this male transvestite would be welcome only whilst dressed up, therefore if he suffered abuse or discrimination whilst dressed as man, and therefore identifying as straight he could not go to Morton Hall for support. However, this level of complexity was unthought-of by those advocating exclusion, which illustrates that they were attempting to ignore anything that could end in a potential destabilising of sexual and gender identity. To continue the Deleuzian metaphor, Morton Hall has successfully ensured that the tree of sexual and gender identity is not uprooted and continues to stand. As previous chapters have shown, the tree has been well shaken, but is yet to be uprooted, although it may be starting to topple over.

On the contrary, the discourses of inclusion employed by Pat, Lauren and myself represent the never-ending process of the conjunction 'and'. Whilst 'to be' stabilises and fixes identity, 'and' recognises myriad sexual and gender identities and does not force them into narrow boxes. Furthermore, the 'and' is limitless; a continual means of addition with no finite end point. 'And' does not presuppose the simple coming out narrative outlined above; following the logic of the rhizome, one's sexual and gender identity could begin at any point and end at any point without there being neat categories of homosexual and heterosexual, man and woman. Those who supported trans inclusion rejected the solidification of sexual and gender identity – Pat claimed that it worked on a four sided model whereby you may or may not take your sexual orientation with you when you cross genders. Moreover, she claimed that the majority of trans people must be, by definition, queer. This demonstrates a refusal to constrain identity into dichotomous boxes; rhizomatic reasoning has exposed the binary nature of Morton Hall. The extract from Androgyne Online (above) is also highly

pertinent here. The author's complaint is that the term 'transgender' as is generally understood refers to transvestites and transsexuals, which, as stated earlier, both involve a clean transition from male to female or vice versa. On this reading, transgender is a term that enforces the verb 'to be' because it does not allow for an open proliferation of genders and gendered desires. 'Transgender' enforces and stabilises gender identity because it attempts to place everyone on the spectrum from male to female, whilst the writer on Androgyne Online argues that people may not identify with either masculinity or femininity. Furthermore, several other writers, such as Wilchins and Bornstein (1995) (see Chapter 3) use transgender in such a way as to be inclusive of all behaviour that deviates from accepted gender roles, however, this is not the most usual understanding of transgender. A cursory search of the internet can reveal tens, if not hundreds, of terms for gender variant people (<http://www.queerbychoice.com/genderbend.html> lists over a hundred) that are not fully covered by 'transgender'. This points to the extreme difficulty of defining 'transgender' as well as the highly problematic way in which it was viewed by Morton Hall; 'transgender' was much more likely to be acceptable to the Executive Committee members when it was solidifying and centring, that when it was multiplying and transcending.

This relates to the multiple possible understandings of transgender described in Chapter 3. Trans can be conceptualised as static and highly normative, or it can be seen as highly subversive. Generally, closer to the subversive end of the spectrum, one's perspective is more amenable to gender variance, by which I mean non-static gender performance. Conversely, if one's perspective lies at the normative end then one is often less accepting of gender variance: that is, male is male and female is female. (To clarify, I am classing a MTF individual as female and an FTM individual as male.) It is possible for a trans person, who follows the 'wrong body' discourse to have more invested in the hegemonic gender order than a non-trans person as Bornstein (1995) recognises. In other words, one is more likely to find transsexuals and some transvestites at the normative end of the spectrum and other cross dressers and gender queers at the other end. Static and simplistic understandings of transgender do not fundamentally challenge gender

and sexual identity and are therefore acceptable to Morton Hall. This demonstrates the danger of regarding all trans identities as subversive.

Moreover, it is those transsexuals who do not challenge the gendered status quo that are most acceptable to Morton Hall, however, this is also the group of trans people which it is easiest to distance from Morton Hall. Not challenging gender or sexual identity makes some transsexuals acceptable to Morton Hall because, as has been shown in earlier chapters, the majority of Executive Committee members do not wish to challenge gender or sexual identity themselves and exhibit pollution behaviour when others challenge them. This has, however, not resulted in such transsexuals being welcomed into Morton Hall on the basis that both groups appear to share similar views on gender and sexual identity; rather, the issues between transsexualism and sexuality are seen as too far removed for political alliance. In this instance emphasis is placed on the needs of transsexual people, for example around sex reassignment and the Gender Recognition Act 2004 which do not pertain to LGB people. This perspective is predicated on thinking that the only issues of importance to transsexuals are those that relate to transition. In her interview Mel mentioned several common areas in the needs of transgender and LGB people, such as hate crime, housing needs and marriage, which are unrelated to transition. If these needs and support requirements were the focus of the debate it would have made it harder to distance trans people from the organisation. This serves to further illustrate the stabilising and fixative nature of the verb 'to be'; when one solidifies identity difference is given prominence over similarity.

The foregoing has demonstrated, then, that in the trans inclusion/exclusion debate the majority of the Executive Committee members of Morton Hall have been relying on the binaries that are embedded in thought of the arborescent type; 'this is as much as to say that this system of thought has never reached an understanding of multiplicity' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 5). In Deleuze and Guattari's schema there is another category in between arborescent and rhizomatic logic, and it is to this that I now turn:

The radicle-system, or fascicular root, [which] is the second figure of the book to which our modernity pays willing allegiance. This time, the principle root has aborted, or its tip has been destroyed; an immediate, indefinite multiplicity of secondary roots grafts onto it and undergoes a flourishing development (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 6).

The fascicular root represents a pseudo-multiplicity that makes attempts to recognise multiplicity, but nevertheless fails in its project – in one respect multiplicity is recognised, however nothing is fundamentally changed; dualistic thought is still being relied upon. If transgender (understood as transsexuals and transvestites) had been included within the remit of Morton Hall I would have argued that this would be of this system. The other, in the form of transgender would have been added, but it would not have been done so in a way that would be in the least bit challenging to gender and sexual norms. ‘In truth, it is not enough to say, “Long live the multiple,” difficult as it is to raise that cry’ (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 7). Whilst admitting the existence of multiplicity is important, it is by no means the end point. As it is, Morton Hall has not even cried ‘long live the multiple’; the existence of multiplicity has only been admitted to the extent that it facilitates exclusion. The debate in Morton Hall has, however, at the very least made all concerned aware of the wide disparity of both people and opinions, which may well be foundation for greater future plurality. One could also, just about, argue that the final decision of the debate (only LGB identified trans people are welcome, but Morton Hall will support and work with other trans group) is also a multiplicity on the fascicular model. The principle root (Morton Hall’s ad hoc inclusion) has been thoroughly aborted during the process of this debate, onto which the promise of support for another transgender organisation has been grafted. Moreover, the discussion has raised many questions that point to a possible future inclusion of transgender, such as the fact that certain campaigns, such as ‘Education for All’ are LGBT. However this, final, decision does tend to refuse any understanding of multiplicity in any real sense. What I argue is that some of the Executive Committee members act as though they believe that Morton Hall has adopted a liberal perspective that is aware of the interconnected

nature of gender and sexuality; for example, the framing of the debate in terms of social justice and pledging support for a trans organisation as well as saying that one will raise trans issues whenever it is feasible. I believe that the Executive Committee members have arrived at an understanding of gender and sexuality that is a pseudo multiplicity, in that although the rhetoric of plurality is deployed, the realities of de(con)structive, rhizomatic identities expose the latent arborescence of the multiplicity. Central to this are concerns over the relationship between identity and difference; 'the identity of something implies its difference from others. Conversely, since difference is always difference from something, it implies reference to an identity of some kind. Identities presuppose difference and are inhabited by them, just as differences, inevitably presuppose and are inhabited by identities' (Patton 2000: 46). Because of this it is possible to use arguments based on an awareness of difference to racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory ends. Patton cites the examples of the French far right demanding the repatriation of ethnic minorities out of a respect for cultural difference and the legal defence of Sears, Roebuck & Co. that the gender imbalance at the company was a result not of discrimination but immanent differences between men and women. In the context of Morton Hall, particularly the separating of gender and sexuality, one can clearly see that a belief in inherent differences between gay and lesbian people and transgender people was employed as a reason for excluding trans people from the organisation. This further illustrates the highly limited degree to which the organisation has been prepared to recognise multiple gender and sexual identities; difference has only been admitted to the extent that it may be used as a method of exclusion. This exemplifies the danger of assuming that an awareness of multiplicity will automatically lead to greater inclusivity.

The Becoming-Trans of Morton Hall

Deleuze and Guattari note that the difference between the majority and the minority is not a quantitative one, given that the number of people included in 'minorities' can outweigh those in the 'majority'. Given this Deleuze and

Guattari introduce a third category, that of the minoritarian, or becoming-minor; this is the 'creative process of becoming-different or divergence from the majority' (Patton 2000: 48). The situation is however, more complex than this because,

We must distinguish between: the majoritarian as a constant and homogeneous system; minorities as subsystems; and the minoritarian as a potential, creative and created becoming. The problem is never to acquire the majority, even in order to install a new constant. There is no becoming-majoritarian; majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 117).

They use the example of Arthur Miller's novel *Focus* in which the central character, Lawrence Newman, an average (anti-Semitic) American, has to get glasses which have the effect of making him look Jewish. This leads to his losing jobs and being subjected to bigotry and violence, which Deleuze and Guattari term the becoming Jewish of a non-Jewish person. The following extract is from the interview with Lauren that took place after the debate had come to its conclusion:

I think people are becoming more aware of the difficulties [of exclusion] and as you said and [speaker at conference] said homophobic insults are not actually about sexuality, it's to do with perception. It may be that the person who is being abused or bullied is not gay or trans or whatever. I think that the concept of transgender has become more ingrained as campaigns have moved along and as people have defined what needs to be done. I think the realisation that trans is integral to anything to do with homophobia, so transphobia and homophobia actually go hand in hand because of non normative gender presentation, rather than because they've been seen kissing a bloke or a girl, so I think its becoming more difficult to query the inclusion of trans. Like you said Education For All includes T the work we've been doing in schools includes T. And the fact that with the advent of civil partnership and the fact that transsexual

people can change their birth certificates, all of that impacts on the areas of goods and services that kind of stuff, it impacts on what constitutes a marriage and what services you should be afforded in relation to that. So the trans issue has become integral to anything that Morton Hall does now anyhow. Now the issues are to do with intolerance and the physical manifestation of that its not so clear that it's sexuality only; it's become an issue of how people are [and the] attitudes that need to be changed and the attitude toward trans people is right up there with it, so hopefully by the next iteration of the terms of reference it will become obvious that T needs to be included.

Here Lauren discusses some of the ways in which the remit of Morton Hall may be widened in the future. In the context of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of minority/majority, regardless of numerical issues, LGB is the majority whilst trans is the minority: 'majority implies a state of domination' (2004: 321). This leaves the field open for the (gradual) process of becoming-trans of Morton Hall; that is, the realisation that transgender is becoming a part of the organisation regardless of intention. Just as putting on a new pair of glasses made Newman look Jewish, the changing political climate begins to make Morton Hall look like a trans inclusive organisation. It is central that it is a becoming-trans of LGB, not a becoming-LGB of trans; all becomings are minoritarian, there cannot be a becoming majoritarian – 'there is no becoming-man because man is the molar entity par excellence, whereas becomings are molecular' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 322). For Deleuze and Guattari, molar and molecular are used to contrast multiplicities that are 'divisible, unifiable, totalisable and organisable' with those that are 'not unifiable or totalisable and that do not divide without changing in nature' (Patton 2000: 42) respectively. Therefore, the majoritarian category or identity, in this case sexuality, is fixed and unchanging; it is not something that one becomes. The trans people excluded from Morton Hall as a result of this debate will not be claiming that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual in an attempt to rejoin the organisation because one cannot become the majority. However, one can become the minority; Morton Hall could experience a becoming trans that relies upon the

molecular, rhizomatic nature of transgender to subsume non normative sexual and gender performances under the rubric of gender. In the above extract Lauren identifies several moves that could be associated with this process of becoming-trans. She references one of the speakers at one of the annual conferences, where the Education for All campaign was launched, who was talking about how homophobic bullying in schools not only affects homosexual pupils. Some level of awareness that homophobia and transphobia are interconnected is seeping into the organisation, regardless of whether it is desired. Moreover, the very fact that trans inclusion/exclusion was debated at all will have brought the issue out into the open and made the Executive Committee members more aware of the complexities of the situation than if the debate had not occurred. It was the fundamental point of most of my personal interventions in the debate that whether one suffers from homophobic abuse or discrimination is often much more related to gender performance than to sexual identity. It could be argued that the political project of some trans activists, such as Bornstein and Wilchins is the becoming trans of LGB. As discussed in Chapter 3 they argue that of transgender and LGB, it is transgender that is the more inclusive category, based upon the fact that homosexuality is an inversion of accepted gender norms.

Maps and Tracings

Deleuze and Guattari's injunction is to 'make a map, not a tracing' (2004: 13) for the map is synonymous with the rhizome, whilst tracings abort the rhizome, returning it to roots and radicles. 'What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely orientated toward an experimentation in contact with the real' (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 13); the map is changeable, interconnected and is subject to the possibility of continual reworking, whilst the tracing forces structure. A tracing does not reproduce a map, or rhizome, rather it is like a photograph; a snap-shot in time that restricts, taking only one image. There is no space in the photo/tracing for multiplicity. The tracing 'has generated, structuralized the rhizome, and when it thinks it is reproducing something else it is in fact only reproducing itself. That is why the tracing is so dangerous' (Deleuze

and Guattari 2004: 15). Two examples that Deleuze and Guattari give of the danger of tracing are that of psychoanalysis and linguistics, arguing that they only produce photos or tracings of the unconscious and language respectively. Psychoanalysis does not try to map the unconscious of its patients, rather the psychoanalyst traces the clients unconscious with regard to Freudian complexes; the tracings have 'organised, stabilised, neutralised the multiplicities according to the axes of significance and subjectification belonging to it' (2004: 15). This section will demonstrate how the comparison between maps and tracings can be used to further comprehend the identity practices of the Morton Hall Executive Committee members.

Of importance here is how the Executive Committee members attempt to make sense of the multiple nature of sexual and gender identity. Do people follow the call to make maps, that is, do Executive Committee members accept the multiple and fluid nature of identity, or do they attempt to create order by taking photo-tracings of identity? Moreover, what are the political affects of making either maps or tracings; does one lead to a more inclusive political strategy than the other. This extract from the interview with Lauren begins to answer some of these questions:

It certainly didn't seem that people had got what I was saying; the idea that separating gender from sexuality is just oxymoronic, I think that's probably the wrong word. But the fact that sexuality as it's currently understood in society is based on gender of object choice means that sexuality is always already inherently gendered, therefore to try to separate gender from sexuality is either utopic to the extreme or just misunderstands sexuality as currently is used in common parlance.

In this extract, Lauren is talking about her input into the debate and the reactions to it. The point that she was trying to make was that one cannot separate gender from sexuality because, as Sedgwick (1990) argues, sexual orientation is based upon gender of object choice. This interpretation of sexual and gender identity is a map because it is amenable to the rhizome; it attempts to construct an

understanding, rather than reproducing an earlier image. However, as the extract shows, this argument was not generally accepted, for Lauren this error is either the result of high levels of idealism or a fundamental misunderstanding of what sexuality is. One can argue that either of the two options are the result of making tracings as opposed to maps. Both options abort and refuse the multiple nature of sexual and gender identity by taking only a snap-shot of identity that organises, normalises and stabilises it along pre conceived lines. The central point is that the majority of Executive Committee members are, for whatever reason, not viewing sexuality as ‘always already inherently gendered’, which is the result of the separation of gender and sexuality discussed in Chapter 5. There is an unwillingness to view sexuality as based upon gender, which may well be an attempt to fully distance oneself from earlier understandings of homosexuality which relied on ideas of inversion – that a male homosexual was really a woman’s soul trapped in a man’s body. However, this is not the point that Lauren was trying to make. Being attracted to the same sex does not mean that one is ‘really’ of the opposite sex, however it does mean that one is crossing the normal gender roles for one’s sex by choosing a partner of the same sex. If, in the meetings, the point had been pushed to its logical conclusion – that all LGB people are transgender – there would probably have been uproar. Those refusing to make these connections are attempting to abort and stultify a broad understanding of sexuality and gender that would advocate for trans inclusion.

This, however, does not explain why this misunderstanding occurs; for Lauren the reasons are political:

The knock on effect of my understanding of transgender is that sexuality as is currently used is redundant, but you use it to a political end. So identity claims, from my perspective, are for attaining certain political ends, in certain situations or contexts. So to claim the identity of lesbian or bisexual or gay or transgender is to do something, to elicit a response, or to claim something that creates a response in someone else, rather than any necessary truth about yourself. This is again where I think there was a disjuncture between what my understanding of identity was and what

some of the others was, as far as a lot of the other people were concerned identity was truth; it was fact.

Here Lauren posits her understanding of the meanings of identity claims. The end point of the Lauren's deconstructive notion of transgender is that 'sexuality' is a redundant term that possesses no inherent meaning; however, one is still able to use sexuality to a given political end. The central point here is that to make an identity claim does not express any kind of truth about a person. Deleuze and Guattari claim that 'the map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation' (2004: 13-4). For Lauren, identity claims are Deleuzian maps: depending on the context that one is in, one will make different identity claims because they will fit different political purposes. In the interview, Lauren said that although she identifies as trans, she did not make that identity claim in the Executive Committee meetings because she did not want to be told to leave the room. Whilst this may sound extreme, Lauren relates how a bisexual friend was told to leave the debate at the National Union of Students lesbian and gay conference which concerned whether to expand the group to include bisexuals. Here one can see Lauren making different identity claims at different times because each claim serves a different purpose. Identity claims can mean different things to different people and can be manipulated and folded to any given purpose; if Lauren had identified herself as trans in the Executive Committee meetings it would have been to elicit a response from the other Executive Committee members and would not have defined any kind of fact about herself. However, if one understands Lauren's perspective on identity as a map of sexuality and gender, then one can also understand the majority of the other Executive Committee members' perspectives as tracings. For most Executive Committee members, as Lauren identifies, identity is truth; it represents something that an individual can be said to *be*. Claiming an identity as your own means that that identity defines you and is permanent and immutable.

For Lauren, what should be important for any liberation campaign is that anyone who supports the stated aims of a group should be able to campaign on that particular issue; such campaigns should not only be open to those in particular identity groups: She defines two distinct spheres of work that she thinks have gotten confused within Morton Hall; first, lobbying and campaigning; and second, providing a support network. For Lauren, these two spheres could require different styles of working. Lobbying and campaigning can be carried out by anyone, regardless of identity, who subscribes to the aims of the organisation. The situation may be different for support work as a lesbian may not feel comfortable talking about homophobic discrimination with a heterosexual person. These two spheres of work have become blurred because Morton Hall is trying to do both – the organisation's main body of work is around campaigning and lobbying, but there has also been a significant amount of community development work aimed at building the LGB community, particularly in more rural areas:

There is a separate issue between campaigning, and achieving a stated political aim, and who should be allowed or not allowed to be involved. My argument would be as long as the aims are clear it doesn't matter who's involved in that, but then within Morton Hall there is this community support aspect which it seems has become problematic. ... The fact that they're trying to gather a community certainly in rural areas is laudable, but at the same time it does seem to be at the expense of all else. And if you're not part of that community then there is something wrong with you, which again is this exclusionary approach to identity that I think is bad.

Having two, largely separate, work plans has, for Lauren, helped to create the identity crisis for Morton Hall. Allowing anyone who shares the aims of the organisation to work on achieving those aims can be seen as map because it follows the rhizomatic nature of sexual and gender identity. Those that campaign on issues around sexuality and gender do not have to reproduce specific identities; rather connections can be made across boundaries. Conversely, insisting that

those who campaign on any given issue need to be affected by that issue relies on tracing, on arborescent logic that enforces 'to be'. The idea that one must have a particular identity and all the experiences that that entails has been critiqued in Chapter 6. This type of thought is dangerous in that constructs homosexuality as other to heterosexuality and that homosexuality is only of importance to those who identify as homosexual. This is exemplary of identity politics as defined by Young (1997) and expanded upon in Chapter 5. The community building and support aspect of Morton Hall's work complicates this matter, for, as Lauren admits, it is easier to construct an argument that such support should be given by those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual as they may well, although not necessarily, have a greater knowledge of the issues than a heterosexual person. The community building aspect also raises the question of whose community it is, and who is welcome in such a community. Given that, at least away from large centres of population such as London and Manchester, the LGB community is relatively homogenous and only caters to a certain type of LGB person, notions of community building are returning gender and sexual identity to the root; the rhizome is aborted by a unifying and structuralising tracing. If you do not feel part of what Morton Hall considers to be the LGB community then the work that the organisation is doing with regard to community building and support will be of little personal relevance, even though the political work will be of value.

It is clear that Lauren is refuting the model of identity politics as considered in Chapter 5. The conflict between 'us and them' and 'active oppressors and active resisters' (Young 1997) is circumvented. For those operating within an identity politics model, as I have argued, identity is truth; it defines a person, usually in opposition to some other category. However, if identity is not seen as expressing any kind of truth about a person it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the above distinctions. This is not to deny that in Lauren's schema there will not be a distinction between us and them, and active oppressors and active resisters, but to state that the differentiation will not be on the basis of an identity as truth. The 'us' would be those who support the aims of Morton Hall, whilst 'them' would be those who were opposed to the

organisation's aims. Therefore the dichotomy between active oppressors and active resisters becomes meaningless because those who are in the privileged group may well support the oppressed. The outcome of this understanding of politics, were it adopted by Morton Hall, would be that it would become an organisation which would allow anyone, regardless of identity, who support the business plan, to become a member. This would also, as Lauren recognises, also problematise the idea of community building; if identity is not truth, and identity claims are only made in certain contexts and for a purpose, who exactly is 'the community'? This demonstrates that identity does not have to be foundational for the organisation; contra Sartre (see Chapter 5) a pledged group does not have to refer back to a series based upon a particular relationship to practico-inert structures.

Conclusions

This chapter has used some of the work of Deleuze and Guattari as a heuristic device to think through some of the complexity of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate in Morton Hall. This chapter has demonstrated the importance of one's view of transgender identity has on the inclusion/exclusion debate; those that tend employ more fluid understandings of gender identity were more likely to advocate trans inclusion than those who had a more fixed understandings of gender identity. Furthermore, the arborescent logic of exclusion attempts to order and stabilize gender and sexual identity, even in the face of a possible future becoming trans of Morton Hall.

BORDER CROSSINGS AND QUESTIONING COMMUNITY

Whilst each of the preceding chapters could feasibly stand on their own, there are a multitude of themes and ideas that bisect and connect them. This concluding chapter will attempt to pull out and expand upon some of these points. At this point I reiterate the conclusion of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate because this chapter should be read with this in mind. Transgender people are welcome to join Morton Hall so long as they, in their gender of choice, identify as either, gay, lesbian or bisexual. Additionally the organisation will raise trans issues whenever it feels that there is an 'obvious link' with an LGB issue that is being raised in a particular instance, as well as attempt to facilitate a local transgender group gain more funding. In essence, after a year of debate, nothing has really changed. The only difference is that the latter two commitments are now on paper, rather than being the *de facto* practice of the Morton Hall. I say that nothing has fundamentally changed because if there were any heterosexual trans people in the organisation prior to the debate, they have not, to my knowledge, been expelled from the organisation. However, what has changed is that transgender has been, symbolically at least, excluded from the organisation and the earlier *ad hoc* inclusion has been abandoned.

Chapters 3 and 4, on transgender and LGB identity and politics, have contextualised the research within a particular spatial and temporal setting. It was shown that defining transgender itself is highly problematic and that the resultant multiple definitions are important vis-à-vis inclusion or exclusion. Furthermore, transgender has not had a stable relationship with LGB: at varying times transgender people and practices have been intimately connected to same-sex orientation and politics (molly houses or early gay liberation, for example) whilst at others it has been rejected and repudiated (the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival or the present case, for example). Chapter 5 charts the several ways in

which Morton Hall constructs an ethnic and essentialist understanding of both gender and sexual identity. Heterosexual transgender people are marked as people without the knowledge of LGB identity and experience that is placed as central within Morton Hall's organisation identity. This chapter also illustrates the manner in which transgender is generally understood as transsexual and delineates the consequences of this assumption with regard to the debate; for most, the non-transsexual transgender person remains unconsidered, other than as an object with a potential polluting influence. The theme of the polluting heterosexual transgender is taken up in Chapter 6 where transgender is discussed in terms of liminality. Whilst the transsexual successfully transitions from one stable category to other, the non-transsexual transgender refuses to do so and remains in the limen and is thus a troubling influence on others.

The positioning of transgender as liminal is also taken up in Chapter 7 where it is argued that the heterosexual transgender person is a transgressive force that illuminates the central constitution of Morton Hall. This chapter also illustrated some of the complex relationships between Morton Hall and transgender which are described in more detail, below. Whilst the chapters up to this point mostly considered arguments for exclusion (given their prominence in the debate), Chapter 8 focused on arguments in favour of inclusion. Those advocating for trans inclusion are seen as relying on rhizomatic understandings of gender and sexual identity, rather than the arborescent logic employed by those advocating exclusion which rely on stabilising and solidifying identity.

Organisational Exclusion

The exclusion of transgender from Morton Hall relies both on contradictory and tautological arguments. As the preceding chapters have demonstrated, the rhetoric of exclusion often relies on constructing a symbolic unity between all LGB people; all lesbian, gay and bisexual people have a shared understanding of being LGB, which is a shared understanding that is not open to trans people. However, if all LGB people did truly possess this then there would be an *a priori* understanding that (heterosexual) trans people were not welcome in the

organisation, removing any need for a debate on the matter. However, the very existence of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate, with Executive Committee members on both sides, demonstrates that this shared understanding does not exist. Even within the small number of LGB people that made up the Morton Hall Executive Committee there was no shared knowledge of the nature of being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered; this was, however, ignored by most Executive Committee members. As Chapter 8 argued, the arguments put forward for trans inclusion exposed the arborescent and categorising logic of the organisation and showed that those advocating exclusion were trying to impose a sense of order onto an inherently disordered group. This inherent disorder is also demonstrated by the mere existence of the debate in the first place. As I have claimed, Morton Hall relies upon an essentialist, minoritising and ethnic understanding of sexuality; sexual orientation refers to an identity rather than a practice.

Furthermore, some Executive Committee members' opinions run along the lines that because the current remit of the organisation is LGB it is outside of the organisation's remit to include trans people. For example, Jerry cites the fact that Morton Hall would not have enough money to take on transgender issues as well as LGB issues. This ignores the fact that if Morton Hall did decide to become trans inclusive they would be able to apply for extra funding on that basis. Here I repeat an extract from Robin:

I think Evelyn you were saying that we have identified that there is the possibility of funding for either [local trans organisation] or for a transgender group to pick that [issues around Gender Recognition] up and we would certainly want to work with that group to support it, but at this stage it does seem to be over and above our remit to include the T as though Morton Hall is representing transgender people across [area] I mean I think that is the general feeling

Robin claims here that there is a possibility of funding for a trans group; were Morton Hall to include transgender then they could have tried to get that funding.

Robin then claims that it is ‘over and above’ the remit of Morton Hall to include transgender. The whole point of the debate was to decide whether the remit of Morton Hall *should be widened to include transgender*. Using the fact that at present the organisation is LGB to say that it should not be widened to include trans people is highly tautological. A similar argument was made by Terry regarding heterosexual trans people not wanting to join Morton Hall anyway. This again uses the present remit of the organisation (that it is LGB) as a reason why heterosexual trans people would not want to be part of it were it to become LGBT. If the organisation had decided to include transgender, using a definition, such as that of the Gender Trust, then heterosexual transgender people may well have joined because Morton Hall was being inclusive of them.

For many Executive Committee members, trans exclusion is predicated upon gender and sexuality being disconnected; Morton Hall should only define itself as concerned with sexuality and LGB people. However, the transgression of gender is central to this definitional process – it is a person’s gender identity that defines the sexual orientation of their relationships. The collapse of transgender into transsexual takes sexuality from the moment of gender transition, eclipsing and erasing any pre-transition identities. This is an interesting perspective because, unlike the trans inclusion/exclusion debate concerning the Michigan Womyns Music Festival, no one has claimed that transsexuals are not ‘real’ men or women (post-transition) or that their being in Morton Hall would be divisive, so long as there were lesbian, gay or bisexual. For Morton Hall a post-op MTF is female, so if in a relationship with another female, a lesbian. Similarly if this person was in a relationship with a male, they are seen as heterosexual. The problem is not about allowing trans people into the organisation, but about allowing heterosexual people in. However, as previous chapters have shown, this relies on a somewhat simplistic understanding of transsexual transition. It is not unusual for transsexuals to think they were, or experiment with being, gay or lesbian at some point in their lives. Furthermore as Rees (1996) shows, even if one may not exactly identify as lesbian or gay prior to transition, one may be seen as such by others and experience harassment and discrimination because of it.

These are the future heterosexual trans people who will (apparently) have no knowledge of LGB experience.

The existence of Morton Hall is seemingly founded upon a belief that there are shared experiences, and, indeed, identities, with a concomitant political perspective, that unite all LGB people. This however, raises the question of what is actually shared. Do you have to have been discriminated against because of your sexuality? Nothing in Morton Hall says this is the case. Do you have to be solely attracted to people of the same sex? Bisexuals are part of Morton Hall, so that cannot be the case; there is nothing inherent in opposite-sex attraction that forbids one joining the organisation. Do you have to have some degree of same-sex attraction? A previous member of the Executive Committee, and Chair for a time was also a member of FFLAG (Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays) and was heterosexual (this was however an individual who had already proved their dedication to the cause of LGB equality). This means that the only things shared by the Executive Committee members are that they broadly support the aims of the organisation and they have some idea of what being LGB is like, either from oneself or others. Furthermore, whilst all members have an idea of what being LGB is like, this is not to say that all members have *same* ideas. Given this, the exclusion of trans people from Morton Hall appears to be about distancing those heterosexuals who transgress gender, - that is, non-transsexual heterosexual trans people - from the organisation by claiming that they are, and always will be, simplistically heterosexual, and thus have no idea about LGB experience.

The relationship of the individual to the group is of paramount importance. Much work on (political) group identity formation carries with it the assumption that there is some a priori connection between the individual and group. What connects and brings together all women for feminist action? What connects and brings together all lesbian, gay and bisexual people for LGB action? These questions all assume that there are such connections that be discovered. In Sartre's theory of class formation (see chapter 5) the group refers back to a series which is constituted by people sharing the same relationship to the practico-inert

reality. It is this type of thinking that predominates in Morton Hall: the practico-inert reality which orders the series is one's position vis-à-vis the hetero/homobinary. Thus the collective that the group draws upon is solely constituted by LGB individuals. However, continuing Sartre's metaphor of the bus stop (chapter 5) there may be those who do not use public transport, but nevertheless want there to be a decent service. How many nineteenth century socialists came not from poor, working class backgrounds, but from positions of varying degrees of privilege?

When I started this research, one of my main interests concerned how an identity politics organisation defined sexual and gender identity, especially in the face of the level of critique that such a political model has been subjected to in the past twenty years. It seems, however, that whilst critiques of essentialist understandings of identity are widespread in the academic world, they are not so prevalent in some parts of the LGB community. This is not necessarily a problem, but it does suggest that further research could consider why some people (not just those who are activists) find it important to identify as lesbian or gay in a largely essentialist manner.

As chapters 6 and 7 argue, issues of liminality and transgression were central to the construction of Morton Hall's organisational identity. It has been shown that Morton Hall (as an organisation – not all its members) supports static understandings of gender and sexuality; one is *either* male *or* female, *either* gay *or* straight (Roen 2002), whilst discourses of *both/neither* are repudiated and refuted. Those activities, practices and identities that occupy a liminal or transgressive position in relation to gender and sexuality are marked as off limits for Morton Hall. It is in what is proscribed that one can most clearly see what is permitted; the revelation of the limit, of the taboo, reveals the constitution of the centre.

Identity as Fiction

Some of the problems in this debate arise from the dual purpose of Morton Hall; that is, political lobbying and community building. If the organisation was purely a campaigning one it would be easier to open membership up to all those who

supported its aims. It is more problematic when community building is also part of Morton Hall's work as some people may think that heterosexuals should not be part of an LGB community because of, for example, safety reasons. Would, for instance, a gay man who has been attacked because of his sexuality be comfortable talking about it with a straight man? It should be noted, however, that this is not an insurmountable problem, as other LGB groups are also inclusive of heterosexual allies; witness the growth of Gay and Straight Alliances in American colleges and universities. Changes of this sort would have to entail another debate (possibly even more divisive than the trans inclusion/exclusion debate) concerning the ethics of creating a gay 'community'.

From this thesis it is clear that those involved with Morton Hall are a very diverse group of people who are able to work together even with differences of opinion. However, the arguments for trans exclusion are an attempt to create a sense of unity across the organisation, although I would argue that any resultant unity is false. The debate can be seen as an attempt to enforce similarity at the expense of the multiple differences between Executive Committee members. This is the enforcement of 'to be' at the expense of 'and...'. This fixing and stabilizing of identity also has implications for the community building aspect of Morton Hall – whose community is being constructed? These questions address some central concerns over the aims of a gay organisation and the endpoint of LGB equality. Morton Hall covers a reasonably large area of the UK, both urban and rural. As one would expect, the urban areas have more of an LGB 'scene', whereas the rural areas are lacking. It is in these rural areas particularly that the organisation is working towards community building. What requires discussion here is the nature of that community – it is one thing to create a forum where people of all sexual orientations can come together to work towards a common goal, it is another to attempt to create some sort of gay community as it exists in urban areas. The latter is almost always exclusionary in some regards, and only benefits some LGB people as opposed to all (albeit that this is usually unintentional).. This leads to the question of the endpoint of equality – by what criteria do you adjudicate that equality on the grounds of sexual orientation has been achieved? This is important

because one must have consideration of the ends before one can devise the means. Similarly, well intentioned means can have a disadvantageous effect if the potential ends are not thought through. One needs to question whether the creation of LGB(T) communities is beneficial to the cause of equality. It should be noted that I am not saying that LGB people should not come together for political ends; rather I am separating the social and the political. Clearly, without the several LGB groups bring pressure to bear on successive governments equality legislation would not be such as it is. Also, I recognise that for many people, especially those in more rural areas, joining or forming an LGB community can have a strong lure. I, however, remain unconvinced by the merits of this. To quote Rubin again (see chapter 4), we live in a world where

A modern gay man ... may migrate from rural Colorado to San Francisco in order to live in a gay neighbourhood, work in a gay business, and participate in an elaborate experience that includes a self-conscious identity, group solidarity, a literature, a press and a high level of political activity (Rubin 1984:286).

To Anglicise this, one could transpose Colorado to Cornwall and San Francisco to London or Manchester. Whilst that level of segregation can only occur in major metropolitan centres, aspects of this can be seen in many other places. Is creating gay friendly places and venues, and remaining within them, equality? Most gay pubs and clubs are exclusive; certain clothes, fashions and music tastes proliferate at the expense of others. This is not necessarily an inherent problem – it is obvious that all clubs play a particular kind of music and attract certain types of people. The problem lies with the fact that gay venues tend to only cater for one section of LGB people, not all. There are, for example, very few gay pubs or clubs that cater to gay people who like music generally denoted by the label ‘alternative’. Furthermore, equality is not having some gay spaces and venues for homosexuals, whilst leaving heterosexuals with the majority; is not equality having spaces, workplaces, venues &c. that do not differentiate between hetero and homo?

This minoritising exclusion does not just apply to the type of situations described above; it can also be applied to LGB organisations. Morton Hall has constructed, and temporarily fixed, its organisational identity in a particular way, based upon specific understandings of gender and sexual identity. This has, therefore officially excluded the non-LGB trans person, however, I suggest that it has ‘unofficially’ excluded those LGB people who do not subscribe to the definitions of sexual identity provided by the organisation. Given that Morton Hall has fixed its identity, for the moment at least, it is feasible that other members, or potential members could feel alienated from an organisation that is not inclusive of transgender. It is also true that if the final decision was to include transgender then there would be another sector of LGB people who would feel alienated from the organisation.. Indeed, if the executive members of Morton Hall Are taken as representative of the general membership, then the latter group would probably be more numerous than the former.

One of the main arguments for trans exclusion was that (heterosexual) trans people would have no knowledge or experience of being lesbian, gay or bisexual. As Terry said ‘the heterosexual transgender wouldn’t come within 50 miles of us’, which I think can be widened to also include non-trans heterosexuals as well. This is Sedgwick’s minoritising logic – LGB sexuality and the issues arising are only of importance to those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual. As previous chapters have demonstrated, this logic says that it is only homosexuals who are affected by LGB issues and discrimination; a perspective I have argued to be false. However, this theory places heterosexuals as the enemy, rather than as potential allies. This is not to say that heterosexuals who are actively anti-gay do not exist, clearly they do, but rather to say that placing all heterosexuals in that category is, at best, foolish.

It may seem that I am simply advocating assimilation or normalisation: *I am not*. Assimilation means becoming like, and being incorporated into, the heterosexual majority, which would necessarily involve the silencing of same-sex desire. However, the end that I think we should be striving for is a society where the gender of the person someone is attracted to is inconsequential, and where

being lesbian, gay or bisexual or heterosexual says nothing more about a person than their gender of object choice. Nor would this merely involve the heterosexual majority merely tolerating homosexuals; it would be acceptance. When meeting new people, most people have a default assumption that they are straight. Until this type of assumption is overturned we will not have true equality. Similarly should one not be freely able to talk about one's same-sex partner in the same way that heterosexuals do about their opposite-sex partner?

This is not normalisation, rather it is a re-evaluation of what is considered normal. In *The Trouble with Normal* Warner (1999) lambastes those who seek assimilation; gay marriage and gays joining the military are examples he uses. His general point is that it is not equality when LGB people are seeking acceptance for their sexuality by trying to imitate heterosexual relationships, or live by heterosexual norms. The type of equality I envisage is one in which what is considered normal is refigured; heterosexuality is no longer the default option. Queer, as stated in Chapter 4 sets itself in opposition to what 'normal' and seeks validation for this outsider status. This is a very productive theoretical position (and its insight used in this thesis) and can provide comfort to those who occupy an outsider status. However, fundamental change can only occur when the majority change, as the example of gay marriage illustrates (below).

This way of thinking also has wider implications, for example, with equality law. To illustrate; a marriage can only be contracted between a man and a woman, whilst a civil partnership is only valid between two people of the same sex. This was demonstrated in the case of *Wilkinson v Kitzinger* (2007) in which the petitioner and first respondent entered into a same-sex marriage in British Columbia, and wished it to be recognised as such in the UK. In his justification for refusing the application, Sir Mark Potter stated that

Parliament has not called partnerships between persons of the same-sex marriage, not because they are considered inferior to the institution of marriage but because, as a matter of objective fact and common understanding, as well as the present definition of marriage in English law, and by recognition in European jurisprudence, they are indeed

different. ... To the extent that by reason of that distinction it discriminated against same-sex partners, such discrimination has a legitimate aim, is reasonable and proportionate, and falls within the margin of appreciation accorded to Convention states (Wilkinson v Kitzinger 2007: 217).

This is the equal but different philosophy; gays and lesbians can, in all but name, marry, but heaven forbid if it is actually called marriage. In essence, this is the same as remaining within the safe gay spaces. Notwithstanding the fact that the rights attendant upon entering a civil partnership are near identical to marriage, this sends a signal that same-sex relationships are somehow fundamentally different to opposite sex relationships. Indeed, this was recognised by the petitioner, and was one of the main reasons for bringing the case. Referring to the fact that the marriage would be 'downgraded' to a civil partnership, her first witness statement states,

I do not wish my relationship with Celia to be recognised in this way because we are legally married and it is simply not acceptable to be asked to pretend that this marriage is a civil partnership. While marriage remains open to heterosexual couples only, offering the "consolation prize" of a civil partnership to lesbians and gay men is offensive and demeaning. ... They are not equal symbolically, when it is marriage that is the key social institution, celebrated and recognised around the world; and they are not equal practically, when it is apparent that civil partnership is a lesser alternative, which will not be recognised around the world, or even across Europe (Wilkinson v Kitzinger 2007: 187).

It is clear therefore, that, regardless of whether one favours or otherwise the dual system of marriage and civil partnership that in having a system for gays and lesbians, and one for straights a problematic distinction is drawn. For many this is not equal but different, merely unequal.

Here the norm is marriage, which can only be contracted between a man and a woman; when measured against this, gay relationships fall short by 'matter of objective fact and common understanding'. It is this privileging of one specific type of relationship over another that is problematic. In this case a re-evaluation of what is considered normal would involve the re-evaluation of the privilege of marriage as the ideal relationship between someone who has 'male' on their birth certificate and someone who has 'female' on their birth certificate. It would argue not for merely allowing LGB people to marry in the conventional sense, but would go much further. It would question why we, as a society, give precedence, and a raft of legal rights, to a particular type of relationship between *two* people over all other types of possible relationships between two or more people.

The Gender Recognition Act is something that fixes and stabilises gender identity, as previous chapters have stated. Again, I am not saying that the GRA is a bad thing. As the high take-up of gender recognition certificates shows, there are many transsexuals who want this legal change of gender. My point is that the gender recognition procedure is only available to a particular class of transgender person. Changing one's birth certificate is, I think, normalisation. It is done because of the many times that one may need to provide documentation which includes one's sex. In privileging one aspect of trans experience, other options that could be more supportive of those trans people who do not wish to transition are foreclosed. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 5, a married (that is, a legally opposite sex) couple in which one partner applies for a Gender Recognition Certificate, will have to divorce before the full certificate can be granted. This again comes down to the same problems in the Wilkinson case; that marriage is for opposite sex couples only. Here re-evaluation of the normal would question the need for anyone to have to 'prove' their sex.

Future Progressions

At the commencement of this research my interest lay specifically with the construction of lesbian, gay and bisexual collective identity. As chapter 2 outlines I wished to consider how an identity politics organisation operated given the

academic critiques of such ways of working. However, particularly due to the fortuitous timing of the trans inclusion/exclusion debate, the research became something much broader. Morton Hall has become a case study for the more general topics of (organisational) identity, belonging and transgression.

As stated, one of the key aims of this thesis was to interrogate queer ideas of identity using the analysis of an identity politics organisation. Referring back to the definitions of queer theory presented in Chapter 4 it is clear that they cannot be applied to Morton Hall *as an organisation*, although they may be applicable to some members. Notwithstanding the queer injunction to deconstruct identity then, the lure of identity, and of belonging, remains strong. Much of this thesis has shown that, in Sedgwick's (1990) terms, the minoritising logic of identity is prevalent in Morton Hall; sexuality is only of importance to those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual. I have used queer theory as an analytic lens with which to deconstruct identity, as it was employed in Morton Hall, in order to consider the ways in which a collective, organisational, identity manifests itself. Thus, I have shown that Morton Hall's identity is constructed by the marking of certain groups (particularly heterosexual trans people) as the other. This othering is predicated upon a rejection of a universalising view of gender and sexual identity. It must be remembered here that I am talking about the organisational identity of Morton Hall; various individual Executive Committee members hold views that are more or less amenable to queer theory. This demonstrates some of the paradoxes that inhere in the organisation. Below the surface, the constitution of Morton Hall is more contingent and subject to difference than its initial labeling as an identity politics organisation might suggest. As elucidated at the beginning of this chapter, Morton Hall has, for the time being, fixed its identity, but, to my knowledge, there has not been a purge of those members who do not 'fit'. Therefore, the exclusion of transgender appears more as a symbolic exclusion than an actual one. Only time will tell if this assumption is correct; indeed, this would be an interesting area of further study.

This thesis has become an analysis of the construction of organisational identity more generally. The theoretical understandings of identity construction

are applicable outside of the narrow research site. I have outlined myriad ways in which the identity of Morton Hall has been constituted through, for example, pollution behaviour, transgression and arborescent logic. These are themes that can be productively applied to any organisational setting. Any defined group of people is always exclusionary in some, not necessarily obvious, way; this thesis provides the theoretical tools required to explicate these complex processes of exclusion and inclusion – of defining the centre.

One of the main strengths of this work is the utilisation of a diverse range of theories. The use of theorists such as Durkheim, Douglas, Nietzsche, Bataille, Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari, in combination with both my own research and previous work on similar topics (Young, Roen, and Gamson) has enabled a sustained critique of how ‘the other’ is constructed. This theoretical synthesis, in conjunction with the historical sketching of the relationship between lesbians, gays and bisexuals and transgender, has given me a unique facility to analyse and explicate the often complex and contradictory nature of practices of inclusion and exclusion. Further, the theoretical understandings of, for example, how transgressive acts work to define the constitution of the centre, or how a rhizomatic identity differs from an arborescent one, can be applied in a multitude of situations not related to gender or sexuality.

Whilst the work contained in this thesis is important and valuable on its own, there are several ways in which this research could be developed. One thing lacking in this thesis is the input from (with a couple of exceptions) transgender people themselves. This was obviously due to Morton Hall being a LGB organisation in the first instance, meaning that there were few trans people on the Executive Committee. However, it would be interesting to see if transgender people, be they pre/post/non-opp transsexuals, heterosexual cross-dressers or other transgressors of gender, actually want LGB organisations to open their doors to them. Based on this thesis I have several ideas as to who would and would not want to be part of an LGB organisation. For example, I suggest that a post-operatively heterosexual transsexual who is heavily invested in the either/or dichotomy would not want to join an LGB group, whilst I suggest that a

genderqueer individual would be more inclined to do so; this however requires further investigation. Furthermore, the type of politics employed by the organisation would also affect who would want to join it. So far the analysis has primarily focused on those within the borders, changing the focus to those without would be beneficial and would increase my understanding of the nature of (organisational) identity, community and belonging.

Furthermore, on a more broad level it would be worthwhile to consider the questions raised in this thesis in an area other than gender and sexuality. The theoretical understandings of identity and transgression could profitably be applied to other settings. Any situation where a group of people are attempting to define their identities could be analysed in this fashion. There are also other theorists and philosophers' ideas that could be brought to bear on the contents of this thesis, and further research, which would increase my understanding of the subject. I am thinking here particularly of some of the existentialist philosophers such as Heidegger and Sartre whose ideas could be employed to critique notions of (in)authentic communities and identities. This could explore some of the tensions inhering in the verb 'to be' – for Deleuze and Guattari this refers to fixing and stabilising, whilst for Heidegger this refers to the existent's desire to be an authentic self.

In summation then, this thesis has provided a theoretical analysis of the myriad ways in which organisational identity is constructed and transiently fixed. Moreover, this work affords me an excellent starting point for future work on the topics of community, belonging and identity.

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