Culture and Community

Researching HIV and gay and lesbian lives in Australia, 1990-2005

Volume One

Michael Hurley BA, Dip Ed, M Litt

A submission in three volumes in fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Publication

University of Technology, Sydney
June 2005

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Acknowledgements

I put your body

 between me

   and the history of horrors

(Porter 1996: 63)

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Site One: Gay and lesbian writing and publishing in Australia

(1990) 'Homosexualities: fiction, reading and moral training', in Threadgold, T., and Cranny-Francis, A. (eds) *Feminine, Masculine and Representation*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney: 154-170.

(1992) 'Writing: the body positive', in *Pink Ink. An anthology of Australian lesbian and gay writers*, Wicked Women Publications, Sydney: 12-42. Edited version published in *Meanjin*, 1992, 51(1): 199-219.

(1996) *A Guide to Gay and Lesbian Writing in Australia*, Allen & Unwin and the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Sydney.

(2002) 'A Critical Reflection', in Aitken, G. (ed) *The Penguin Book of Australian Gay Writing*, Penguin, Melbourne: 396-410.

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VOLUME TWO

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Abstract

This thesis presents an essay and thirteen items published between 1990 and 2005 in support of my candidature for a Doctorate in Philosophy by Publication. The items presented range across several forms: books (1), book chapters (5), refereed journal essays (3), and research reports and report chapters (4).

The items analyse various articulations of culture and community in relation to contemporary gay and, to a lesser extent, lesbian life in Australia. They are organised into three sites. The work in Site One establishes gay and lesbian writing in Australia as a scholarly field. In Site Two, the work investigates Australian responses to HIV, how the epidemic affects gay cultures and relations between 'community' responses to HIV and those cultures. Site Three begins a systematic consideration of the relations between media, representation and commodification and how these effect change in the social narration of gay and lesbian lives.

The accompanying essay provides an overview of the presented work that argues for its contemporary relevance and original contribution to knowledge. The essay explores the ways culture and community are articulated on each of the sites. It argues that community is both a specific socio-cultural form and a mode of governmentality. It investigates these articulations in relation to everyday life and explores the resultant tensions and ambiguities, their connections and disconnections.

Preamble

This submission consists of an essay and thirteen published items selected and presented in support of my candidature for a Doctorate in Philosophy by Publication. The items presented for examination are organised in three volumes, as indicated in the Table of Contents. For purposes of submission, the items are grouped into three sites of investigation. Volume One includes an essay and the first group of published items. Volumes Two and Three include the remaining items grouped as Sites Two and Three.

The 13 items were published between 1990 and 2005. They address various aspects of culture and community in relation to contemporary gay and, to a lesser extent, lesbian life in Australia.[1] The items were not written as a conventionally unified thesis for Doctoral examination, and this submission ('the PhD') has, accordingly, a form of its own. The essay accompanying the publications consists of an Introduction, Overview, Background, Methodology, a discussion of the three sites and a Conclusion.

The aim of the essay is to show, *as required*, how the work has developed, its contemporary relevance, and the ways it makes an 'original and scholarly contribution to knowledge' in 'a thematic overview which serves to link the individual publications into an integrated whole'. The work presented ranges across several forms: books (1), book chapters (5), refereed journal essays (3), and research reports and report chapters (4).

For the purposes of presenting the work here, the thirteen publications have been organised into three sites of investigation: first, gay and lesbian writing and publishing in Australia; second, HIV social research into the relations between the HIV epidemic, HIV

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[1] I use 'gay' and lesbian' here as inclusive, descriptive terms to cover all forms of same sex desire without any automatic assumption of an accompanying identity politics. I avoid identity proliferations such as GLBTI (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, intersexed) and research categories such as MSM (men who have sex with men), though I accept that sometimes people who identify as heterosexual also sometimes engage in same sex behaviour or might want to do so, just as some people who identify as homosexuals engage in opposite sex attractions and behaviours (Smith *et al.* 2003). However, there are times when gay men and lesbians are much more strongly identifiable as constituting 'lived cultures' and 'communities', not only but often in relation to identity, forms of association, sexual practices, ritual social events and to the state.

education and people living with HIV and AIDS and gay men. In the process of my work in these two sites, especially on their interactions with the 'doing' of gay, a third site emerged: the wider socio-cultural shifts that change the forms in which gay lives and desires are narrated and regulated in contemporary commodity cultures.

I note that my *Curriculum Vitae* includes a body of publications and peer reviewed international and national conference presentations that is significantly larger than the items presented here. The work put forward is a selection. Where I refer to work from my *CV* that is not submitted here I do so in the ordinary way, for example, (Hurley 2000), and include it in the references. Where I cite work written by me and submitted here I do so by its title only, for example, ('Contemporary gay cultures'). The Curriculum Vitae was presented separately as part of the application process for admission to candidature for the degree. The application for admission to candidature was supported by two referees familiar with my work overall: Associate Professor Gary Dowsett, then at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, and Professor Terry Goldie, Department of English, York University, Toronto, Canada.

The work presented progressively articulates and re-articulates the 'different, distinct elements' that continuously make and change relations between community and culture (Hall 1986). Where necessary for that articulation I bring in a third term, governmentality, in order to understand better what is occurring when cultural forms narrate and produce socialities. In that way, culture and community are articulated in relation to the detail of what has been learned in the research. This enables identification of 'relations between forms of communication and forms of social life' (Grossberg 1997: 144). The contextual details of the discussions are Australian, but the preoccupations are often those of both Cultural Studies internationally (Lewis 2004; Morris 1984) and the global challenge of HIV. These general preoccupations are mediated in each site by specific considerations.

The works presented in Site One established the scholarly field of gay and lesbian writing in Australian literary and cultural studies. They did so in ways that took into account how

the field was understood by practitioners in the relevant writing and publishing formations, but the research was not delimited by those understandings. The works presented in Site Two identified ongoing challenges posed by everyday cultures for HIV social research and HIV education. The works presented in Site Three described and analysed shifts in the socio-cultural structures affecting the making of gay lives.

I also want to say along with Michel Foucault, Rosalind Coward, Stephen Heath, and no doubt many others, that the twentieth century is the century in which we, the citizens of western capitalism, speak ourselves and are spoken of sexually. In a grand narrative of personal development through bodily mobilisation, romantic fantasy, sexual awareness and orgasmic fulfilment. By novels, by women's and men's magazines, through newspapers, through advertising, through agony columns, popular music, personal columns, through literature courses, through self help therapies, through 'How to' manuals, through sex education, through films, through soap opera, through gossip and self regulation. Through writing. Narratives in which personal life is sexualised. The century of identity. The century of maturity, health and normalcy. The century of deviance, perversion, inversion and illness. The century of homosexuality, of camp, of resistance, of gayness, of lesbianism.

Like them I want to say no to all this, but the first voice I hear is that of Blanche in *The Golden Girls*: 'how can I say no to the man I love when I can't say no to the men I like?'

<div align="right">(Hurley 1991: 27)</div>

Introduction

The thirteen publications presented for examination are grouped by site of investigation. The essay is a reflexive account of how my work makes sense of these specific sites at particular moments (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). The moves from one site to another make apparent the shifting focus of my work, especially the shift from gay and lesbian writing as a cultural practice (Site One) to HIV social research (Site Two) and the emerging connections between both of these and the wider socio-cultural narration of gay and lesbian lives (Site Three).

A site in this context is a socio-cultural space constituted by the researched relation between artefacts, social practices, media relays, cultural formations and narrative forms.

The essay has five sections. The first section is an overview of the ways community, culture and governmentality emerge as themes in the presented work. I relate them to issues of sex and sexuality; technologies of the self; gay men and public health, and to the state. Section two is a background discussion of the HIV epidemic in Australia. Section three discusses methodology. Section four is a description and overview of the work presented in each of the three sites. Section five is the conclusion.

The challenge in providing a thematic overview of the presented pieces is to account for the ways I have analysed different aspects of culture and community, even as the cultures and communities involved changed. While I proceed in the essay by letting 'community' emerge in discussion, I am well aware that it has been subject to celebration, lamentation and sustained critique both amongst gay men and lesbians, and elsewhere. Criticism has occurred particularly, but not only, when community is used to unify otherwise heterogeneous ways of living (Grierson *et al.* 2005; Kippax *et al.* 1993a; McInnes 2001; McInnes *et al.* 2001; Hobson *et al.* 1997; Putnam 2000; Secomb 2003; Watney 1987). The articulatory force of community, its capacity to 'unify', is discussed throughout the essay.

The phrase 'heterogeneous ways of living' refers here to the doing of gay in social practices. Sometimes, and unavoidably, this doing is a performance of identity. That is, after all, the nature of subject formation as we know it. Much of the time this performance of gay or lesbian is also an identity *politics*, especially when articulated with community, and carries with it all sorts of difficulties to do with who is included, who excluded (Fuss 1989, 1991; Mercer 1990; Rajchman 1995). Indeed, in Australia, identity politics are the dominant form of gay and lesbian politics. However, it too is a contested form, from within and outside of community formations. Following Watney, we could argue that gay and lesbian are politicised sexual categories as well as collections of ways of being. Their disruptive potential is in the degree to which they operate outside of a hetero/homo binary that distributes sexual 'truth', rather than in being pulled back inside 'the dominant orbit of the orthodox structure of sexuality' (1987: 27).

Even so, operating outside 'the orthodox structure of sexuality' is a tall enough order politically, as distinct from how it might occur socially. As Butler put it, some years after Watney, when the culture wars had begun in the USA over sex and sexuality in ways often connected to HIV and AIDS, gay men, feminism and lesbian sex:

> Particular identities are being produced as contested zones within political discourse all the time…it would be perilous at this historical moment to claim or call for the surpassing of particular identities…In the face of the prospective silencing or erasure of gender, race or sexual minority identities by reactionary political forces, it is important to be able to articulate them, and to insist on these identities as sites of valuable cultural contest. My own view is that it is imperative to assert identities, at the same time that it is crucial to interrogate the exclusionary operations by which they are constituted. (Butler 1993: 226-230)

As Johnson (1997) points out, it is at this point that Butler tends to locate identity politics primarily within a civil rights framework. However, for my purposes, the 'sting' in Butler's remarks is in the last clause beginning 'at the same time' where she asserts the need to challenge exclusivist practices of identity. This 'time' is simultaneously articulated as analytic and political, but the analysis cannot be done solely in the name of politics and its urgencies, much less a politics directed only at the state. For to do so is to grant political analyses and practices a reductive primacy. It also confuses analytically

different modes and planes of articulation (political, social, cultural, economic). The result is an inability to understand adequately the disjunctures between politics, forms of social association and everyday cultural and sexual practices. It is in the latter particularly that we see other reasons for these disjunctures: the power of affect, desire and making do (de Certeau 1988; Dollimore 1991)

The constant challenge in my research work is precisely that of how to identify, describe and articulate the 'different, distinct elements' that constitute, say, a micro sexual culture constituted by networks, venues, sexual practices, dispositions, knowledges and the presence of a virus. 'At the same time', I cannot lose sight of the ways in which that micro culture might need also to be articulated in relation to community, modes of subject formation, and the state. Policy and practice require such circumstantial understandings. Because of this, my work investigates the relations between structures, activities, social technologies, discourses, artefacts and meanings in order to better understand the structures, processes and pleasures involved in making sense in, and of, everyday life.[2] There is a constant engagement here with critical theory, but the work is a series of performances informed by theory rather than conceptual elaborations of it.

From 1990 onward, two general trajectories are evident in my work: gay and lesbian writing, and HIV and its effects on cultures of everyday life amongst gay men. Community and culture were central themes in this writing, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly. To a degree, in some of the later works included here, the two trajectories have converged ('The Love that Loves', 'Imagine Hope', *Then and Now*,). They form an emerging problematic: how to do a cultural sociology of gay lives that takes into account HIV, and which includes cultures of treatment and the experience of people living with HIV ('Cultures of Care'), but doesn't collapse wider cultural analysis into that inclusion ('Contemporary gay cultures'); how to discuss the political and socio-cultural aspects of the commodification of community and their relation to ways of living; and, how to account for the emergence and form of normalisation. The issue of

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[2] I note in this process a *de facto* construction of an interdisciplinary field indebted primarily to cultural studies, but also to sociology, anthropology, media studies and critical theory.

'normalisation' is not one of the disappearance of the political or the social, but of their changing forms (Gane 2004) ('Imagine Hope', 'A Critical Reflection' and 'Contemporary Gay Cultures').

This problematic is linked to, but larger than, and separate from, that of how best to do social research on HIV and gay men. My work shifts between these frames. It sometimes highlights how community-based organisations act as agents and forms of governmentality, intervening in and urging adherence to forms of subjectivity at odds on occasion with the values and practices of particular sexual cultures. At other times, the work makes clear how those sexual cultures are themselves articulated in relation to community and governmentality, especially for purposes of HIV prevention, HIV education and practices of self care.

Overview

In the early 1980s, Rosalind Coward wrote:

> To be a woman is to be constantly addressed, to be constantly scrutinised, to have our desire constantly courted…Everywhere, female desire is sought, bought, packaged and consumed. (Coward 1984: 13)

Coward was writing of women, pleasure and popular culture. Not long before, Heath had written of the making of sexuality and its intensification as the 'truth' of identity (Heath 1982). Something akin to what Coward was saying has happened since to lesbians and gay men. By the early 1990s, changes in social attitudes saw lesbianism become a media symbol of cosmopolitan chic. Lesbian sex 'emerged as exciting, exploratory and glamorous' (Hamer and Budge 1994: 10). Somewhat differently, the advent of HIV/AIDS had resulted in gay men being progressively 'sought' as subjects of legalisation, research, public policy and health promotion. Sex was the subject of purposeful and voyeuristic address, but the bodily pleasures of the sex were displaced in HIV research by their configuration into 'risk practices'. In the process, gay men's sexual practices were subject to sustained, intense disciplinary scrutiny. (Segal 1990: ix noted the scrutiny of men's lives generally in the 1980s.) Gay men became 'governed' in ways

never seen before. Since then, they have been 'bought, packaged and consumed', particularly in television programmes and advertising, but also in gay community media. In the process, the tight discursive connections made between gay sex, disease and death in the 1980s (Dollimore 1998; Hurley and Dowsett 1994; Lupton 1994) have arguably loosened, to the extent that in many contemporary popular representations gay is now de-sexed and aestheticised (Dowsett 2003; 'The Love that Loves'). These were (not so) 'new' moves in the formation of (not so) queer subjectivities.

In Foucauldian theory, links between scrutiny, normalisation and sex constitute technologies of the self. When these technologies are associated with efforts to manage whole populations, the result is governmentality. Foucault's governmentality thesis has been applied to culture as a pedagogy (Bennett 1990; Hunter 1988), to the formation of subjectivity (Rose 1989) and to public health. Petersen and Lupton declare 'that the new public health is at its core a moral enterprise…it involves prescriptions about how we should live our lives individually and collectively' (1996: xii).

Bartos put this bluntly:

> Governmental techniques in relation to public health threats entail rendering populations calculable in terms of risk…At issue…is the achievement of a proper subjectivity. (Bartos 1996: 125)

At the time, Bartos was arguing that when safe sex is configured within the rationalities of a public health framework unsafe sex between gay men becomes incomprehensible. Without celebrating unsafe sex as transgressive, and in order to include pleasure in the discussion, he likens unsafe sex indirectly to 'queer' as 'an irruption into a field of normalisation' (126) and as a 'defiance of the tyranny of HIV' (130). Subsequent analysis of the increasing emergence of *unprotected* sex amongst gay men in Australia identified both safe and unsafe forms of unprotected sex (Rosengarten *et al.* 2000; Van de Ven *et al.* 2002; Willis *et al.* 2002). These analyses required accounts of subjectivity not achievable within public health frameworks, yet needing acknowledgement within policy and practice (Hurley *et al.* 2002). They allowed recognition of sexual practices and

sociabilities that could be more fully understood in terms of fluidly constituted micro cultures rather than only through community acting as a dominant configuration of gay cultures in the interests of HIV health promotion. For all the attendant difficulties, this cultural analysis allowed for a re-positioning of sex to include pleasure and a potential critique of aspects of 'a proper gay subjectivity' as practised by HIV prevention.

In the process of discussing these issues in my work it became apparent there were unexpected relations between community and culture. The dynamics of unprotected sex often signified a displacement of HIV and its threats. This held, in different ways, for both HIV negative and positive men who increasingly appeared to prefer the sexual company of men of the same HIV sero-status (Van de Ven *et al.* 2000).

Analytically these matters required recognising culture as conceptually separate from community in gay contexts. They also raised questions of whether 'community' and 'culture' were conceptually adequate for understanding and explaining the relevant phenomena. Governmentality gave added explanatory depth in that it allowed discussion of subjectivity formation as both constrained by and outside of government. This mattered for two reasons. Firstly, it was quite clear that 'community' initiated and led the response to HIV. Secondly, it mattered because of the ever intensifying interface between gay men, community-based organisations and public health. It took me some time to realise that at different points, and in various ways, community was itself an organised cultural form, rather than only an increasingly hostile form of governmentality intruding into a culture. Culture and community were still often mutually articulated rather than simply opposed, and between them brokered diverse subjectivities.

At the more obvious level, these insights made it possible to account for the social and semiotic slides evident in discussions of HIV and non-HIV related community-based organizations (CBOs) and in discursive mobilisations of community and culture. Often 'community' was used to refer to community-based organisations, as though they were synonymous, and then used as though community and culture were also synonymous.

The challenges inherent in understanding how community and culture are articulated together were apparent in Matthew's 1997 remark on the limits

> of the variety of communities in Australia that define themselves in relation to sexuality rather than to some other characteristic. Individuals in these communities sustain a personal identity that is self-consciously (if usually complicatedly) sexual. They have a collective identification, they identify with others, on the basis of that understanding and those practices of sexuality. At least for some of the time, when such understanding matters, these individuals situate themselves, and are situated by others, as part of a sexual culture or community. (Matthews 1997: xv)

Here I note the sense of 'both/and' in 'culture or community', rather than an exclusive sense of 'or'. I also note the mix of elements: processes ('identification', 'identify'), identities, sexuality, individuals, collectivity, 'mattering', provisionality and temporal considerations: 'At least for some of the time, when such understanding matters'.

The essay works with these usages. I note here, however, that the affective power of invoking community in everyday life does not rely on analytic distinctions such as those between governmentality, CBOs, community and culture. Rather, it is a matter of diverse and changing social and psychic investments in relation to HIV, crisis and 'having a life'. The associated tensions and strains are significant for how we constitute a researched understanding of this field.

Social, political and organisational responses, firstly to social inequality and then to HIV and AIDS, were often seen in the 1980s as definitive of gay and to an extent lesbian community. However, they were also appropriated over time by mainstream media cultures and re-formulated into broadcast articulations of same sex desire as mostly sanitised differences (*Will and Grace*). The associated narratives and representations become generalised elements in commodity culture, blurring the historical relations between the political, sexual and social origins of the representations, and contemporary modes of governmentality: health promotion, television series and advertising ('Contemporary gay cultures').

The works chosen were selected because they marked out points where I engaged with, contested and reconceptualised dominant accounts of the field of gay cultures and communities, and the relations between them and practices of HIV education and HIV social research. This selectivity allowed me both to provide the degree of integration required for the purposes of this essay and to indicate the ways in which the presented writings had significance for both scholarly and professional practice. They demonstrated theoretical and methodological developments that produced new research data, concepts and articulations of the relevant fields ('cultures of care'). These, in turn, enabled new forms of engagement in health promotion research and practice, in policy and in research. It is this process of development that coheres the selection as an original contribution to scholarly knowledge and as a contribution to cultural studies (Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler 1992).

What selectivity also did, however, was exclude. My selections displaced much of my work on grief, and the forms of writing in which it was explored: fiction, ficto-critical essays and auto-ethnography. These writings were sometimes less conventionally academic in form and often had their origins in oral presentations to conferences, workshops and seminars (like much of the selected work presented here). They were performed, but also appeared in refereed journals and book chapters. It is their performative character, the active seeking of a poetics of affect, which troubles academic convention in the social sciences (Hurley 2002). They sought forms for writing about what it meant to live in the 'affected communities' without replacing affect with analysis.

A more general problem for both the excluded pieces and the pieces included in Site Two was one of explaining the stress of extremity – the experience of 'Living in an Epidemic' (Hurley 1995; 1996; 1997; 2000; 2001a) – while contesting the ongoing sentimentalising of those living with the virus as 'victims', whether medical or social. Together with the need to explain epidemic affect in regional cities that seemed out of proportion to local epidemiology, this was to become integral to my developing understanding of the virtuality of grief (*Then and Now*: 17-19, 65) From there I moved to the role of various media in relaying new HIV treatments information during and after the 1996 Vancouver

media 'event'. I linked media cultures to treatments cultures amongst people living with HIV (Hurley *et al.* 2000) and to HIV prevention amongst gay men (Hurley *et al.* 2002). I later followed up the effects of new media forms on how same sex desire is socially narrated, circulated and commodified ('Contemporary gay cultures'). It is the latter work, rather than that on grief, which appears in the selections here.

HIV always was, and remains, 'an epidemic of signification' (Treichler 1988, 1999). The articulation of that signification socially, politically and culturally is ongoing. My work was also informed by how HIV changed the nature of state involvement in the lives of gay men and gay community (funding, policy structures, involvement of affected communities, supportive legislation). As community-based HIV organisations were increasingly funded by federal, state and territory governments, they became progressively more closely connected with funding accountability mechanisms, including programme and resource approval processes. They also became more obviously implicated in governmentality.[3] AIDS councils were community organised forms of response to the threat of HIV and became the largest ongoing brokers of relations between the state and community. AIDS Councils became, or are becoming, gay and lesbian health organizations, with 'health', especially sexual health, also being a primary form of governmentality. The works presented here criss-crossed the Foucauldian arena of political rationalities, genealogies of the state and techniques of domination even as they investigated ethics, genealogies of the subject and technologies of subjectivity (Foucault 1978, 1982, 1984a, 1984b).

Rose argued persuasively against conceptualising community organisations in any straightforward way as opposed to state apparatuses. I later refer to the 'brokering' role played by community-based organisations as distinct from any putative role of 'representing' community. For Rose, governance and management were established by

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[3] While I connect 'governmentality' variously to social technologies, health promotion and media commodification of gay in my research monograph *Then and Now. Gay men and HIV*, I don't explicitly link it there to community. This particularly insightful linkage came from Rule (2005) who has adapted the notion from Rose (1999) in a somewhat different context. See also Keogh, 2001, 2003 and Tomsen 2001: 23-26.

the state through a whole range of mechanisms, including funding, but also through forms of legal control and various kinds of moralism. Practices of self-surveillance, professionalism and monitoring were implicated in the appropriation of 'community' as a mechanism of control (1999: 167 - 197). Just as important, for discussions of governmentality, was the focus on the productivity of the interactions, as seen, for example, in the work on AIDS by Ballard (1998) and Dowsett (1998), and more generally that of Dean (1999), and Clifford (2001).[4]

While community-based organizations were involved in governmentality, they also had ways of establishing critical distance from the state and pharmaceutical companies ('Strategic and conceptual issues'). In the case of health promotion for gay men and lesbians, the state often preferred they do so where there were perceptions of political risk. In terms of gay and lesbian 'community', community-based health organizations and historic forms of sociality were articulated as a specific economy of power. One aspect of those historic forms was resistance to biopolitics, especially, but not only, where they intersected with homophobia and moralism, as seen constantly in Mardi Gras parade floats and, before that, in the targets of gay liberation activism. Early citable instances would include struggles against aversion therapies and the coding of homosexuality as a mental illness. The ways this resistance is currently the case amongst gay men and lesbians is more a form of reverse discourse, including their insistence on inclusive modifications to census data collection instruments and on access to state funded reproductive technologies.

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[4] At this point the discussion could widen to include current theorisations of the state that consider amongst other matters relations between government and governmentality. Much of the literature on these matters focuses now on globalisation (Beck 2000), complicating the role of the nation state, and on consumption rather than relations of production. These emphases then influence current understandings of 'the social' and the contemporary distribution of political power (Rose 1989; Gane 2004). I thank my colleague Murray Couch for useful conversations on this matter. Considerations of space and purpose here do not allow for this discussion; however, I note that Johnson's (2003) account of political homophobia in Australia has implications for current practices of public health governmentality.

Now, with gay men, we might talk about various practices of HIV, STI and viral load testing, the availability of new prevention technologies such as post- and pre-exposure prophylaxis, and what these have made possible: the choice of sexual partners according to sero-status, as well as health maintenance (Race 2001; Rosengarten *et al.* 2000). When sex, biomedical technologies and state-funded health promotion are included in the picture, it becomes impossible to keep any sharp distinction between the state as a solely external form of repressive domination and how community is articulated with the state, and then implicated in the formation of particular subjectivities.

The productivity of this articulation, in terms of both the health services made available by a public health system in Australia and the funding of community-based, culturally relevant health promotion, was not in question. As indicated by my publications grouped in Site Two, that productivity generated important social capacities and cultures of care. Further, it enabled sophisticated, sex positive and respectful interventions into lived cultures that were central in sustaining safe sex practices over a long period. It also gave official purchase to censorship, further medicalisation of sex and moralism.

However, which kinds of subjectivities were produced was another matter. Keogh argued on the basis of British evidence that:

> Our analysis of health promotion might … be described as re-constructing certain types of gay men, not as deviant, but in Kinsman's (1996: 402) terms as merely 'a variant from the norm'. Thus, gay men are being granted a very limited social legitimacy. The question therefore remains: does this model of health promotion meet the needs of all gay men? Empirical research suggests increasingly that the answer is no. (Keogh 2003)

Elsewhere Keogh *et al.* pointed to the ways current health promotion practices did not meet the needs of many working-class, immigrant and black gay men who did not choose to do gay in relation to dominant gay cultures (Keogh *et al.* 2004). One of the challenges constantly negotiated by community-based health promotion was the central place of medicine's authority and the ways it ruled 'cultural salience' out of order or subsidiary to the good order of health (*Then and Now*, pp76ff; Race 2005).

The state was present in gay men's lives long before and after HIV appeared, in terms of (il)legality of sex acts, age of consent laws, anti-discrimination and discriminatory legislation. However, in an age of deregulation and neo-liberalism, the state played new roles in relation to health, risk, responsibility and ('the gay') lifestyle. Particularly after the arrival of Highly Active Antiretroviral Treatments (HAART) in 1996, a nexus emerged between state funded HIV prevention and treatment education and medicine, treatments cultures and gay male sexual practices (Race 2001). One consequence was the need to account for shifts in sexual practices before and after HAART.

My work on gay men, people living with HIV and treatments cultures (Site Two) indicated that the operations of governmentality were not definitive, and needed to be complemented by an understanding of both sense making as an active process in cultures of everyday life and the effects on this of medicine and wider media and commodity cultures.

Accounting for change involved considerations of temporality. This was clear to me in each of the sites of analysis presented here. One of the nastier ironies of the work presented in Site One was that even as gay and lesbian writing and publishing boomed (1990-1996) there was a sense in which its moment was 'over' in that the pressure on the writing to represent gay and lesbian responses to HIV and to homophobia diminished. The reasons for this were multiple. The general representational burden on print was dispersed by the proliferation of new electronic media technologies (the world wide web and the internet), recognition of the increasing role of mainstream publishing, the burgeoning of initially HIV-related then more general gay and lesbian representations on television and the lessening of a sense of crisis.

As can be seen in Sites Two and Three, there were major internal cultural shifts amongst many HIV negative gay men when they realised safe sex had worked and they hadn't become infected. Australian researchers discussed this as the emergence of a 'post-AIDS' environment (Dowsett 1996a; Dowsett and McInnes 1996). While that didn't sit easily with many HIV positive people, their cultures also shifted after highly active

antiretroviral therapies became available to treat HIV (Site Two). Gay men, irrespective of their HIV status, experienced new possibilities for doing gay in a context of converging shifts in social attitudes, the emergence of new media technologies and an explosion in commodification (Site Three).

In order to understand these emerging trends better, rather than automatically assuming a link between gay and community, I began to use the concepts of post-AIDS developed by Dowsett and McInnes and 'ways of doing gay' from their and others' work on community and responses to HIV (McInnes, Bollen, Couch and Dowsett 2001).

All of these changes affected the ways extremity was experienced and positioned (Rofes 1998). The crisis was over. By 2001 the politically urgent question, in terms of HIV, was how to account for increases in new diagnoses of HIV without falling back on reactivating 'crisis' for health promotion purposes, and without starting a witch-hunt against HIV positive gay men. In a post-AIDS culture an imposed crisis wouldn't work. In that sense my interest was in both the operations of governmentality and how people actively escaped it in the interests of other forms of power, particularly the creation of pleasure in everyday life and its costs.

What I think now of some key concepts like 'community' is very different from what I thought in 1990 when the first piece was published. Then 'community' was closely linked politically to responding to crisis, and 'community attachment' was a key operational category in both HIV social research and HIV education (Kippax *et al.* 1990). Later, I queried the utility and adequacy of 'crisis', 'community' and 'community attachment' for understanding ways of doing gay as distinct from, but related to, doing HIV prevention (*Then and Now*, Site Two; 'The Love that Loves to Speak Its Name', Site Three). What became much clearer over time was how the articulation of a lived culture into community, during an extended moment of crisis, led in various ways to difficulties in distinguishing between them. With that limit came limited analytic capacity to explain the changing relations between the effects of the HIV epidemic, sexual practices and socio-cultural relations amongst gay men now.

My methodologies and methods also shifted during this time. Largely this was an effect of changing the kinds of objects I researched from texts, writing and publishing practices to sexual and treatments practices embedded in gay men's everyday lives and the role of media in relation to them. I don't wish to impose a polished 'overview' that either hides these differences or elevates them as definitive. Rather, I want to acknowledge the differences and, to a degree, chart them, while showing that there are thematic continuities that can be seen as constituting a sense of an integrated whole.

All of the selected work presented was written in the context of the HIV epidemic. However, I need to note that my work on gay and lesbian writing (Site One) was motivated originally by a desire to keep open a space in which gay and lesbian culture and social life weren't totally collapsed into HIV and its effects. While that raised questions for the structural relation between cultural practices and HIV, it now seems fairly clear that the relation is constitutive rather than determinant. This plays out in quite different ways in each of my three sites of investigation, but, in each case, relative indeterminacy and contingency are key to understanding relations between social structures and lived cultures (Gardiner 2000).

The everyday lives of people affected by HIV, HIV education and research in Australia co-exist in a complicated field. For example, the work of HIV health promotion is required to be 'evidence-based'. That gives research a practical priority over HIV health promotion in that the policy environment decrees that research must come first in order for educators to justify their proposed programmes and activities in funding applications. This has two consequences. First, the professional knowledges of health promotion practitioners, their 'professionally gay' pedagogies, are devalued (McInnes 2000/2001; McInnes *et al.* 2000). Second, members of the lived cultures are increasingly configured primarily as research respondents, as the recipients of health promotion 'messages' and as populations. The culture in that sense is configured behaviourally for utilitarian purposes, and those 'lived' aspects, once central to culturally relevant HIV education are

increasingly pressured, if not replaced, by epidemiologically driven 'messages' in the name of sexual health.

While historical and contemporary research into gay and lesbian lives continued throughout the first decade of the epidemic in Australia (Bradstock and Wakefield 1988; Wotherspoon 1986, 1991), and there were political analyses of AIDS (Altman 1986) much of the sociological research into gay men occurred as HIV social research. In an extended period of infection, illness and death, that research was inevitably geared to pinpointing risk practices for HIV transmission. In the process, much Australian sociological and cultural research into lived gay cultures was overdetermined by HIV, as indeed were large parts of those cultures themselves.

Indeed, in the 1980s, gay cultures were marshalled as a resource for research and for HIV educational purposes. In that delimited sense, safe sex as a (100% condom use) culture had become functionally synonymous in the HIV social research with gay culture as a whole. This posed a problem for researchers engaged in articulating the relations between community, culture and safe sex. They knew from 1987 onwards that a significant minority of men were practicing safe unprotected sex (Kippax *et al.* 1993a; Vadasz and Lipp 1990). However this could not be named because of its potential impact on how safe sex culture was understood and promoted in HIV education. The result was what Dowsett (1996b) in a later discussion of the period called a 'discursive silence'. It was named in 1993. In the case of seroconcordant HIV negative men in regular relationships it was named as 'negotiated safety' (Kippax *et al.* 1993b).

What these delays in publicly naming pointed to was two-fold. Firstly, safe sex cultures were dynamically adaptive (Hurley *et al.* 2002), rather than static, and were not 'naturally' or automatically articulated with community-promoted, safe sex practices. The dynamism occurred before it was identified by researchers. Secondly, there was inevitably a time lag between the orchestration of 'community' response and the lived culture. Community-based health promotion was forced into a 'catch-up' role. However problematically, the culture often 'led', though was not necessarily separate from,

community or the effects of research. We began to see analytically the ways that community was a powerful articulation of aspects of the culture, not simply a synonym for it.

This recognition and naming of what was occurring in sections of lived sex cultures was amplified and circulated within the affected communities when the AIDS Council of NSW made negotiated safety an official part of HIV education during 1995 (Kinder 1996). At that point, safe sex culture became 'officially' heterogeneous, though that knowledge was not well known or understood outside of the HIV sector.

The implications of the above discussion for the critique of 'professionalisation' of community-based organizations and HIV health promotion that emerged at the time in Australia and the USA (Altman 1994; Patton 1990) are now clearer than they were then. Patton and Altman rightly signalled a major change in the general relation between community-based organisations and 'community'. The discussion could only partially articulate the constituent elements of the social technologies that were both linking and separating 'community' from emerging cultures of sexual practice. In this interaction, community not only brokered relations with the state, but was now also increasingly positioned as having to broker ways of intervening in divergences in (safe) sex cultures. Increasingly, however, descriptions of these divergences had to take into account subjectivities formed under different conditions of governmentality: gay men, and to a degree lesbians, as recognised participants in commodity cultures (Site Three).

The importance conceptually of post-AIDS was that it flagged a shift in the lived culture away from HIV. It was a socio-cultural account of what was occurring in relation to HIV, rather than a psychosocial account governed by risk of HIV infection. The fear of infection and the effects of living in an epidemic were no longer determinant of the culture as a whole. 'Community', to a degree, became the 'left over' of the mobilisation against HIV and AIDS, as distinct from being a synonym for the lived culture in all its variety. Different strands of this argument can also be seen elsewhere (Dowsett *et al.* 2005; Race 2003)

These matters were first systematically addressed in HIV education in 1995 in the Campaign Working Group of the Gay Education Strategies Project of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. I was a participant in those discussions. The much delayed result was a national campaign in 1999 ('Getting Things in Focus') that attempted to promote a discussion amongst gay men of where HIV and AIDS now fitted in their lives (Hurley 1999; Murphy *et al.* 1999: 43). Meanwhile, in the socio-behavioural research these matters were reduced to scales of 'optimism' in relation to the new HIV treatments and their effect on sexual behaviours.

Analysis of what was occurring in wider gay cultures was limited. In my own work, I flagged elements of it in 'The Love that Loves to Speak its Name' (1999, Site Three), in 'Sydney' (2000, Site Three) and in 'Imagine Hope' (2002, Site Two) before addressing it systematically in *Then and Now* (2003, Site Two). Part of what I was trying to do in *Then and Now* was point to both the ways in which those aspects of the lived (sexual) cultures of gay men that did not conform to even the newer, heterogeneous safe sex culture had been displaced from view, except as risk practices, and how this affected understandings of wider aspects of lived gay cultures and the work of HIV educators. Without this wider understanding, the behaviour of gay men became both incomprehensible and, from the point of view of state-funded mechanisms of governmentality, reprehensible. These were precisely the responses that emerged when the number of new HIV infections increased in the early 2000s. Gay men were blamed for 'complacency' and depicted as living in a drug-fuelled frenzy, 'dancing with death' (Dow 2000).

The gap between this representation and what was known about gay men and sex was wide. Dow's commentary in *The Age* was written from a position that saw any negotiation of condom use as risk behaviour, and hence as incomprehensible. How gay men have responded to HIV over time – by figuring out the relativities of risk and then positioning themselves in relation to it and each other – was ignored.[5] For gay journalists

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[5] I thank Dr Garrett Prestage of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research for many discussions of this issue.

like Dow, and the national HIV policy structures, the associated complexities were beyond the capacity of those engaging with them. All the data indicating sustained risk management by gay men were ignored effectively. New infections were seen as outweighing a safe sex culture in which most gay men never or infrequently engaged in sexual risk. A small minority who behaved reprehensibly were instead represented metonymically. Gay men were denied rationality in the process and represented instead as irresponsible.

In the changing policy context of HIV, the extraordinary response by gay men to HIV had been normalised, and in the process minimised. 'Partnership' in a changed policy environment was tweaked and diluted (Hurley 2003) to the extent that policy and public health claimed the successes as theirs, and as 'Australia's'. Gay men were positioned again as 'outside' the national. In a new political articulation, the 'general population' became 'the mainstream', making it easier for policy responses to new infections to speak of complacency amongst gay men. Waldby argued some time ago, that seeing the nation state as a body occurred in ways that included 'men but not women, and heterosexual men, but not gay and bisexual men' (Waldby, 1996: 86; Watney 1987).

To further this discussion of 'development' and provide the necessary overview of my work I step back in order to do two things: first, to identify contextual markers relevant to the period in which the pieces were written and which clearly 'mark' the writing presented (Background); second, to make some remarks about theoretical perspectives and my theoretical shifts during the writing (Methodology).

Background

> 'Get over it, honey', he said. 'It's the 80s. My whole social world is crumbling. There's going to be no one left.' (Levine 1998: x)

> [O]ne needs to remember just how much the leather scene in San Francisco fashioned Foucault's ideas and how many …were lost to AIDS...this was theory embedded in practice, the very practices of our colliding bodies. It grew from our bodies and how they engaged each other in wicked acts of violent passion, splashing body fluids and a wilful abandonment of things proper. (Dowsett 1999).

The HIV epidemic and initial responses to it in Australia affected how 'community' and 'culture' were theorised in research, how they were mobilised socially and politically and how they were used to articulate everyday life back into the research and the response.

In Australia, the HIV epidemic occurred primarily amongst gay men. They constituted historically over 90% of people infected with HIV (about 22,000), of AIDS diagnoses and of those who have died from AIDS (about 7000). 85% of current new infections and ongoing AIDS deaths have occurred amongst gay men, though the rates of both are much lower (NCHECR 2004). All this had a dramatic effect on how gay men understood their lives, on how they were represented in mainstream and community-based media, on their sexual practices, on social attitudes and on government legislation, policy and service delivery. In subsequent years, the collaboration between gay communities, medicine, government and research took on mythological status as the 'partnership' response, without regard for major changes in the practices and structures of partnership from 1996 onwards.

My focus on gay men and HIV had, however, to be carefully formulated. First, gay men did not constitute all people living with, or affected by, HIV and AIDS in Australia. So when it came to discussion of 'treatments' cultures, a very specific and productive area of my work, out of which came the concept of 'cultures of care', it was to the lived cultures of men and women, heterosexual and homosexual, living with HIV that I referred. Second, like the ways in which gay men responded to the presence of HIV in everyday life, treatments cultures were in constant re-formation. Initial uptake of new combination therapies was rapid, and the treatments had significant effects on morbidity and mortality.

HIV and AIDS became private matters between doctors and patients which changed the public representation of HIV. Focus shifted from uptake and adherence to side effects. Structured and unstructured treatments breaks emerged causing significant variations in uptake as well as shifts in levels of viral load in non treating individuals at any given moment. The time periods involved in these changes were relatively short, and within them there was constant individual change. Third, gay, much less lesbian, cultures were not defined only by the presence of HIV, though aspects of gay cultures were deeply inscribed with its effects. There was considerable socio-cultural heterogeneity *between and amongst* HIV negative and HIV positive gay men, much of it produced as much by differences in ways of doing gay as by HIV sero-status (HIV positive, HIV negative) or by the effects of the epidemic.

The biggest rise and fall in the rate of HIV infection in Australia occurred between 1983 and 1987. The decrease was due largely to gay men changing their sexual practices, even as science struggled to identify a virus as the cause and to develop a test for its presence. The fall in infection occurred through international, community-based development of practices of 'safe' sex well before any major influx of government money. 'Safe sex' was a sex positive, harm reduction approach that initially drew on community cultural practices and institutions to do HIV education.

While the rate of new infections fell quickly, infection continued. Meanwhile, the rate and number of deaths seemed to rise inexorably and didn't peak until 1994. 700 died in that year alone:

> They sent him home
> with legs as thin as wrists,
> to eat tinned fruit.
> (Wheat 1996: 134)

While there are ongoing deaths - 75 so far reported for 2004, much lower than in 1994 - there are signs that the effectiveness of treatments amongst long-term infected people on treatment falters (Grierson *et al.* 2004: 13). Over 50% of the epidemic is in one state (NSW), and much of that in two inner Sydney health areas (NSW Health 2000: 5). In that

inner area, HIV prevalence approximates that of South Africa, 15-25% of the gay male population (Prestage 2005).

When HIV first emerged (1982-1984), 'community' included pre-existing political, social and cultural practices, histories, media and organizations and an emerging formative process, the response to HIV (*Then and Now*).

While gay and women's liberation movement politics had emerged some twelve years earlier, by the late 1970s gay movement politics had shifted to a self-conscious engagement with 'community' (Bennett 1981; Johnston 1980, 1981). Johnston argued that:

> The major impact of the gay liberation movement on the homosexual subcultures was not to eliminate them – as gay/lesbian liberationists, rejecting commercialism, sexism and heterosexism desired – but to transform them. This transformation occurred through a process of diffusion and defusion of gay liberation ideas, so that the subcultures reflected the image of the gay liberation movement without losing their satellite status in the wider culture. The result, a phenomenon which is still in the process of development, has been called "community" by its exponents (and its detractors). Those gay, and lesbian, communities still retain the satellite status of subcultures as such, but more accurately than pre-Stonewall subcultures, can be considered as cultures of resistance. (Johnston 1983)

Community, in that political sense, was an attempt to change the largely external relation between political activism and what was known as the sub-culture, the burgeoning inner-city social spaces where many gay men in particular lived their lives (bars, dance floors, sex clubs). Sydney Gay Mardi Gras [6] became a primary site of this political shift. The nature of the change to community was symbolised in 1981 when Mardi Gras was disconnected from its June 28th date, linking gay pride and the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York (generally taken as the founding events of Gay Liberation), and moved to February, in the Australian summer (Johnston 1999). That year the first Mardi Gras party was held after the parade.

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[6] Sydney Gay Mardi Gras was renamed as Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in 1989.

1978-1982 were protean years. They saw the growth of the 'clone' phenomenon (short hair, moustaches, check shirts, work boots, disco dancing) amongst gay men which Johnston credited at the time as transforming 'male homosexual subculture in Sydney':

> Clone signified a new, self-originating statement about sexual and gender identity by those gay men, and a new assessment of the social regulation of (homo)sexuality. It is among the clones that the politicization has been the greatest, not the drag queens or the young New Wavers, and it is they who took up the ideas of the gay liberationists (who despised them) to contribute to the creation of a community. (Johnston 1983)

This analysis gave an account of dynamics internal to emerging gay sociabilities, rather than discussing them only in relation to external forces. For Johnston, clone cultures became emblematic of the nascent community. Though Johnston's was a politically driven analysis, it articulated everyday life within 'community'. It included dancing, stylistic differentiations and self representation as part of organising responses to social power and as forms of power in their own right. The performance of self signified both a collective politics and an articulation of individual and intersubjective forms of being and becoming. That is, culture, understood as the progressive combining of these elements, was formed by articulation.

Initially, clones and associated fetish groups like leather men were hardest hit by HIV and AIDS in both Australia and the USA (Levine 1998). They became a key component in the response to HIV. Gay 'community' itself, as quickly as it formed, re-formed as part of a 'crisis' response to HIV. That politico-cultural assertiveness became a social capacity politically and socially mobilised by the most affected in the face of large-scale public fear and hostility. This was not helped by a frenzy of media-relayed and politically motivated homophobia,[7] but there was emerging government support for those most affected (Willett 2000).

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[7] 'AIDS finally gripped the public imagination with the election-campaign announcement by the Queensland health minister in November 1984 that four babies had contracted the disease and that they had done so as a result of transfusions of blood donated by an infected gay man. It was low politics but high drama and the media lapped it up. At its worst (as in the *Truth's* screaming headline 'Die, you deviate!'), coverage bordered on incitement to homophobic violence. At its best, it was merely hysterical…In Brisbane, the hostility of the conservative government –

The institutional histories of gay and lesbian communities here would have to articulate responses to HIV and its relations with the wider lived culture: the rapid growth of Mardi Gras (Carbery 1995), the emergence of dance party culture, shifting lesbian sex cultures, the re-emergence of gay and lesbian coalition politics, gay, lesbian and women's media, changes in commercial venues (bars, saunas) as well as the effects of research and education as forms of 'governmentality'. Then there are issues of changing forms of sociability involving friendship networks, funerals, practices of care and treatments activism (Ariss 1997; Grierson *et al.* 2005).

'Crisis'-based practices were to dominate how community and culture were understood in community-based professional practices of health promotion, and in research, as well as in practices of everyday life until the mid 1990s, and to an extent continue to do so today. One consequence has been that matters of anxiety, fear, morbidity and emotional extremity have had a degree of constitutive force in each of these arenas. This is not to say these matters and histories are hegemonic in a unified economy of affect (Grossberg 1997; Harding and Pribram 2004). Indeed, their longer term socio-cultural and biopsychosocial effects have been barely investigated.

Those living with HIV have themselves experienced major life changes subsequent to the arrival of 'effective'[8] HIV treatments in 1996, and there are significant degrees of heterogeneity amongst them in terms of how they live their relation to diagnosis and to treatments. Forms of social collectivity amongst people infected with HIV and AIDS shifted in ways somewhat comparable to those seen amongst people directly affected, but not infected (Bartos 2002; Bartos and McDonald 2000; Grierson 2001).

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marked by a refusal to even talk to activists before 1987 – placed the Queensland AIDS Action Committee in an exceptionally difficult position' (Willett 2000: 166, 172).

[8] HIV treatments have kept people alive, but require very high daily levels of routinised adherence to be effective and avoid resistance developing. They are also are notorious for their side effects which require careful management and often further treatments.

Cultural responses to both historical homophobia and HIV, of which writing was one, carried a particular burden. To use Eagleton's words from another context, their task was one of mediating

> between an historical set of social relations, the general cultural and ideological modes appropriate to them, and the specific forms of subjectivity (embodied not least in artefacts) in which such modes are lived out. (1984: 110)

Within numerically relatively small gay and lesbian communities under siege, [9] 'writing' became a dimension of social and political mobilisation. 'Writing' was tasked with representing, honouring and voicing in a collective act of psycho-cultural survival. However, as we see in the Site One discussion below, not all writing in the name of gay and lesbian can be configured this way.

It is not surprising that every one of the selected pieces of writing takes the HIV epidemic into account although to quite different degrees. Five of the selected pieces deal substantively with HIV and its various manifestations. These are discussed in Site Two below.

However, it is too easy for the shadow of HIV to be seen as overdetermining everything that happened amongst gay men during the period of writing. Much else happened 'besides'. One of the unexpected outcomes of the HIV epidemic was the achievement of much higher levels of social acceptance, though arguably in de-sexualised forms. Responses to HIV included significant mobilisations around human rights and discrimination. Australian gay historian Graham Willett declared in 2000 that 'the

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[9] The size of gay and lesbian populations is difficult to estimate, much less their involvement in community. The *Australian Study of Health and Relationships* survey (n=19,307) reported that 1.6% of men and 0.8% of women identified as homosexual; however, '8.6% of men and 15.1% of women were not exclusively heterosexual in either attraction or experience or both' (Smith *et al.* 2003: 141). The Gay Community Periodic Surveys, conducted in major cities by the National Centre in HIV Social Research (NCHSR) and the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research since 1996, report systematic information on the sexual practices of gay-community-attached men. Attachment is reported on a three-item scale: identity, proportion of gay friends and proportion of time spent socially with other gay men (Hull *et al.* 2004). The NCHSR also reports annually on sexual behaviour, drawing on data from a number of sources (Van de Ven *et al.* 2004)

triumph of liberal tolerance is now more or less complete' (Willett 2000: 240). These changes are positioned in relation to changes in media and commodity culture in the Site Three discussion.

Methodology

> In most descriptions and analysis, culture and society are expressed in an habitual past tense. The strongest barrier to the recognition of human cultural activity is this immediate and regular conversion of experience into finished products…(R)elationships, institutions and formations in which we are still actively involved are converted, by this procedural mode, into formed wholes, rather than forming and formative processes. Analysis is then centred on relations between these produced institutions, formations, and experiences, so that now, as in that produced past, only the fixed explicit forms exist, and living presence is always by definition, receding. (Williams 1977: 128)

I use 'culture' in the general senses initially proposed then later revised by Raymond Williams when he referred to it as 'ordinary', and as having 'two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested'. For Williams, in his initial account, culture

> is always both traditional and creative; … it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings…a whole way of life--the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning--the special processes of discovery and creative effort. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about deep personal meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind. (Williams 1958)

The first thing I note is that Williams refuses notions of cultural completeness. He identifies culture as dynamic, involving processes of production, reproduction, learning and making. His objects of study are the relations between activities, technologies, artefacts and meanings, and the issue of who has public access to, and status in, the process of forging these relations. Williams was later to revise 'culture' in several ways (1976, 1977, 1980, 1981). It had, he said, residual, dominant and emergent aspects and these he related to questions of power and politics, to social structures, hegemony and structures of feeling. Increasingly his focus was on the tensions between lived, 'practical consciousness', and its social articulation (1977: 130), though he later insists on the centrality of aesthetic forms of signification (1981).

Williams' focus is also my focus here, but in an adapted form. Until very recently, Western metropolitan, much less regional, gay and lesbian cultures and communities

were formed under conditions of social siege, and have never been 'ordinary' in quite the ways implied. This was compounded by HIV and in that sense requires the extraordinary be included in the ordinary, though in Australia that situation is changing rapidly ('Contemporary gay cultures').

Williams refused to make the social determinative of the cultural in ways that make culture dependent, 'superstructural'. Rather, in his work, culture is a constitutive social process, creating 'specific and different "ways of life" ' (1977: 19). The making of cultures was intrinsically social, involving multiple connections between creators, institutional practices and generic forms. Unexpectedly, perhaps, there are aspects of this that sit well with Foucault who also refuses any definitive separation of the cultural and the social (Morris and Patten 1979: 33).

To an extent, 'practical consciousness' sits adjacent to Foucault's account of the social technologies involved in care of the self. Further, it is in some ways analogous to aspects of Bourdieu's concepts of 'disposition' and 'habitus' (1977, 1990). In a sense all three, along with feminist theorists such as Haraway (1991) and Butler (1993), are conceptualising 'embodiment': the corporeal relations between subjectivities, practices, technologies, power, cultures and social structures. For Bourdieu, 'habitus' positions the relations between objective constituents of culture (social discourse and institutions) and the subjective moment, cultural practices. However, I find the structuralist legacy in Bourdieu's conceptual apparatus too determining. It's difficult to use disposition in ways sufficiently flexible to account for what Probyn referred to as 'interstitial moments…an ongoing inbetweenness' (Probyn 1996: 5-6) in some aspects of everyday culture. If we are not able to account for this relative indeterminacy, we lose sight of what constitutes the 'lived' in lived experience.

This matters in my work because of the challenge posed by the social moment of HIV infection. It requires an understanding of sexual practice as both dispositional and radically contingent ('interstitial moments'). In my work, both are constitutive elements of 'practical consciousness'. Interstitial moments are sometimes brief, temporary.

Sometimes they also involve re-articulations and/or disarticulations in which habituated dispositions (safe sex) are displaced by exigencies.

> But I swear
> On a stack of bibles this high
> I wouldn't have let him fuck me
> If he hadn't looked so much like
> Elvis.
> (MacNeill 1989: 45)

Though habitus may allow us to understand how gay men engage in different kinds of sexual safety at different times, according to psycho-social context, we also need to account for shifting dispositions within the same or quickly sequenced sexual encounters.[10] By themselves the structuring elements don't allow us to do this. They don't let us into the variations possible in such moments. Disposition has within it formally the effectivities of structure, but not the ongoing inbetweeness of the interstitial moment.

The challenge of these moments is often framed inadequately in Foucauldian elaborations of the history of the present. Foucault asked the unexceptionable question: how did 'we' get to be this way, now and here? He sought 'a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects' (Foucault 1982: 208). In that history the present is both extended analytically, and used to refer to the immediate presence of techniques of embodiment as technologies. However, the power of affect on what occurs in the present – 'now and here' - is diminished. It is made *effect*, secondary. It becomes exemplary, a matter of 'intensification', and is without causal power socially. I address this in relation to health promotion and governmentality in *Then and Now*, p79ff.

Williams' concept 'structure of feeling' addresses the affective content of the social present. Williams used 'structure of feeling' as an intermediate, general category to mark

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[10] The Australian Study of Health and Relationships indicated that 'Homosexually identified men reported a much higher number of lifetime and recent sex partners than did heterosexually identified men' (Grulich *et al.* 2003: 161).

out the border territory between the making of meaning in everyday life and more fully articulated accounts of these processes as structured social experiences:

> Structures of feeling can be defined as social experiences in solution, as distinct from other social semantic formations which have been *precipitated* and are more evidently available. (1977: 134)

Williams insisted that 'social experiences in solution' constituted a generative zone, fluid and dynamic, often inchoate, but, crucially, productive of new social forms. Harding and Pribram have appropriated Williams to speak of *particular* structures of feeling 'at an individual micro level but always as part of macro sociocultural operations' (Harding & Pribram 2004: 878-879). This allows further development of notions of individual and shared repertoires without instantly fixing the forms of collectivity involved (sub-cultures, communities, networks).

As Probyn argued elsewhere, 'the lines of force that regulate and actually produce us are always in motion' (2000: 61). This mobile productivity is consistent with anthropological accounts of culture as a repertoire of patterns and possibilities 'that generally have been implemented, foregrounded or given legitimacy in a particular place at a particular point in time…[Culture] shapes and reshapes, stabilises and destabilises the visible surface forms' (Jackson 1998: 16).

Where I have long broken with Williams is in understanding culture as involving a series of lived (as distinct from solely semantic[11]) signifying practices that actively constitute sociability and sociality. I have worked with Stuart Hall's insistence on recognising differences between practices and the need to articulate the relations between them (Hall 1997). The kinds of theoretical, practical and existential (non sense-making) negotiations that result are to my mind indicative of the dynamics involved in negotiating ways of doing gay and, more generally, of negotiating practiced ways of being in the world.

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[11] '(T)he social can be neither reduced to discourse (understood as a historical configuration of language; a shifting configuration subject to rupture and transformation) nor to the linguistic, but language emerges precisely at the juncture when we try to make the distinction between language and the social.' (Butler 2004: 49)

The result of these dynamics at a theoretical level is, in Probyn's terms, an 'epistemological imperative':

> At an ontological level, experience speaks of a disjuncture between the [analytically] articulated and the lived aspects of the social and, at an epistemological level, experience impels an analysis of the relations formulated between the articulated and the lived. (Probyn 1993: 22)

Probyn's remark alerts us to the ways the structure of subjugated knowledges is relational, produced as much by the lived experience of subjugation as by the structuring effects of the wider social formation. Indeed, *from within*, these knowledges were not subjugated, as distinct from influenced by wider social structures and processes. Now, when gay is being represented, if not mobilised, by mainstream media as in some ways 'ordinary', 'subjugation' itself becomes problematic as a usefully descriptive concept; however, this is a somewhat separate issue. Instead what are required are notions of counter hegemony, counter public spheres and resistant practices.

It's here that I have found myself drawn more to Butler and performance theory, to Probyn's critique of Williams (1993) and, within the limits gestured to above, to Bourdieu ('field', habitus', 'hexis' and 'disposition'). Probyn persuasively argues for an account of 'experience' in which it is not pre-configured as the result of 'already constituted social differences' and as a passive effect of 'the social' (1993: 26). What emerges more and more in my work is an insistence on 'the lived' and a querying of the power of analytic categories when their perceived explanatory power is substituted for the power evident in practices of everyday life. It is there that culture as resource is appropriated in makeshift and tactical ways. It also there that cultures begin to be remade, within the relative structural constraints, but in ways that can also, over time, shift structures and require new analyses. Structures too are mobile, sometimes flexible, even as they structure. In that sense I am still at home to Williams, however differentiated our account needs to be of the relations between structures, practices, affect, sex and culture.

The works grouped into Sites One, Two and Three illustrate my engagement with these methodological issues. The outcomes of the work in each site are, of course, as

provisional as any other form of situated knowledge of lived cultures and their articulation with community.

Although I refer constantly to 'everyday' and 'lived cultures' my working assumption is that 'experience' neither precedes nor determines the nature of the social. There are extensive critiques of 'experience' in anthropology and cultural studies (Grossberg 1997; Jackson 1998; Morris 1990). I am not about to replace either signification or discursive analysis of instances of power-knowledge with a simple notion of experience as fact. I was and remain, however, increasingly concerned that my accounts of social technologies such as safe sex or ways of doing gay or even 'writing', while relatively adequate as genealogies of 'events', do not give affect its full force, by recognising its power, as distinct from intensity, evident in phenomenological descriptions of lived experience. This is of particular importance for HIV education pedagogies that require the co-articulation of intervention strategies, resonance and socio-cultural changes in social technologies.

Much of the work from 2000 onwards addresses and/or is positioned at an interface between research, HIV education, policy and sexual practice. This context shifts rapidly and relatively few researchers and educators have an overall sense of the period from the early 1980s until now. The items presented allow me to highlight their contemporary relevance at the time of publication and now, and the ways they make an 'original and scholarly contribution to knowledge'. Writing about this, however, is salutary. This covering essay enforces a certain modesty as recognition comes of the ways the presented work was sometimes of a moment and how one might now do it differently. Inevitable as that recognition is for research generally, it is particularly so when the research is focussed by questions of current practice in an increasingly politicised policy environment.

Contextual shifts are further complicated by the emerging dominance of 'health sciences' as the disciplinary field on which much of the scholarly apparatus rests as HIV and AIDS are mainstreamed. While my work can be seen as insisting on culture as a resource in

everyday life and culture making as a pedagogy, much of it emerges as positioned critically in relation to professionalised health promotion practices.

The thirteen pieces presented here have a degree of methodological consistency, while demonstrating a variety of methods of research design, data presentation and analysis. Data were collected through document and textual analysis, the making of new research literatures by combining discourse analysis, bibliographic techniques and the incorporation of grey literatures and secondary sources, meta reviews of bodies of research, secondary analysis of empirical data, interviews, focus groups, surveys – a 'bricolage of methodologies' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). These methods combine techniques from several disciplines in interdisciplinary ways.

The consistency is evident in the ongoing use of poststructuralist, Foucauldian and cultural materialist problematics to ask questions and analyse problems. The problematics are used to ask questions about how homosexuals perform and make their sexualities in cultural artefacts, in self-representation, in sexual practices, in HIV advocacy, education and health promotion and activism. Variety is also evident in the contexts of analysis: theory, policy formation, health promotion practices, research. These problematics assisted in the process of recognising the speed of change involved in the cultural forms available for the narration of same-sex desire, the ongoing nature of the change and the kinds of 'energies' which propelled it from within as well as from without ('Strategic and Conceptual Issues').

Cultural forms in which ways of doing gay are narrated have multiplied. This is an argument developed further in both 'A Critical Reflection' (Site One) and 'Contemporary Gay Cultures' (Site Three). In the latter, I explore the tensions between the ways gayness is represented in mainstream cultures as distinct from issues of social, legal and political regulation. I contextualise these matters in relation to the commodification of 'community' and 'identity' and discuss what this means when men chose to do gay away from specifically gay institutions and politics. This discussion is also significant in *Then And Now*.

Site One: Gay and lesbian writing and publishing

The four works presented in Site One are an ongoing mapping of the field of gay and lesbian writing and publishing in Australia. The initial challenge was how to articulate the relations between texts, gay, lesbian and feminist writing practices and publishing while taking into account the ways same-sex desire was rendered discursively in literary studies and community cultures. The items describe the ways same sex desire has been represented in fiction and non-fiction from the nineteenth century onwards and investigate how different reading formations have read the writing. They are the first extensive empirical descriptions and analyses of the field in Australia.

During the years preceding the first of the articles, a gay and lesbian writing formation emerged in Australia. Key players in it were centred in Sydney, publishing the early *InVersions* collections (Sydney Gay Writers' Collective 1980, 1981), then the first ever anthology in book format, *Edge City* (Bradstock *et al.* 1983). Some of them were later instrumental in establishing Blackwattle Press (1988-2000). It was this formation which was to express most clearly in Australia a felt burden of representation fuelled by limited publishing opportunity, wider social discrimination and the onset of HIV/AIDS (MacNeill 1990). When it began there was very little published. When 'Homosexualities' appeared, the volume of writing and publishing was rapidly increasing and continued to do so, but almost nothing was happening to include it systematically in Australian literary studies.

In 1991, publisher, editor and writer Gary Dunne pointed out somewhat tendentiously that more gay and lesbian books were published in 1990 'than in the previous seven years put together' (Dunne 1991: 7). He rightly referred to the growing role of community-based presses and media at that point. However, both of those then significant supports of gay and lesbian writing and publishing look very different now ('A Critical Reflection': 407). The wave of new writing Dunne was celebrating continued. New baselines were being established for the amount being published and the status and situation of the writing changed very rapidly. A lesbian novel, Mary Fallon's *Working Hot*, won the 1989

Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Innovative Writing, the first ever mainstream published anthology of Australian gay and lesbian writing appeared (Dessaix, Oxford University Press 1993) and in the mid 1990s three gay authors appeared simultaneously in Australian best seller lists (Conigrave, Dessaix, Tsiolkas).

Even so, Dunne's reference to the greater number of gay and lesbian books published in 1990 compared to the previous seven years was puzzling. Even if we referred only to novels, and ignored the non-fiction that appeared from 1983 onwards, his argument didn't stand up. On the very tightest categorisation there it was possible to identify 27 'possibly' gay or lesbian novels published between 1980 and 1990. Of them, 15 were gay or lesbian in point of view, thematics, characterisation or discursive mobilisation of 'gayness'and/or 'lesbianism'. 13 of the 15 were published by non gay or lesbian Australian publishing houses. There was no reason to think Dunne wasn't aware of many of these novels. However, 'awareness' was not the issue. In a 1993 article Dunne differentiated between

> The artists who happened to be gay and locate themselves in a mainstream context and the gay artists who see some kind of relationship between their art, their sexual identity and the gay/lesbian community.

This remark was followed by a distinction between 'mentions of homosexuals and homosexuality in Australian fiction' and 'the history of gay fiction, that is fiction with some kind of connection to notions of gay identity, gay community and possibly a gay market' (Dunne 1993: 297)

The books Dunne had in mind when he made his 1991 remarks came from community-based publishers, were edited and/or written by gays and lesbians, spoke of same-sex desire and were marketed to gay and lesbian communities. This was the significance of Dunne's choice of seven years as the counter period to 1990. Dunne's remark signified what was to count as 'gay and lesbian' writing.

What I'm drawing attention to here is how the category of 'gay and lesbian writing' has been used selectively to highlight a particular set of understandings and practices that

have bedevilled discussion in this area. Dunne had earlier acknowledged the 'uses and abuses of labels' (295) and described his pragmatism in 'approaching the topic from the other end of the literary process, the marketplace' (296).

The works presented in Site One challenge identity-based constructions of gay and lesbian writing that privileged the (often assumed) sexuality of the author at the expense of representations of same sex desire. My initial impulse was recuperative: what had been written, by whom and how? The 'how' was linked to both poetics (narrative forms) and sex and sexual difference theory. Each affected the ways practices of representing same-sex desire might be best understood and what was to count as gay and lesbian writing. In that sense, methodology was central to my work and produced a quite different account of the field from some community-based commentary (Dunne, 1991, 1993; MacNeill 1990) which 'authorised' the writing as gay. Lesbian literary commentary was more likely to refer to poetics, feminism and the representation of diversity (Gibbs and Tilson 1982) or to work with discourses of authenticity rather than directly with authorisation (Bradstock and Wakeling 1987: 10). At that point (1990-1996) gay community-based anthologies and publishing were being made definitive of both what there was and what mattered. They played a major role in any account of how writing became a surrogate marker of community-based assessments of wider political success in achieving social tolerance and of responses to HIV.

The first AIDS death in Australia occurred in 1983, the year *Edge City,* the first community-based anthology, was published. One of the co-authors of that anthology, Dave Sargent, died of AIDS two years later. Though the history of writing representing same-sex desire is separate logically from the history of the HIV epidemic, the two converge. The second community-based anthology was a chapbook of responses to HIV, *Love and Death* (Gallagher 1987).

'Homosexualities' (1990) began a more inclusive account of what was to count as constitutive of the field. It disputed claims of historical invisibility in Australian writing, pointing to discursive and textual manifestations of female and male same-sex desire in

fiction and non-fiction and how 'homosexuality' was seen historically as inclusive of a variety of sexualised differences. I analysed how the *post hoc* critical imposition of sexological taxonomies can distort what was being represented in early 'lesbian' fiction (Praed's *Affinities, 1886*) and how moral agendas were at work in a particular critical reception of White's *The Twyborn Affair* (1979).

The theoretical positions developed in 'Homosexualities' were used in 'Writing: the body positive' (1991) which introduced the second book length *general* anthology of gay and lesbian writers, *Pink Ink*. There I analysed the poetics and politics of representation then currently in play in gay and lesbian writing, insisting that narrative poetics of a kind more often found in feminist lesbian writing be included in the field. This involved recognising some of the work of independent feminist presses as part of gay and lesbian writing formations and the role of mainstream publishing. The latter led to my querying claims of discrimination that ignored what was being published by the mainstream because it didn't meet the criteria of the critics. Part of the relevance and scholarly importance of my work in this site is to be found in how it constructs the field in more inclusive ways than that found in community-based discussion, and does so as an evidence-based activity.

 In the process of engaging with these debates, with which I shared much ground, I realised that there was no authoritative reference work for gay and lesbian writing in Australia of the kind seen in Australian literary studies. On that basis I wrote *A Guide to Gay and Lesbian Writing in Australia* (1996). It has since become a standard reference for literary, historical and gay and lesbian studies researchers, both nationally and internationally. I am currently involved in quantifying the changes in publishing patterns since the *Guide* was published (Hurley and Greenwood 2004).

The scholarly challenge has been in constituting the field in theoretically informed ways that account for the different cultural formations involved, and attributes relative importance to each element without allowing the claims of any one formation to determine what is to count most. What I believe I achieved was a fielded balance between the poetics of writing and its social articulations.

However, this trajectory is complicated because parallel to gay and lesbian community-based formations there was a largely, but not always, separate cultural formation, that of women's and feminist writing and publishing in which many lesbian writers were involved. Here too anthologies were central. Within and between these anthologies, however, there were important differences. The anthologies problematised the relations between the representation of women, the poetics involved, and the kinds of writing best suited to exploring social relations.

The neglect of this writing in some community-based accounts signifies the difficulty in narrating gay and lesbian writing 'together' while keeping both the poetics and politics of representation in view. Lesbians were involved in both the early Sydney cultural formation that produced *Edge City* and in the relevant feminist formations. There are different formations which sometimes cross over, as they did, for example, in *Pink Ink* for which I wrote the Introduction ('Writing: the body positive') and addressed this issue. An account based only on differences in gender politics or on what constitutes 'community-based' writing doesn't account for what happens in the name of the writing. So when a publication such as *Kink* appears which is co-written by a gay man, a female-to-male transsexual and two lesbians, and editorially situates itself as 'queer' (Bashford *et al.* 1993), while elsewhere declaring 'safe sex sucks', and is launched by a poet who is lesbian and was making her literary reputation largely outside of either feminist or gay and lesbian writing formations (Dorothy Porter), there is a need to problematise how the field is to be thought.

Munster's 'safe sex sucks' signifies the presence of more explicit and diverse lesbian writing on sex of all kinds, as well as a more general set of sexual responses very aware of HIV, but much less determined by discourses of health and HIV education. *Pink Ink* had an importance here, as did other anthologies (Blazey *et al.* 1995; Carter 1992; Carr 1995). We can see in the fiction, and other cultural artefacts, perspectives which spoke the tensions inherent in safe sex cultures and positioned sex outside of disease even where the points of view in the writing were clearly affected by the epidemic. In the

midst of death the cultures formed and re-formed, were swirling mixes rather than unidimensional blocs. As the artist and self-described 'Toxic Queen', David McDiarmid, put it: 'It's my Party and I'll Die if I want to' (Gott 1994).

These four pieces making up Site One record gay and lesbian writing and publishing in Australia, both historically and contemporarily. At the point I began, a theorised sense of the field barely existed as distinct from community-based commentary on what was occurring. The writing formations that were to produce, amongst other texts, *Pink Ink* were part of wider, international, culturally activist writing formations and movements such as 'queer'. They refused exclusivist elements in identity politics. They insisted on cultural style as an element in activism and asserted its role in creating new, more inclusive social spaces rather than a simple representing of a pre-made 'ordinary', whether that of the mainstream or gay and lesbian organizations and agendas. It was a micro-cultural politics refusing to allow HIV to predetermine what it meant to 'make' same-sex desire, even as they took it into account.

Site Two: Gay men, HIV and treatments cultures amongst PLWHA

The items constituting Site two involve a constant rearticulation of the relations between gay men, people living with HIV/AIDS, treatments cultures and HIV prevention. I referred earlier in the essay to the challenge faced by accounts of HIV in Australia that continue to rely insufficiently critically on articulations of culture into 'community': they cannot easily explain changes in sex cultures that led to some increases in rates of infection.

In 2002 I edited the monograph *Cultures of Care and Safe Sex Amongst HIV Positive Australians.* The term and concept 'cultures of care' have resonated strongly amongst advocates for and people living with HIV and AIDS. Indeed, many of its current appropriations are at considerable distance from the original research. It has been taken up by the National Organization of People Living with HIV and AIDS in their submission on care and welfare to the Commonwealth consultation on the Fifth National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NAPWA 2004), and by other researchers who have linked it with safe sex and the sexual practices of people with HIV (Willis *et al.* 2002), with internet based HIV education (Reeders 2004), and with drug education (Reeders 2005).

'Cultures of care' was first named in *Strategic and Conceptual Issues for Community–Based HIV/AIDS Treatments Media,* which analysed data from a treatments education research project. It followed an earlier small piece of associated research in which I had identified HIV/AIDS media as part of a dense network of information feedback loops feeding treatments information to HIV positive people and relaying responses from HIV positive people to other sites (Hurley *et al.* 2000).

In *Strategic and Conceptual Issues,* I explained the notion this way:

> A 'culture of care' refers to the everyday social spaces created when self-care practices are actively supported and relayed amongst and by people (I) affected by the presence of a disease, and/or (II) sharing or negotiating a community of interests. (Hurley 2001b)

Strategic and Conceptual Issues reported on research into the national treatments newspaper, *Positive Living*. I concluded that current understandings of HIV treatments-media minimised the role of these media in constituting and reinforcing cultures of reciprocal care. I suggested instead that they were 'active, core elements in the maintenance, circulation and quality control of cultures of self–care amongst people living with HIV.'

On this basis I was able to later argue in the piece entitled 'Cultures of Care' submitted here that the notion offered a way of conceptualising:

> the relations between health service providers, the people taking the treatments, their social support networks, international media relays, community-based treatments- media and the development of practices of self-care amongst people living with HIV/AIDS.

So in its initial formulations it was a carefully developed notion that tried to link a 'sense of capacity with respect to health practice' with the ways treatments-media were both a resource and relay stations in relation to the cultivation of self-care. It was not at that point linked directly with sex. In scholarly terms, 'cultures of care' introduced less instrumental notions of media culture to health promotion practices dominated by questions of social marketing and reach.

Identifying ways of living with HIV and treatments as a 'culture' established a degree of resonance for the research participants. It also gave advocacy organizations a way of reconceptualising both HIV treatments-media strategies and 'care and support' that didn't group all people living with HIV as welfare supplicants or as needy. It recognised the differences between being diagnosed with HIV and being ill.

Perhaps most importantly, 'cultures of care' kept visible sociality as a key element in what could be seen as a particular case study of Foucault's work on 'care of the self'. 'Cultures of care' speaks to the *capacity* of a treatment's culture to resist governmentality, even where it played an important role in the formation of that culture. In my research, participants differentiated clearly between medicalised treatments

discourses and discourses of living with HIV, including treatments. The latter I described as a 'quasi clinical space' because built into it is a mixed series of potentialities: to treat, to comply with treatments guidelines, to refuse medicine, to suspend treatment, to put other issues before treatments compliance, to negotiate treatments regimes according to life needs rather than clinical efficacy. In each case power/knowledge is a negotiation with room for manoeuvre, though often at considerable personal cost, up to and including serious illness and death. It's worth noting here that about 12% of people living with HIV in Australia have never taken antiretrovirals.

The link between 'cultures of care' and sex came later in two ways. My edited report *Cultures of Care* was published at the end of 2002. The initial context of the research reporting 'cultures of care' had changed considerably. There was considerable discussion of how HIV-positive people, especially gay men, were being represented and reported in some research. This was particularly the case with much of the research from the U.S.A. that identified unprotected sex amongst HIV positive gay men as unsafe without asking about, or reporting on, the HIV status of their partners. The assumption was that all unprotected sex was unsafe, whereas Australian researchers and educators had long shown that unprotected sex between men of the same HIV status (sero-concordant sex) was safe in terms of HIV transmission. While Australian research and HIV education recommended only negotiating 'safety' in regular, sero-concordant relationships, unprotected anal sex was increasingly occurring in casual contexts. Indeed evidence was emerging that amongst some gay men it was a strategic risk-reduction practice (Van de Ven *et al.* 2002).

This research reporting occurred in a context quickly dominated by reports of rises in new HIV infections in Australia from 2000 onwards. What had been initially a discussion within the HIV sector of treatments cultures became a public discussion of risk, unprotected sex and differences between HIV-negative and HIV-positive gay men. At the time of the *Cultures of Care* report's release there had been two years of reports of increased HIV notifications in Victoria and associated media commentary that continued with reports of increases in NSW then other states. Much of the commentary was

inaccurate, moralistic and blamed gay men for complacency. *Cultures of Care* includes the print version of the paper of the same name and Willis *et al.'s* re-analysis of quantitative data from the *HIV Futures* surveys (Grierson *et al.* 2002). Willis showed an association between the uptake of antiretroviral therapies amongst people living with HIV and safe unprotected sex according to the HIV status of sexual partners. In this process Willis linked care of the self and sexual care of others and identified the link as central in a 'culture of care'. *Cultures of Care* was one of a number of strategic responses that provided a sound evidence base for asserting that safe sex was still normalised amongst HIV-positive people, even though there was evidence of a small amount of unsafe sex occurring.

The political pressure on gay men, both HIV-negative and –positive, grew steadily in 2002-2003. I wanted to comment but did not want to buy into attempts to reinstall 'crisis'-driven policy and practice responses to the increases in HIV diagnoses. While I wrote pointing to the deterioration of the national policy framework and associated practices and structures (Hurley 2003) and analysed media reporting of new infections (Hurley *et al.* 2003), I believed it to be important that gay men not be defined solely by HIV. One of the reasons for this was the history of the response in Australia, which clearly showed that for gay men HIV was a political, social and cultural issue, as much as a matter of health (Altman 1986). In that context, to impose professionalised health promotion practices which were culturally irrelevant in the name of a spurious new crisis was to undercut the possibility of success. A second reason was that gay culture was in many important ways a post-AIDS culture. People had repositioned HIV outside of crisis frameworks, and in many cases were doing gay outside of the collective forms that had constituted community in the initial AIDS response. All of this needed to be taken into account, and as a result I wrote *Then and Now. Gay men and HIV*.

Then and Now (2003) is in part a meta-review of the data and several major analytic categories used in two early, ground-breaking pieces of Australian HIV social research: the Social Aspects of the Prevention of AIDS study (SAPA) and its follow-up study, Sustaining Safe Sex (Connell and Kippax 1990; Dowsett 1996b; Kippax *et al.* 1993a, b).

These categories included: context, crisis, sexual practice, safe and unsafe sex, sexual repertoires and choreographies, community and community-attachment. I concluded that, as important as it had been, the earlier research was now, in some ways, blinding HIV education to what was needed. Gay cultures had changed in ways not easily explicable on the basis of HIV behavioural data. Those data indicated shifts in safe-sex practice, but had insufficient purchase on the everyday life of the men involved. They didn't account for the ways in which different gay sexual sub-cultures put themselves at risk of HIV infection for very different reasons.

Then and Now asked two questions: did the key categories involved adequately describe the social phenomena relevant to gay men and safe sex and in what ways were the categories themselves still rooted in notions of 'crisis' appropriate to the first ten years of the epidemic in Australia?

In Williams' terms we were dealing simultaneously with residual and emergent cultures that were dispersing what had been dominant unities. In addressing this issue, I pointed to a 'present' constituted by three different temporal elements: the past ('crisis'), the simple present (post-AIDS, post crisis) and the continuous present (ongoing crisis). These times relate loosely (not homologously) to generational issues: those who were doing gay before HIV emerged, those who came out into HIV before the development of 'new' combination therapies (1982-1995), and those who have come out since the fall in the death rate and the presence of HAART. Overlaying this were different 'generational' issues to do with when people were infected with HIV.

I refer here to the heterogeneity of safe sex practices adopted by gay men over time and discussed earlier in this essay.

What becomes clear in *Then and Now* are the ways the separate activities of, and interactions amongst and between, lived cultures, community organizations and researchers intensified the invocation of community as a form of sociality, and deeply embedded that in specific practices. Psychosocial expectations of what 'community' could

deliver at a personal level intensified, probably correlative to the rising death rate, but also as a frame into which people came out. In the response to HIV, 'community' became a social force, a resource, a form of politics and a site of sexual learning. It was the mobilising foundation for the development of safe sex cultures.

The legacy of this has been multiple. First and foremost there is the ongoing success of community responses to HIV. Second, in a post-AIDS, post-HAART environment, however, community is often unwittingly asked to model an idealised way of life and forms of sociability (through signification, media, the spectacle). I say 'idealised' because though the success continues in lower rates of infection and death, and is spoken in their name, its originating conditions have changed. For example, key event manifestations of community (dance parties) formed in relation to 'crisis' now postdate crisis, yet are still expected to meet generalised expectations of community affect, both connected to and disconnected from HIV (Race 2003). Third, in regimes of governmentality 'community' is expected to deliver the good gay citizen, as defined by current, epidemiologically driven articulations of sexual health. In that sense regimes of power/knowledge ('sexual health') continually try to substitute themselves for the responses of a lived culture that include community-based organisations.

Site Three: Media, commodity cultures and the narration of gay and lesbian lives

The three pieces of work presented in Site Three are progressive engagements with what gay cultures look like when they are not primarily understood through the prism of HIV and its effects. Their origins are in the work done in Sites One and Two. What is evident from Site One is that the power of the writing comes as much from its narration of sex, pleasure and affect as from its relation to HIV and its effects. In Site Two, we see an emerging disjuncture between 'community' narrated responses to HIV and the lived culture. In Site Three, the works presented recognise that that culture as process, as resource and as social capacity cannot be accounted for in quite the same way as overdetermined by HIV. The work in Site Three has a more structural focus in that it begins a systematic consideration of the relations between media, representation and commodification, and how these effect change in the social narration of gay and lesbian lives.

'Sydney' was an invited book chapter. It explored the interaction between place, commerce and identity: Sydney as a cosmopolitan, global city and a great queer city. It focused on the role of hallmark events (Mardi Gras and Gay Games 2002), international tourism and the marketing of 'Sydney'. In terms of community and culture, the chapter points to how these were consciously sold in the Sydney gay and lesbian community's bid for the 2002 Gay Games, the perception of Mardi Gras as internationally competitive on a gay party circuit and Sydney's place as a sexualised subculture. The chapter distinguished between articulations of Sydney's gay and lesbian subcultures and the creation of a globalised gay, and to some extent lesbian, market that manifests in mega events. This enabled me to ask, how do we talk about symbolic exchange in ways that are not determined only by economics?

The difficulty here is articulating these forms of exchange in ways that acknowledge the interrelationships made at a community level between commercialisation, politics and the changing nature of the culture in the form of mega events. In some of these discussions 'community' is configured as non-commercial, so 'commodification' becomes an

automatically tainted process. Remarking on this argument, Race (2003) commented that 'the complaint of commercialism effectively hamstrings marginal or independent cultural production.' He suggested it allows us to see how it enables homosexuality to be represented as 'merely recreational'.

I began this discussion in 'The Love that Loves to Speak its Name' by exploring tensions between geographical and virtual relations as aspects of the creation of metropolitan spaces. I was concerned by sociologies of community that made place the primary determinant of community without reference to the semiotic exchanges made possible by globalised media cultures (Beck 2000). In these accounts, population densities and consequently associated forms of sociability define the limits of what can be explored empirically. Symbolic exchange ('culture') becomes illustrative of, rather than constitutive of, the social. I have worked instead with de Certeau, who suggested that 'space is a practiced place' (1988: 97-98), and complemented him with various media theorists, including Wark (1992, 1994) and Appadurai, who saw community media as representing one of many disjunctures within the global cultural economy (Appadurai, 1993).

Most sociologies of gay lives that include issues of commodification are done in relation to consumerism ('the pink dollar'), uptake of new technologies and the ways they are used (mobile phones, the internet) and cultural consumption and production (books, films, theatre, audiences, readerships and how they are formed, bought and sold). Few accounts have studied how key cultural forms ('gay', 'community', 'sex'), and hallmark events (Mardi Gras, the Gay and Lesbian Games, the dance party circuit) have themselves become commodities. How did it come about that the gay print media nationally in Australia were saleable (Satellite Media) or that social identities have been sutured into media narratives and marketing campaigns and bought and sold? In terms of 'gay' and 'lesbian', this could occur only in the last ten to fifteen years, though it has long been the case that consumption has been positioned as central to social life in commodity cultures. There is little analysis of the ways these narratives act as resources and possibilities in the everyday doing of gay and lesbian lives, or re-position 'gay' or

'lesbian' as markers of cosmopolitanism and urban 'cool' in mainstream culture ("Contemporary gay cultures'). What are the ways media and commodity cultures interact with, and are in tension with, community as a pedagogy and a politics?

The three works in Site Three explore the relations between the explosion in media narratives, especially on television, and the new social possibilities offered by the World Wide Web and the internet and how these are implicated in the commodification of culture and the relaying of same-sex possibilities. I began consideration of these matters as co-editor of the special queer edition of *Media International Australia* (1996). In 'Imagine Hope' (Site Two), I addressed their implications for people living with HIV, especially HIV-positive gay men and their relations with gay cultures. In 'Contemporary Gay Cultures' these new possibilities are discussed side by side with HIV, legal regulation and social discrimination and violence, but without totalising them.

Both community and lived culture are affected by wider structural contexts. I have quoted Wark on the importance of non-commodity relations:

> in making commodification a general metaphor for contemporary culture rather than a specifically delimited form of historical relation, [some critics] miss the extent to which non-commodity relations have been central to recent historical development, in communications and elsewhere. (Wark 1992: 151)

The question in my work is precisely one of specifically delimited forms of historical relation: treatments cultures, responses to HIV and what is possible now in the name of community and the doing of gay and lesbian lives. As Mort has said of the forces that produced Soho, London, as a masculine space of consumption in the 1980s: 'all of these factors were at once material and symbolic. They were enacted in the workings of policies and programmes and through systems of representation' (Mort 1996: 149). They collide, 'especially at the level of everyday life', requiring 'broader social and cultural histories to be written, in association with more specific narratives' (Mort 1996: 7). The work in Site Three begins analysing this process of oscillation.

The question is not one of whether commodity relations have intruded on previously non-commercial forms of culture, re-writing if not overturning the kinds of communication structures traditionally constructive of community. Rather, at least for metropolitan gay and lesbian cultures, the question is one of the role commercialism has always played, and how this is changing, intensifying, and to what effect in the major Western metropoli (Bronski 1998; Chauncey 1994; Mort 1996; Wotherspoon 1991).

Many of the current discussions are framed by the problematics of neo-liberalism: the relation of 'autonomous' individuals to 'the market' and to politics. Culture and community become configured analogously to the individual, as though they emerge from outside of the social. These formulations, of course, beg the question of the presence of the social in the economic and of the cultural in the social. The problem is how to account for the ways sociality is structured within the operations of what is fetishised as the market, but includes a complex range of media technologies, commodity relations and social capacities. Once we might have called these the social relations of production. What repertoires do these now make available for the doing of same-sex desire?

Conclusion

Community is a particular cultural form: an articulation of ways of being, often in relation to the 'healthy' subject, identity, invocations of desire to belong, social venues, organised forms of sociality, sexual practices, organizations. It varies considerably according to location and critical mass (population, venue density), but is also relayed in ways that disrupt purely local conceptualisations.[12] It manifests in various ways: in safe-sex cultures, political mobilisations, pride events, media narratives and relays, and on dance floors, at dinner tables, in meetings and other shared events. It is made possible by various kinds of social density (place, people, institutions), by negotiated collective activities, ritual representations and events, and by shared affective spaces and practices.

To the degree that community is organised in relation to HIV or health issues, questions of serostatus and its effects are still central constitutive elements and are required to be so by those who see this as integral to shared care practices. In this sense 'cultures of care' refers to ongoing manifestations of the co-articulation of community and specific cultural formations. In these manifestations community-based organizations and services are integral. However, for those not particularly affected by the epidemic, and for those HIV-positive men who have renegotiated their relation to it in the post-HAART period, cultures of care matter more when they manifest in the ongoing articulation of safe-sex culture. It is there the articulation can become fraught in relation to unprotected anal sex in casual contexts. Even so, distinctions are needed between what is generally the case (use of condoms) and more specific practices involving the negotiation of risk. There the articulation occurs more in relation to 'the minuteness of movement that occurs in everyday processes' (Probyn 1996: 6) rather than only in relation to organizations or health as a form of governmentality.

The dynamics of these articulations challenge and sometimes resist 'community', querying the adequacy of its performance as promise. They are articulated into other cultural forms, new forms of sociality related increasingly to media-relayed narratives of

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[12] This is not to argue either that there are no particularities in regional cities or remote areas, or that those particularities don't have quite specific contours and challenges.

gay, and the spaces opened by new media. Just as gay is confirmed performatively in an appropriation of the spaces and in the resultant new social practices, it is also dispersed and made less available as a form for disciplining same-sex desire.

Performances of ways of being, shared affective spaces, and invocations of belonging exceed their articulation as community in quite challenging ways. This is particularly evident as the role of HIV and the effects of the epidemic on affected communities shift and change. 'Community' becomes configured partly as mythic, a non-attainable idyllic experience of collective belonging in the name of identity (Secomb 2003). Except for those who have particular, shared histories of belonging ('the affected communities'), the response to HIV is no longer available or salient as the key articulating element of the culture. This poses ongoing challenges for community-based organizations that have the task of making sure HIV is still articulated within the culture both generally and at those points where sexual practice meets HIV prevalence and infection is most likely to occur.

To the degree, however, that community is an articulation of culture occurring in the name of collectivity rather than that of HIV, it is also faced by decentred possibilities of belonging. Culture, as distinct from community, 'experiences' or articulates this variously: as the pleasures of spectacularity, as celebrations of alternatives, but also in more ordinary ways simply as having relationships, clubbing, doing the scene where the scene is not defined by the gay specificity of the venue or the event, though it may include it, and by participating in friendship, drug and sex networks. This often holds too for HIV-positive gay men who now often 'do' HIV in relation to specific periods of illness rather than to infection, identity or sero-divide. There are also specific moments where HIV-positive and -negative gay men meet in difference, rather than sameness: in expectations of disclosure of HIV status and the aftermath of disclosing, in HIV illness and in treatments side effects.

I suggest that we abandon any lingering oppositions, as distinct from distinctions, between liberation and regulation, culture and community, community and commerce, and ask instead on what surfaces do these figures appear and to what effect? This may

allow us to see more clearly the relations between sexual identities, forms of association, HIV and the construction of sexual subjects.

Hope is a forked and not a feathered thing.
…
I can't envision what will happen, tried
and stymied myself nightly. That's not true,
exactly. I've spent years of nights with you
in ten, come in your honour if not in
your arms. But what will be our dailiness?

…   (Hacker 1986: 55)

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