

# Cape Queer? A Case Study of Provincetown, Massachusetts

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**SUMMARY.** Cape Queer is a case study that details how sexuality intersects with race, gender, and class in the development of the gay and lesbian resort community, Provincetown, Massachusetts. It asks scholars to pay closer attention to the ways in which methodologies and practices utilizing LGBT studies and queer theory can combine rather than separate to interrogate LGBT and queer histories, politics and communities. In the process, it assesses how the global mechanics of capitalism led to the local queering and eventually un-queering of a gentrified, white, gay and lesbian enclave. doi:10.1300/J082v52n01\_08 [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2006 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

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Nestled neatly into Cape Cod's outer fist of shifting land and seascapes, curls Provincetown, Massachusetts, a narrow strip of sand shifting constantly under the weight of its own historic and contemporary claims to fame. From the late 1800s to today, Provincetown has capitalized on its currency as the landing place of the *Mayflower* pilgrims, birthplace of Yankee whaling captains, home of Portuguese fishermen, base for the United States Navy, theater for the Provincetown Players, canvas to Charles Hawthorne, and playground for gay tourists. Throughout the twentieth century, individual and national imaginaries invested in "American" promises of freedom, whiteness and economic success enticed any number of visitors to visit this distant but attainable "Land's End" destination. My larger project examines the making and marketing of Provincetown in detail (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). Here I track some of those who answered Provincetown's call to the persecuted and their complicated relationship to post-WWII circuits of resistance and power. Before doing so, I provide a brief overview of my methodological approach.

Purposefully, I utilize both gay and lesbian studies and queer theory. My most memorable introduction to the "contested terrain" between the two took place at the 2001 American Historical Association's annual meeting in Boston. There I delivered a paper on what the *Provincetown Advocate* in 1951 called, "The 'Queer' Question"—the postwar moral panic facing residents in Provincetown and elsewhere. When I finished, a self-identified gay man, lay historian, and frequent Provincetown visitor launched the first comments and question. After praising the two men on the panel for presenting refreshingly thoughtful and well-written papers, he accused me of using the term "queer" offensively and irresponsibly. In his mind, queer was used in the past and present in one, and only one, way: as a derogatory term heterosexuals invoked to mark and hurt effeminate, gay men. He had no knowledge of the field of queer theory, no experience in queer activism, and he ignored my historical contextualization of the term. He ended his rant by asking me, since I used the term queer, how I would like it if he called me a "cunt." While I would have preferred a collegial rather than an embittered and sexist exchange, the encounter prompted me to ponder the following: how misogyny functions within gay and lesbian communities, how the terrain of sexuality gets linked to discipline and punishment, how re-

lieved I am in the knowledge that my worst conference experience has happened already and how salient are past and present investments in the term queer.

My more formal introduction to queer politics and practices began in graduate seminars at New York University during the mid 1990s. As a student, I studied the historiography of gay and lesbian history and took brief forays into what a queer history might look like. The space of the classroom allowed me safely to debate and challenge a queer analysis that questioned the logics of social history projects dedicated to “usable pasts” (Stein, 2001). Among other interrogations, I recall four methodological and theoretical modes of inquiry: social history, cultural history, lesbian and gay history, and queer theory/history. Informed by the “bottom up” politics of the civil rights and women’s movements, social history set out in the 1970s and 80s to recuperate people and events previously neglected. Social historians sought to legitimize the following as worthy of historical inquiry: everyday life and ordinary or disempowered people. They aimed to give voice to the voiceless, to render the invisible visible, and to do so through empiricist and quantitative research methods (Stein, 2001).

Cultural historians departed from this approach in the 1980s and early 90s by critiquing the essentialist assumptions and empiricist methods used in the hunt for those “hidden from history.” Informed by the growing field of cultural studies, cultural historians attended to the various meanings and *processes* embedded in understandings of culture. They studied culture as “high,” “low,” and popular; as processes rather than fixed entities; and as systems of meaning deciphered from rituals and representations. Instead of recuperating social movements per se, they analyzed subcultural formations as modes of resistance (Escoffier, Kunzel, and McGarry, 1995; Stein, 2001).

Following the work of early sexologists and homophile writers, the “modern” field of gay and lesbian history sprang from both social and cultural history projects (Rubin, 2003). Beginning in the 1970s, the first set of texts paralleled other social history endeavors by recuperating homosexuals, both extraordinary and ordinary, from history (Berube, 1990; D’Emilio, 1983; Duberman, Vicinus, and Chauncey, 1989; Faderman, 1981; Katz, 1976;). Appearing in the early 1990s, the second set approached variations in identity, desire and representation more decidedly by focusing, in the spirit of cultural studies, on the historically and culturally specific meanings embedded in same-sex erotic practices, relationships and performances (Chauncey, 1994; Kennedy and Davis, 1993; Newton, 1993). Although the move from social to cul-

tural history was chronological, it was not neatly linear. Gay and lesbian history texts like George Chauncey's *Gay New York* (1994) and Esther Newton's (anthropological) *Cherry Grove* (1993) utilized both social and cultural history approaches as they rendered the invisible visible while attending to the ways in which gay men and lesbians mobilized subcultural practices of resistance in historically specific moments and geographies.

Historians in general were slow, and often refused, to engage the burgeoning literary fields of poststructuralism and queer theory that took off in the late 80s and early 1990s, finding themselves sandbagged in what Lisa Duggan (1998) has referred to as the "theory wars." Queer theorists led by Eve Sedgwick and carried forth by Judith Butler and others made central the project of destabilizing rather than recuperating identities of the past, present and future; focused on the performative, repetitive, and representational aspects of identity that debunked claims of authenticity; and attended to discourses and power relations that mapped, maintained and intervened in constructions of normalcy and deviance (Butler, 1990; Escoffier et al., 1995; Duggan, 1998; Sedgwick, 1990, 1993; Stein, 2001; Warner, 1993, 1999).

From this alchemy of methods and politics, *at least* two kinds of queer history projects have emerged. One takes the literary-based "queer turn," as Marc Stein (2001) has called it, and seldom looks back. Lisa Duggan's *Sapphic Slashers* (2000) best exemplifies this approach as she shifts, in her words, "from researching the social history of lesbians to investigating the narrative representation of 'the lesbian' and its imbrication with social and material life" (2000, pp. 17-18). Rather than focusing on bodies engaged in homoerotic acts to locate and reclaim a lesbian past, Duggan (2000) examines how "a broad clash of stories and categories of sexual and gender difference produced a highly influential if contested cultural narrative" that disseminated a "tale about sexually deviant 'types'" and "produced the figure of the 'lesbian'" (p. 16).

Another kind of queer history differs in emphasis. Rather than making the "queer turn," it hesitates at the corner, shuffles and inhales, but keeps close lgbtq bodies and communities in need of recuperation. This kind of queer history still uses social and cultural history methods to locate voices and movements previously unheard or undocumented. It privileges everyday acts of resistance and their accompanying power relations, reading both as cultural narratives. It analyzes history through a queer lens, meaning, it asks how gays, lesbians and other deviant "types" disrupted or reinforced heteronormativity. Martha Umphrey's

(1995) essay, “The Trouble with Harry Thaw,” works well with the emphasis of this second model. In tracing Thaw’s queer, meaning eccentric and sexually non-normative, past, Umphrey calls for a *queered* history—“a process of doing history, an antihomophobic mode of inquiry”—that takes “instability and scandal as its subjects” (pp. 20-21).

My work on Provincetown falls within the expansive realm of the latter queer project. Like Umphrey, I understand the term queer as an adjective—what looks disruptive, odd, non-normative—and a verb—the action of disrupting heteronormativity. Instead of attempting to claim certain people in Provincetown’s past as queer, I focus on the queering process. I am less interested, as Umphrey (1995) puts it, in the “self-consciousness of the historical subject” and more interested in tracing “the history of sexual outlawry as a way to critique homophobia and compulsory heterosexuality” (p. 20).

My project also differs from Umphrey’s as I look historically at how that which looked queer and disruptive in one place and moment—gay and lesbian space-taking in Provincetown during the 1950s—evolved decades later into a kind of queer-less conservatism that reinforced rather than disrupted dominant notions and systems of gender, race and class. In other words, rather than taking an anachronistic approach and requiring the term queer to understand disruptions across historical circumstances and locations as similar, I ask it to measure that which was disruptive and risky in Provincetown for certain people at certain moments. Thus, the term queer surfaces in this paper in three temporal and relational ways: first, as a derogatory descriptor used in the mid twentieth century to mark effeminate men; second, as an inclusive analytic tool that reads certain post-WWII economic and/or demographic processes as disruptive to heteronormativity; and, finally, as a mode of analysis that is critical of gay and lesbian politics that reinscribe rather than challenge class and race exploitation. In this latter sense I use queer to indicate that which aspires to disrupt heteronormative spaces, discourses and practices *without* erasing or conflating the intersections of sexuality with class, race, national and ethnic differences (Hennessey, 1995). In this way, I deploy and redeploy a queer analysis in the same project to map desire and deviance, and to assess the politics of space-taking projects that require critique and not just celebration.

Based on a three-year ethnographic community study—during which time I lived in Provincetown, conducted seventy oral history interviews, and perused reams of archival papers—my work at Provincetown speaks to many of the postindustrial capitalist projects that affected and continue to influence the making of ethnic resort towns and identity-based

urban enclaves globally and locally. Tourist attractions, like Niagara Falls, New York; Steamboat Springs, Colorado; Monterrey, California; and Santa Fe, New Mexico bore witness to similar processes as their working-class, ethnic enclaves became resort destinations (Coleman, 1997; Dubinsky, 2000; Horton, 2000; Norkunas, 1993). Countless urban and rural locations such as Manhattan's Lower East Side and Virginia's Loudoun County have struggled under similar strains of gentrification (Mele, 2001; Spain 1993). The seasonal importation of foreign-born workers of color, specifically Jamaican laborers sponsored by hotels and restaurants and holding H2B visas, that Provincetown turned to in the mid 1990s, takes place now in resort towns from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Boothbay Harbor, Maine. And the gay enclave-making that shaped Provincetown resembled that in urban and suburban places like Park Slope in Brooklyn, the Castro in San Francisco, Greenwich Village and Chelsea in Manhattan, and New Orleans in Louisiana; and in resort areas such as Cherry Grove on Fire Island, Miami Beach in Florida; and Rehoboth Beach in Delaware (Boyd, 2003; Chauncey, 1994; Knopp, 1990; Krahulik, 2003; Newton, 1993; Rothenberg, 1997).

In the end I offer both a narrative of gay and lesbian resistance, territoriality, and pleasure as well as a critique of the queering process—a closer look at the local and transnational socioeconomic relations that shaped gay life in Provincetown and made “Queersville, U.S.A.” (Cunningham, 1995, p. 83) possible and desirable. Even more important than evaluating Provincetown for its measure of queer-ness, I question the politics mobilizing lgbt quests for safe space. To do so I consider how gay enclaves like Provincetown—which I contend has rearticulated many of the race-ethnic and class exclusions one might find in any postindustrial tourist town—can begin but then eclipse a queering process.

The layout of this paper mirrors its theoretical underpinnings. The next section, “Queering Land's End,” charts forms of resistance and dissent as Provincetown turned unevenly into a gay and lesbian resort mecca. This part heeds Lila Abu Lughod's (1990) call to illuminate “diagnostics of power” (p. 42) rather than romantic readings of freedom and agency by “respect[ing] everyday resistance not just by arguing for the dignity or heroism of the resisters but by letting their practices teach us about the complex interworkings of historically changing structures of power” (p. 53). Like George Chauncey, Jr.'s (1994) interpretation of New York City's early twentieth-century gay worlds, I read Portuguese and gay narratives of resistance as politically conscious and/or socially

collective acts that had a cumulative effect on local power relations, in this case on what constituted acceptable or unacceptable behavior in Provincetown. I also locate responses of those in power to these moments of resistance, the responses indicative in and of themselves of resistance, to make central the tension between those thwarting and those courting a gay presence in Provincetown. The final part, "Displacements," hones in on the exclusionary outcomes of this evolution, on the ways, as Abu-Lughod (1990) notes, that "resisting at one level may catch people up at other levels" (p. 53). In this section I argue that the socioeconomic effects of making spaces gay are as important as the process, and that without such a critique we—scholars interested in questions of social change and transformation—risk reproducing the very systems of oppression we aim to expose (Hennessey, 1995).

### ***QUEERING LAND'S END***

Building on yet also diverging from other narratives of lesbian and gay history, this story begins not in the semi-public spaces of bars, parks, theaters, or homophile meetings, nor in the semi-private spaces of house or neighborhood parties, but in the households of heterosexual-acting or identified Portuguese women who took in gay boarders (Beemyn, 1997; Boyd, 2003; Chauncey, 1994; D'Emilio 1983; Garber, 1989; Kennedy and Davis, 1993; Newton, 1993; Rothenberg, 1994; Stein 2000; Thorpe, 1996). This is not to say that restaurants and nightclubs did not play a significant role in the making of gay identities and communities at Land's End; they clearly did. But rather that a critical mass of socioeconomic relationships between gay tourists and Portuguese natives were forged in these boarding homes before, during and after the postwar era (1946 through the 1950s). Feminist historians and theorists, particularly those attending to race, have documented the ways in which families functioning as private training grounds feeding systemic action have been central to the creation of oppositional cultures (Hunter, 1990; Jones, 1985; Kelley, 1993). Portuguese households in Provincetown functioned in a slightly different, yet no less significant, way as matriarchal, income-pooling breeding pens for economically driven, cross-cultural alliances.

Immigrating en masse from the late 1800s to 1924, Portuguese men and women were instrumental to Provincetown's transition from a Yankee whaling seaport to a fishing village, art colony and resort town. As "picturesque" (Edwards, 1918, p. 151), racialized foreigners, Portuguese

immigrants were sought after by pens, paintbrushes and cameras that strove to capture their “black to creamy olive” (Edwards, 1918, p. 151) complexions and their “joyousness and vivacity” (Nutting, 1923, pp. 17-18). While becoming Portuguese-Americans, Portuguese residents moved closer to the category of whiteness—literally, by articulating that they were white and not black, and, symbolically, by producing and starring in blackface minstrel shows from the 1930s through the 1950s (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). While becoming white and American, Portuguese immigrants enjoyed economic success and were valued by native-born residents and journalists as “law-abiding, industrious and thrifty” laborers (Tarbell, 1932, p. 233).

In the mid 1800s, Yankee whaling captains and their families ruled over all of Provincetown and prospered. By the early twentieth century, however, as Agnes Edwards (1918) described, a noticeable shift had occurred: “Portuguese-Portuguese-Portuguese everywhere,” she exclaimed (p. 151). “They are the fishermen, the storekeepers . . . their daughters are waitresses in the hotels and teachers in the schools” (p. 151). While Portuguese husbands, brothers and fathers were out fishing, or, increasingly, taking tourists out to see fish, Portuguese women engaged in a number of income generating enterprises. Some left their homes to bait hooks, work in the cold storage freezers, or wait on tourists in restaurants and shops. Others turned their spare rooms, kitchens and parlors into boarding homes (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). It was in the spaces of these boarding homes that Portuguese women and their families not only came into direct contact with white, homosexual acting, appearing and identifying men and women, but also built symbiotic and trusting relationships with them. The household of Clement Arthur Silva was typical. In the 1930s and 40s, while his father was out fishing, Clem’s mother took in boarders at their home at 557 Commercial Street. Silva (1997) reminisced recently:

we used to have at any time two or three gay guys that my mother rented to who were very nice . . . in my home on the water. And we had gay girls . . . my mother used to feed them, rent the room and everything else for three dollars a night.

If the accommodations suited them, the “gay guys” and “girls” (also known at the time as “confirmed bachelors” and “maiden ladies”), who hailed mostly from the Northeast but also from Canada and Europe, often returned annually to the same boarding home for both short—a weekend or week—and long—a month or season—visits, further ensconcing

themselves within Portuguese households and families. These long-term economic relationships often became caring, social ones as well. Amelia Carlos, born in Provincetown in 1910, rented small cottages in her backyard to gay men for decades. "Especially in the summer the young people move in and they're wonderful and I look forward to seeing them every spring and they're so nice," Carlos (1998) explained not long ago. "I have a boy that came in across the street this winter and at Christmas time he brought me a tin full of homemade cookies that he had made. And he said this is for you and have a happy Christmas." Carlos was delighted to receive the gift and made sure to reciprocate in kind: "I always give [sic] him banana bread. I pound on the window and tell him to come get banana bread when I make it." Representing the perspective of white gay men, Peter Hand (1990), a Canadian who first visited Provincetown in 1932, noted simply and nostalgically, "we became one of the family. They cried when we came and they cried when we left. And we did too."

During a time when homosexuality was suspect and criminalized, Portuguese women and their families welcomed sex and gender "deviants" into their homes for any number of reasons. They did so because they needed the income, especially but not only during the Great Depression; because their neighbors did the same, thus normalizing associations and kindnesses toward effeminate men, masculine women and gender-normative gays and lesbians; because housing homosexual rather than heterosexual men allowed Portuguese women to rent rooms in their homes without risking questions of sexual impropriety (gay men revel in telling tales of these harmonious matches wherein Portuguese women appreciated having a "man" about the house to "protect" them and to exchange recipes and such with them); because, having lived in an art colony, they had grown accustomed to and developed a fondness for eclectic artists, many of whom behaved or identified as homosexual; and because after decades of *becoming* white Portuguese Americans, Portuguese constructions of "desirable" guests hinged on race and class more so than sexual or gender orientation (Krahulik, 2000, 2003; Sanchez, 1993). In other words, as long as sex- and gender-bending men and women were white and arrived with income to spare, Portuguese homeowners were pleased, more often than not, to take them in. This is not to suggest that all Portuguese homeowners were racist or elitist or that all tourists were white, but rather that collectively and symbolically Portuguese and other residents participated in shaping Provincetown as a welcoming destination for a racialized (as white) leisure class of gay and lesbian vacationers and consumers.

Along with a handful of Yankee-owned accommodations, like the Pilgrim House and Delft Haven Cottages, Portuguese households made room in Provincetown for countless “confirmed bachelors” and “maiden ladies.” Arriving alone and coupled in the 1910s and 20s, visiting artists such as Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, Maude Squires, Ethel Mars, Fred Marvin and his “all man Friday,” Cesco, and “wash-ashores” (local term for visitors who become residents) like Eleanor Bloomfield, Ivy Ivans, and Peter Hunt introduced non-normative erotic sensibilities and relationships to Land’s End (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

By the dawn of WWII, according to Tennessee Williams, another set of “belles” descended upon Provincetown. In his 1940 sojourn to Land’s End, Williams fell in quickly with a group “dominated by a platinum blonde Hollywood belle named Doug and a bull-dike named Wanda who [was] a well-known writer under a male pen-name” (Windham, 1976, pp. 5-6). The “crowd” was, he bragged to friends elsewhere, “the most raffish and fantastic crew that I have ever met and even I—excessively broadminded as I am—feel somewhat shocked by the goings-on” (Windham, pp. 5-6). Offering a glimpse of Provincetown’s 1940 summer options, Williams noted that he was enamored with a ballet dancer; courted by a musician, a dancing instructor, and a language professor; and duped by “a piece of trade, a Yale freshman . . . [who] got away” (Windham, pp. 5-6). In 1944, again from Williams’s point of view, gay visitors became even more flamboyant. As opposed to his 1940 visit when the “belles [were] jingling gaily all over town” (Windham, 1976, pp. 10-11), in 1944 he found Provincetown “screaming with creatures not all of whom are seagulls,” and “full of really *sur-realist* belles,” who make for a “social atmosphere [that] has been utterly vile” (Windham, 1976, pp. 141, 144-145). Regardless of Williams’s preferences, his letters support the premise that by the mid 1940s Provincetown was fast on its way to becoming a gay resort mecca—a reputation coexisting with its other incarnations as an “exotic” Portuguese seaport, eclectic art colony, and quaint “colonial” village.

In the 1940s and 50s, Provincetown housed at least four subsets of gay men and lesbians. Williams described the party atmosphere of the first set when he noted that it entailed, “camping with a bunch of . . . queens” (Windham, 1976, p. 139). Joining or alongside this festive group of gay men was the second subset: Williams and his elite circle of artists who resided for months, seasons and years at Land’s End in order to write, paint, dance or act. The third was comprised of gay and lesbian wash-ashores, like Pat Shultz, Lenore Ross, and Beverly Spencer, who

spent summers working and accumulating capital in the bars and restaurants that the gay tourists and elite artists patronized (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). Finally, having been born at Land's End, were Portuguese, Yankee and mixed-race gays and lesbians, known locally as, "our queers" (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

I distinguish between these groups not to naturalize differences, but to highlight the way gender, race and class shaped different kinds of same-sex or homoerotic experiences in Provincetown. The first two subsets, the vacationing gay men and visiting artists, were, for the most part, white, financially well-off men. They came to Provincetown to "camp," relax, or succeed in the arts. The next two sets, the wash-ashores and native gay men and lesbians, made up Provincetown's laboring rather than leisure or artistic classes. These residents were also more diverse than the visiting groups in terms of ethnicity, gender and income. To be sure, intermingling and identity blurring amongst the artists, natives, "queens," "bull-dikes," and laboring wash-ashores were common. Wash-ashores like Peter Hunt sometimes slipped into the category of "our queers"; native gay men and lesbians went "camping with [the] . . . queens," or took paints to easel; and more than one artist found it necessary to labor alongside others in the service industry. In their distinctions and fluidities, they contributed collectively to the project of queering Land's End.

In addition to households, local businesses were critical to the production of a queer culture in Provincetown. Like most resort areas at the time, Provincetown enticed tourists with a fleet of entertainment venues in the form of restaurants and clubs. In contrast to establishments in more demure vacation destinations like Martha's Vineyard or Hyannisport, but like some of New York City's more risqué cabaret clubs, Provincetown's nightclubs featured gender transgressive entertainment and catered to tourists of varying ethnic, gender, and sexual backgrounds. The clubs spearheading this postwar entertainment culture included: the Weathering Heights Club, the Atlantic House, the Pilgrim House, the Moors Restaurant, and the Townhouse. By the 1950s Provincetown's visiting and native gay men and lesbians had invented an elaborate social ritual organized in and around these establishments.

The seasonal and daily-weather permitting-ritual grounded Provincetown's non-normative tourist community in the postwar era and continues more than a half century later to shape gay leisure time at Land's End. New Beach, presently called Herring Cove, kicked off the festivities at high noon. After a few hours of sun, surf, and, for some, sex, the largely white crowd of "belles," plus a smattering of straights, "bull-

dikes,” lesbians, and gays of color, paraded at approximately four o’clock from the beach down the road to the Moors Bar and Restaurant. A local Portuguese couple, Maline and Naomi Costa (the latter of whom was reputed to have bisexual affairs), owned the Moors; offered “authentic” Portuguese linguica, lobster rolls, and chowder; employed visiting and native gay men and lesbians; and hosted an elaborate cocktail hour featuring the festive pianist, Roger Kent. Kent entertained by orchestrating at least one hour of audience participation comedy skits and Broadway sing-alongs, favorite past-times of a certain collection of white gay men who found the fantasy aspects and the homosexual undertones of the theater empowering (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). At least twice a week, gay wash-ashore Jack Richtman (1997) and others remembered recently, fellow members of the staff or patrons hoisted Kent to the top of his piano where he donned a wide-brimmed straw hat, held a long cigarette holder, and sang “torch songs in soprano.”

At five o’clock the revelers made their way down a sandy path (now Shank Painter Road) to the Weathering Heights Club. The infamously “robust” Phil Baione, a Boston-based “teamster” who was, according to one native, “as queer as a three dollar bill” (Napi Van Derek, personal communication, December 12, 1997), owned the Weathering Heights and was also its headline feature. A number of cross-dressing men and women waited on tables and performed as Baione’s “Weathering Knights,” while Alice King, whom some have described as a short, stout, Italian “butch,” managed the club and at times acted as the emcee. Baione delivered female impressions, told jokes after descending into the crowd from the ceiling on something akin to a trapeze or a large swing, and invited audience members on stage to participate in his skits. Richtman’s (1997) memories position Provincetown and Weathering Heights as liminal places: “We all crawled up there [to Weathering Heights] . . . it was a place away from everything in a place that was away from everything. So that made it more cozy and wonderful.” And Phil Baione’s act, he recalled nostalgically, smacked of “the girl in the velvet swing all covered with tulle again.”

A leisurely change of clothes then dinner typically followed happy hour festivities. Some guests chose Lenore Ross and Pat Shultz’s Plain And Fancy Restaurant, which steered gays and lesbians downstairs while herding straight couples and families upstairs. Others patronized the Bonnie Doone Restaurant, located where Muscle Beach is today, or the lively Flagship Bar and Restaurant in the East End (now Jackson’s). The night for many gay and lesbian vacationers, however, was still young. Night-time entertainment in the form of black, white and mix-

raced comedians, singers, and female impressionists could be found at the Town House Restaurant and Lounge (now Steve's Alibi); the Madeira Room in the basement of the Pilgrim House (now Vixens); the Carriage Room upstairs at the Atlantic House (now the Macho Room); or at the Crown and Anchor Hotel complex. A number of smaller bars including the Pilgrim Club, near the Old Colony Tap, and the Ace of Spades, which attracted a lesbian crowd and eventually became the Pied Piper, also catered in the postwar era to a mixed crowd of gays and straights (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

For many gay men, though certainly not all, the daily ritual also included opportunities for anonymous or semi-anonymous public sex. Besides capitalizing on Provincetown's acres of sand dunes during the day, after midnight many men looked for sex near the Pilgrim Monument or at a constantly changing but designated area of the bay beach, known now as the "dick dock." Others chose to meet friends at one of Provincetown's after-hours cafés like the Hump Inn or Mary Spaghetti's place. The routine even subsumed the late morning hours as gay men and lesbians enjoyed breakfast often at the Cottage restaurant, which a local family, the Feltons, ran before their gay son "Dickie" assumed control (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). Just before noon vacationers headed back to New Beach to witness, among other things, the Weathering Knights, who carried Baoine over the dunes on a litter before ceremoniously tossing him into the surf: "He'd be covered in tulle all flowing and everything," Richtman (1997) remembered, "like something out of 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert' . . . and of course everyone would scream." In this way the clubs and their inhabitants functioned as moving theaters of celebration and resistance, creating and performing layer upon layer of rituals within rituals—the ritual of the secular pilgrimage to Provincetown, the ritual of club-hopping, the ritual of Baoine tossed into the surf or Kent conducting sing-alongs, to name just a few.

In Provincetown's cabaret clubs, cross-dressed bodies and performances that were denigrated elsewhere moved closer to and at times occupied the center. Because of this, gays and lesbians had the opportunity to experience, at least for a limited amount of time in a contained space, what it meant to become "symbolically central," to use Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's (1986) term. In these cabaret clubs, in other words, gay and straight onlookers celebrated rather than demonized an environment in which queer sensibilities thrived. Certainly some queer sensibilities, like female impressionists, thrived more so than others, notably male impersonators; thus begging the question of which gender

disruptions were most celebrated and at whose or what expense. Imbalances of this sort call forth analyses made by cultural critics and historians such as Robin D. G. Kelley (1993), who has reminded scholars to note how “the creation of an alternative culture can simultaneously challenge and reinforce existing power relations” (p. 88). In this case, the creation of a gay male subculture simultaneously challenged and reinforced power relations between men and women.

Still, symbolically, these semi-public clubs assured Provincetown’s less queer natives and visitors that gender disruptive performances would not spill out onto the streets of the landing place of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims. It was exactly, however, this spillage, this crossing of a critical threshold, that mobilized the rhetoric and disciplinary measures of Provincetown’s postwar moral panic—a panic that mirrored all too well the “signification spiral” outlined in Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Robert’s (1978) *Policing the Crisis*. In their analysis, a signification spiral entails six levels of demise: (1) identification of a specific problem; (2) identification of a subversive group; (3) “convergence” or the association of this problem with other concerns; (4) a “threshold,” which, if crossed, will necessarily lead to further destruction; (5) the prophecy of more trouble to come unless specific measures are taken; (6) the call for strict regulations (p. 223). As long as queer bodies and celebratory performances were contained within the semi-public cabaret clubs, thus available to select rather than random or unsuspecting onlookers, Provincetown’s social order remained intact. Let them loose on the streets, however, and the following would swiftly and progressively occur. First, increasing numbers of queers would play out their brazen acts on Provincetown’s streets. These interventions would surely drive middle-class tourists out of town. Economic ruin would soon follow, and, unless strict regulations were implemented, complete moral degradation.

Paul C. Ryan (“Of Ill Report,” 1949) of the *Worcester Telegram* was among the first to make public Provincetown’s queer ritual and emerging politics of containment. Ryan’s piece, “Provincetown ‘Boys’ A Problem,” illuminated for western Massachusetts and surrounding areas the gender sensibilities, ineffectual policing tactics, and welcoming attitudes one might find at Land’s End. Ryan first congratulated eastern Massachusetts for a successful recreation business year, then stated that Provincetown claims to offer “quaintness, old dwellings, the sand dunes and sea,” which attract “legitimate artist[s] and art student[s].” Yet it is also, he exposed, “with this backdrop that P-Towners have found an increasing number of ‘tourists’ who flock into the town in early Summer

and attempt to give the place a little 'atmosphere.' These 'boys' as the townies call them, are somewhat of a problem." The boarding homes, which make up a significant portion of the business community, cannot agree on whether or not to house gay men and "local enforcement officials cannot cope with the situation until some of the 'boys' get into trouble. Then they are heaved out of town. But for every two that go, two more appear." Ryan concluded by lampooning parts of the well-worn queer routine, "It is only after dark that the freak parade starts. The 'boys' flutter along Commercial Street to their various evening entertainment spots or snake along in their brightly colored convertibles to beach parties. Zebra-striped seat covers were vogue this year for the open cars." After this brief description, he added, "Labor Day weekend was the season's climax. Out at New Beach the 'boys' held their annual 'convention' or mass beach party and more than 300 showed up for the affair. Everyone entertained" ("Of Ill Report," 1949). Far from rendering Provincetown's gay vacationers as self-loathing inverts, like many writers, sexologists, and psychiatrists were prone to do at the time, Ryan's column instead revealed the resilient, fun-loving and festive nature of Provincetown's postwar gay community.

The "Boys' Problem" soon escalated into a battle between Portuguese and Yankee elected officials, police officers, conservative residents, and clergymen intending to rid Provincetown of its "boys," and Portuguese and Yankee residents and business owners (some of whom were gay or gay-acting) hoping to profit from Provincetown's popularity with a largely solvent subculture. Some business owners despised most gay men and lesbians, and some elected officials were sympathetic to them, but, for the most part, relationships of authority and dissent fell along these lines.

To bridge this rift and regain some semblance of social control, Police Chief William N. Rogers criticized Chamber of Commerce business owners who employed "boys" and who "provide[d] them with quarters and [were] not loath to provide them with congregating places" ("Chamber to Ponder," 1950). Rogers asked the Chamber to support a stricter set of town by-laws so that law enforcement officials could more effectively prosecute the "exhibitionists" who, he argued, behaved in Provincetown as they would not dare in their own hometowns. Chamber President and Portuguese native Joseph E. Macara echoed Rogers's plea and made more explicit how cagey the terms of local morality and normality had become:

“each season . . . the number of ‘The Boys’ continues to increase . . . and the abnormal actions of many become more public and brazen with the result that more and more normal people turn away from the town in disgust. . . . The problem will be difficult to handle,” he insisted, “but it must be met and solved before the summer trade of the town is seriously damaged and before some climax in abnormality occurs.” (“Chamber to Ponder,” 1950)

The *Provincetown Advocate* responded to the Chamber’s concerns by rousing Cape Tip’s hibernating residents in the winter of 1951 and likening their hometown to a guardian beast battling nothing short of gender immorality. In an article entitled, “The ‘Queer’ Question,” it warned: “Sometime, and the sooner the better, Provincetown will have to take between its paws a somewhat baffling and knotty problem. The problem isn’t pretty, pleasant or wholesome. But it is definitely with us.” The “‘queer’ question” elaborated on “the problem” by deferring to an (in retrospect highly suspicious) anonymous letter from “a patron of long standing who [was] a physician in Deep River, Connecticut.” Apparently, the Connecticut physician had informed Ralph C. Carpenter, a Yankee native, owner of Delft Haven Cottages, and member of Provincetown’s highest elected board, the board of selectmen, that he and his wife, “with regret,” must cancel their trip to Land’s End. The town and Carpenters’ West End resort complex were “perfect vacation spot(s),” the physician conceded. However, “the swarming numbers of ‘queer boys’ . . . [who] flood all over our favorite eating spots . . . cavort around Long Nook Beach, [and] almost fill the walks in Provincetown” (“‘queer’ question,” 1951), convinced them to vacation elsewhere.

One year later, the board of selectmen decreed a set of regulations meant to rid Land’s End not of gay men or lesbians altogether, but of the more flamboyant and visible gender transgressors. “Selectmen Clamp Down on Gay Spots with New Regulations to Curb Evils,” the *Provincetown Advocate* declared in 1952. “Determined to raise the standards of Cape End places . . . [and] eliminate objectionable features which have been on the increase in recent years,” the selectmen hand delivered the regulations to each licensed liquor establishment. The new by-laws insisted that, “No licensee shall employ or allow to perform on the licensed premises any so-called female impersonators, nor employ, cater to, or encourage the licensed premises to become the habitual gathering place for homo-sexuals of either sex” (“Selectmen Clamp,” 1952). Other rules attempted to ferret out obscene or suggestive lan-

guage and dancing in ill-lit spaces; some prohibited the presence of intoxicated persons and female bartenders.

Despite these regulations, business owners refused to police gender and sexual morality within their establishments. One Portuguese lesbian remembered recently that her immediate relatives, who owned and operated a popular local bar, were aghast at the selectmen's audacity even to propose what locals mocked as the "ten commandments." The general attitude, she recalled, amongst most natives was that the regulations were "ridiculous" and "crazy" (Anonymous, personal communication, January, 1997). One imagines this was especially true for local entrepreneurs who fit into one of the following categories: those who behaved or identified as gender or sex deviants; those who had close friends or relatives that were gender or sex deviants; and those whose clientele was made up primarily of tourists and natives that were gender or sex deviants.

In the face of this refusal, local officials changed tactics slightly—from decreeing to cajoling—as they called next on God-fearing "decent" residents. In a formal letter entitled, "An Appeal to All Decent People In The Town of Provincetown," selectmen Frank Barnett, William White, and Ralph Carpenter launched an impassioned, Christian-based, anti-homosexual plea: "We can no longer say 'it can't happen here.' It has and we are at this moment overrun with a throng of men described by Archbishop Cushing as 'the lowest form of animal life.' Unbelievable as it may seem, they have their friends, defenders, and supporters among our own people" ("An Appeal," 1952). Portuguese women house them, "night club operators cater to them." We need everyone's help, they pleaded, to eliminate the "nests where the homosexuals congregate" and to succeed in "this crusade."

To be sure, a good number of residents, local clergymen in particular, stood behind and probably helped to draft the selectmen's "appeal," but a critical mass of natives, wash-ashores, and entrepreneurs disregarded this plea and instead, as we shall soon see, put forth their own ideas about decency and democracy. Before business owners articulated these ideas, the selectmen made one last attempt to exert power by using their capacity as the local licensing board to shut down at least one of the "nests where homosexuals congregate." They strategically targeted Phil Baoine and his Weathering Heights Club first. Although Weathering Heights was one of the most popular clubs patronized by straight, gay, and bisexual natives and tourists, Baoine was an easy target for these reasons: first, unlike other clubs owners, Baoine was not a native or resident of Land's End and could not, therefore, claim exemption

in the category of “our queers”; second, instead of using local suppliers, Baoine conducted business with associates in Boston, thus further distancing himself from community support; finally, Baoine and his Weathering Knights were some of the only “professional” gender transgressors whose performances moved from their liminal nightclub venues into Provincetown’s streets and beaches. Backed by local clergymen and conservative townsfolk, the selectmen succeeded in denying Baoine a liquor license in July, 1960, and in permanently closing the Weathering Heights Club despite protests from countless residents and visitors (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

One week following the closing of the Weathering Heights Club, a group of summer business owners petitioned the board of selectmen to cease its “arbitrary and discriminating nature of the delay and denial of business licenses,” because they pretend to know “what is good for Provincetown” (“Shopkeeper’s Plea,” 1960). In their formal petition, which the *Provincetown Advocate* reprinted on July 28, 1960, they made clear that their concern lay not necessarily with standards of morality, but rather with the “effect that possible closings and future denials will have on the prospects of Provincetown as a resort town.” “Provincetown,” the letter continued, “is no longer a comfortable place to vacation and is quickly becoming also uninteresting and even annoying . . . as it becomes less comfortable and less interesting and less entertaining, our ‘summer people’ also become less.” If the summer people, meaning gays and lesbians, depart, they explained, the only guests who will remain are the frugal “transient tourists.” The business owners agreed, “to deliver justice to an individual who is persistently offensive is democratic; select a business or attack a group and cause economic suicide are other questions.” If the board persists on its path of arbitrary policing, they ensured, businesses will suffer irreparable damage, townsfolk will lose jobs, vacationers will go elsewhere, and “a great deal of color and quality that brings the summer source of income into this town,” will be lost. Only “Coney-Island seekers and beatnik viewers” will make time for Provincetown, they assured (“Shopkeeper’s Plea,” 1960).

In one sense, the attack on the Weathering Heights Club and by extension Provincetown’s ceremonial gay community was short lived. Even though Baoine never again entertained from his sturdy swing, gay men and lesbians continued making annual pilgrimages to Land’s End and by 1997 had laid claim to Provincetown as, “our town” (Provincetown Business Guild, Annual Guide, 1997). In another, it represents a perennial negotiation between residents and local officials at-

tempting to regulate normality and morality at Land's End. In other words, the post-WWII moral panic was not the first nor would it be the last time Provincetown questioned the "kind"—meaning class, race and sexual/gender orientation—of guests populating Land's End, or the acts these guests engaged in once at Land's End.

Indeed, like most other resort towns and many small communities, Provincetown has concerned itself consistently with the status and behavior of its visitors. While mapping these dynamics in detail is beyond the scope of this paper, a brief overview of local policing moments will suggest the breadth of those beyond Provincetown's "charmed circle," to use Gayle Rubin's (1993) term. In the late 1930s, for instance, residents and local officials targeted Boston-based day tourists of the "boat people" crowd, especially those donning "short shorts" and "halter tops" as particularly "undesirable" (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). These working-class "transient tourists," or "Coney-Island seekers and beatnik viewers," as the above caption notes, were also not welcome during or after the postwar queer crusade simmered down (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). Following the postwar era, hippies, lesbians, ACT UP activists, and, eventually, heterosexual as well as gay and lesbian people with children ("breeders") all faced official and unofficial resistance to their claims on Land's End. Concurrently, throughout the twentieth century, some residents and business owners symbolically and literally discouraged black tourists from visiting by refusing to admit them into restaurants or boarding homes, by advocating for the continuation of minstrel shows, and by perpetuating blackface performances into the late 1990s (Krahulik, 2000; 2005). The economist Thorstein Veblen's theory seems to work well regarding Provincetown's negotiations over bodies and consumption: "The basis on which good repute in any highly organized industrial community ultimately rests is pecuniary strength. And the means of showing pecuniary strength, and so of gaining or retaining a good name are leisure and a conspicuous consumption of goods" (Veblen, 1934, in Badgett, p. 470).

### ***DISPLACEMENTS***

White gay men and a lesser number of lesbians supported by Portuguese and Yankee residents and natives, queered Land's End in the postwar era by challenging heteronormative sexual practices and gender representations during a time when explicit challenges as such were prosecutable offenses. In this way they took risks and put job and hous-

ing security aside in order to respond collectively to the moral panics and politics of containment saturating Land's End and most of postwar America. The socioeconomic outcome of this kind of queering process, however, disrupts celebratory readings of gay, space-taking projects. Indeed, the panoply of effects and reassignment of community authority resulting from Provincetown's evolution into a gay resort were and continue to be widespread and complicated. I address these effects at length elsewhere. Here I consider briefly some of the material and structural changes related to gender, labor and the social reproduction of goods and people in late twentieth century Provincetown (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

Provincetown's turn into a gay resort mecca moved the local economy's gender balance in an unexpected direction. Even as residents' anxieties were on the rise—due to the perceived emasculating effects of the decline in fishing and concurrent rise in gender transgressions—male economic authority lived on and thrived at Land's End in the postwar era as men displaced women as much, if not more, than any other category of business owners. The accommodation sector of the service industry illustrates this trend well: In 1966 men owned 107 accommodation establishments (classified by size and amenities as “camps and cabins,” “inns,” and “lodges”) while women owned 110. By 1997 men owned 83 while women owned 27 (License Records, 1966, 1997). This shift reflects three kinds of movements: first, that of gay men into Provincetown; second, that of native and resident men who were either forced or chose to leave fishing and instead joined the service industry; and, third, that of Portuguese women, who, in some but not all cases, lost authority as boarding house entrepreneurs when husbands, fathers, and brothers remained shore bound.

Similarly, although gay men did not necessarily displace lesbians, they certainly carved out more of Provincetown as their own. White gay men arrived in Provincetown with greater financial resources than gay women, they gained access to Provincetown's capitalist service economy more rapidly, and they made up the majority of Provincetown's leisure class of vacationers. Besides cornering the market on nightclubs and bars, with few exceptions, men owned most gay-owned businesses, including, but not limited to, bed and breakfast establishments, retail shops, and hotels. The lodging facet of the new service industry again best illustrates this shift. In 1966 gay men owned approximately six accommodation businesses and gay women owned one. This discrepancy continued as time went on. By 1973 gay men owned fifteen and gay women four, and in 1990 gay men owned

forty-four while gay women owned eight. Gay men also had considerably larger stakes in Provincetown's budding real estate market (License Records, 1966, 1973; Provincetown Business Guild, 1990). They facilitated Provincetown's turn into a gay mecca by withdrawing from the Chamber of Commerce because it did not intentionally advertise Provincetown as a gay place to gay tourists, and in 1978 founded one of this country's first gay business guilds, the Provincetown Business Guild (PBG). At the suggestion of PBG officers and members, who wanted more gay control over local licensing decisions, gay men gained access to Provincetown's local government well before gay women. In 1979 PBG members helped Marvin Coble, an openly gay man, win a seat on the board of selectmen (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

Although dominated by white gay men, the gentrification process that escalated in the 1980s and 90s and eventually consumed Land's End included white lesbians as well a lesser number of lesbians of color. Lesbians washed ashore incrementally rather than descending upon Provincetown en masse as the gay "boys" had done. Lesbians participated in Provincetown's gay ritual in the prewar era by attending the sing-alongs, participating in the Weathering Heights shows, and infiltrating the routine at nearly every twist and turn, partaking in public sex being the possible exception. They also staked out a number of gender-specific spaces for themselves, first a lesbian bar called the Ace of Spades, and, later, in the 1980s the short-lived Ms. Room (in the Crown & Anchor). And they split the south side of Herring Cove Beach—the "gay" side—into two. Upon approaching the beach from the parking lot, lesbians claimed the middle and right side, now called "the lesbian section," and relegated gay men to the far left (a more remote section that allowed for greater privacy and opportunity for public nudity and sex).

Women established themselves economically, politically, and culturally in part by gaining control of a portion of the local service economy. By the 1980s lesbians had set up women-oriented nightclubs, retail shops, and, most important, a series of women-only guest homes. The guest house sector, a traditionally feminine enterprise of the larger service industry, seemed to make room relatively easily for a small number of lesbians. Gay women did not own the majority of guest houses or even a majority of gay guest houses in Provincetown. They did, however, command a highly visible guest house presence by joining together as a group, the Women Innkeepers of Provincetown (WIP), and by carving out women-only space and time in Provincetown, known now as Women's Week. Lesbians also advanced in the arts with painters like T.J. Walton, in the entertainment sector with comedians like

Kate Clinton, and in local politics with selectmen such as Cheryl Andrews. Their ascendancy was fraught with tension, as townsfolk and gay men voiced resentment over and attempted to explain away the apparent lesbian “takeover,” yet soon a women’s movement emerged within what had become a predominantly white gay male space (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

Despite the “takeover” rumor, gay women were far from correcting the gender imbalance following the gay male influx. Indeed, the ways in which gay men and lesbians built community did not then and does not now automatically translate into a disruption of white male privilege and its relation to capitalism. Lesbians still, however, systematically challenged Provincetown’s new male-centered order, and, in so doing, changed the way women lived and vacationed in Provincetown. Gay women created women-only spaces in Provincetown, they encouraged lesbians to take pride in their identities, and they drew distinctions between themselves and Provincetown’s gay male world. Gay women were the first to deliberately tap into a gay retail market by peddling lesbian-specific goods and music in the late 1970s in a store called Womenscrafts. Indeed, they used the mechanics of capitalism to shape and build a gay consumer culture at Land’s End decades before other entrepreneurs and corporations followed suit elsewhere. In this way a gay consumerist identity emerged at Land’s End by the 1980s as lesbians sought economic independence on the heels of the feminist movement and in the face of gay men’s shifting economic options due to the onset of AIDS (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

Provincetown’s demographic shift and new international reputation as a white gay and lesbian mecca complicated the locations of Portuguese residents and cultures. Unlike some ethnic villages that are now resort towns, like Aspen, Colorado, or Niagara Falls, New York, the sets of material and spatial winners and losers in Provincetown did not fall out neatly according to ethnicity or residential status (newcomers v. natives). Some Portuguese natives, like Debbie Silva and her gay brother Clement Arthur Silva, who own Clem and Ursies Seafood Restaurant (named after their parents), have prospered alongside more solvent wash-ashores. Most other Portuguese natives, however, sold their homes and businesses or gave up expensive rentals and moved up-Cape or off-Cape. For some emigration was a choice, for others a matter of economic necessity. Similarly, Portuguese cultural events, such as the Blessing of the Fleet, once integral to Provincetown as an annual Portuguese religious ritual, have become showcase tourist events meant to celebrate Provincetown’s alluring ethnic past in the face of its diminish-

ing present (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). These patterns have led to two distinct demographic shifts: first, working-class residents of all sexual and ethnic backgrounds have emigrated, thus leaving a laboring void filled in now by foreign-born, seasonal workers; and, second, of those (im)migrating as full or part-time residents, most have identified, appeared and/or behaved as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered, and as white.

New family and reproductive structures are now taking shape in Provincetown as gay tourists and part-time residents, most of whom do not have children, continue to displace year-round residents and traditional nuclear families. It remains to be seen whether longstanding civic institutions—churches, schools, firehouses—will disintegrate since the most frequented sites in town have become the bars, shops, museums and beaches (Krahulik, 2000, 2003). Displacing Provincetown's traditional nuclear families, the individual has assumed the primary role as a unit of consumption. This trend follows John D'Emilio's (1993) important argument about the way capitalism and gay identity produced alternative family mechanisms that differed in fundamental ways from nuclear family patterns and expectations.

The terrain of material reproduction and consumption has also changed. Retail stores in Provincetown, exemplifying a new "boutique capitalism," now cater to a gay and lesbian tourist market. In Provincetown residents can find ample rainbow-colored candles, stationary, and tee-shirts, but few if any affordably-priced household items. What was once a ten-minute walk downtown to replenish linens or household staples is now a thirty or sixty mile drive up-Cape to larger towns. Provincetown's location at the end of a sixty-mile peninsula in this respect becomes especially significant for residents without the time or means for such lengthy excursions (Katz, 2001).

Its isolation from other towns has also, in part, led to its most recent demographic shift: the importation of a racialized laboring class that enables gay, lesbian and Portuguese economic success. In the final years of the twentieth century, real estate and rental costs skyrocketed as Provincetown's gentrification process surged ahead despite the widespread displacement of native-born workers. Although several employers, concerned residents and local officials advocated for and created an "affordable housing" program, it proved largely ineffective in terms of retaining a critical mass of low-income residents. Increasingly, employers paid less attention to the project of local worker retention and more to the option of foreign-born worker recruitment. By 2002 close to one hundred business owners imported foreign-born workers of color from Jamaica under the H2B-visa seasonal job program (Patricia Fitzpatrick,

personal communication, August 7, 2002). Just as Provincetown's white Yankees imported "dark-skinned" Portuguese seamen in the mid to late nineteenth century because American sailors found greater opportunities onshore, white gay entrepreneurs and Portuguese natives are importing black and to a lesser degree white, Eastern European student laborers because native-born workers will not or cannot afford to reside permanently at Land's End. Unlike some communities participating in similar transnational exchanges of bodies and labor, Provincetown has a Human Rights Resolution Working Group that counsels foreign-born workers and attempts to oversee their labor and housing conditions. Even so, this group is not likely to solve the larger challenge of labor exploitation if class displacement continues (Krahulik, 2000, 2003).

The larger issue of creating a racialized laboring class, of patching class displacement with foreign-born workers of color instead of interrogating the social processes leading to location-specific exclusions, is not unique to Provincetown. This widespread phenomenon will continue to place native- as well as foreign-born workers in the most menial and least promising labor arrangements as transient and expendable community members. Indeed, this study raises questions for all towns facing the twin challenges of gentrification and displacement. What kind of communities take shape in the leveling of class, race and sex diversity? What investments are gay communities making in whiteness, normality, and assimilation, and at whose expense? Marc Stein (2000) asked similar questions of homophile activists in postwar Philadelphia and concluded that, "while lesbians and gay men have challenged many dominant values, they have participated in and contributed to a conservative consensus about the nature of differences between women and men. Rather than representing a 'queer' alternative, lesbians and gay men, by and large, have reproduced the dominant system of relations between the sexes" (p. 386).

Unlike Philadelphia, Provincetown is one of the only places on the East Coast where certain gay people feel at "home," or free to be "out" on streets, in bars, in public spaces and in private. Yet access to Provincetown is limited and it is not at all clear that tourists, who return annually, understand how their pilgrimages have contributed to the following: the effacement of local residents and cultures, the creation of a gay enclave grounded in male-centered privilege and identity-based consumer capitalism, and the building of a racialized laboring class that serves and sustains the interests of those who are primarily white and wealthy. What are the implications of creating identity-based enclaves that become exclusive and exclusionary? Can places like Provincetown,

despite its status as a resort destination, keep close the ideals of community as a site of political mobility?

Provincetown's history offers new ways of understanding identity-based, space-taking projects. It also speaks to widespread processes of class, gender and race-ethnic displacement and importation as it exposes the price of gay participation in transnational capitalist exchanges of goods and people. To call again on the "contested terrain" with which we began, assessing the project of gay liberation in Provincetown has demonstrated, ultimately, how gays and lesbians who once took risks have moved away from a politics that one might call queer and toward a rearticulation of race, class and gender norms and inequalities that play out elsewhere, indeed, anywhere. In other words, the desires for community and public space in Provincetown that have been born out of historic exclusions complicate the fantasy of what gay evolutions and enclaves have and continue to promise. If, as Rosemary Hennessy (1995) writes, "politically, the aim of queer visibility is not to include queers in the cultural dominant but to continually pressure and disclose the heteronormative" (p. 35), how can white gay men and lesbians residing or vacationing in Provincetown, who hail from or worked their way into places of privilege, begin to derail rather than reinscribe a capitalist consumer ethic based on identity celebration and class-race exploitation?

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