

Late that night, he came home. The children were still up, I was asleep across the bed, and we heard the motor of the car coming in and pulling into the driveway. We heard him get out of the car and the car door slam, and in that same instant, we heard the loud gunfire. The children fell to the floor, as he had taught them to do. I made a run for the front door, turned on the light, and there he was. The bullet had pushed him forward, as I understand, and the strong man that he was, he had his keys in his hand and had pulled his body around the rest of the way, to the door. There he lay. And I screamed, and people came out. Our next-door neighbor fired a gun, as he said, to try to frighten anyone away, and I knew then that that was it.

When Medgar was felled by that shot, and I rushed out and saw him lying there, and people from the neighborhood began to gather, there were also some whose color happened to be white. I don't think I have ever hated as much in my life as I did at that particular moment anyone who had white skin. I screamed at the neighbors, and when the police finally got there, I told them that they had killed Medgar. And I can recall wanting so much to have a machine gun or something in my hands, and to stand there and mow them all down. I can't explain the depth of my hatred at that point. And it's interesting how Medgar's influence has directed me in terms of dealing with that hate, then and over the years. He told me, as well as his children, that hate was not a healthy thing.

DOCUMENT 28.2

Declaration of Indian Purpose

We, the Indian People, must be governed by principles in a democratic manner with a right to choose our way of life. Since our Indian culture is threatened by presumption of being absorbed by the American society, we believe we have the responsibility of preserving our precious heritage. . . .

WE BELIEVE in the inherent right of all people to retain spiritual and cultural values, and that the free exercise of these values is necessary to the normal development of any people. . . .

WE BELIEVE that the history and development of America show that the Indian has been subjected to duress, undue influence, unwarranted pressures, and policies which have produced uncertainty, frustration, and despair. . . .

What we ask of America is not charity, not paternalism, even when benevolent. We ask only that the nature of our situation be recognized and made the basis of policy and action.

Source: Excerpted from *Declaration of Indian Purpose: The Voice of the American Indian*, American Indian Chicago Conference, University of Chicago, June 13–20, 1961, pp. 4, 5, 20.

realized that a considerable crowd had simply re-formed to their rear, they flailed out angrily at anyone who came within striking distance. But the protesters would not be cowed. The pattern repeated itself several times: The TPF would disperse the jeering mob only to have it re-form behind them, yelling taunts, tossing bottles and bricks, setting fires in trash cans. When the police whirled around to reverse direction at one point, they found themselves face to face with their worst nightmare: a chorus line of mocking queens, their arms clasped around each other, kicking their heels in the air Rockettes-style and singing at the tops of their sardonic voices:

*We are the Stonewall girls
We wear our hair in curls
We wear no underwear
We show our pubic hair . . .
We wear our dungarees
Above our nelly knees!*

It was a deliciously witty, contemptuous counterpoint to the TPF's brute force, a tactic that transformed an otherwise traditionally macho eye-for-an-eye combat and that provided at least the glimpse of a different and revelatory kind of consciousness. Perhaps that was exactly the moment Sylvia had in mind when she later said, "Something lifted off my shoulders."

But the tactic incited the TPF to yet further violence. As they were badly beating up on one effeminate-looking boy, a portion of the angry crowd surged in, snatched the boy away, and prevented the cops from reclaiming him. Elsewhere, a cop grabbed "a wild Puerto Rican queen" and lifted his arm as if to club him. Instead of cowering, the queen yelled, "How'd you like a big Spanish dick up your little Irish ass?" The nonplussed cop hesitated just long enough to give the queen time to run off into the crowd.

The cops themselves hardly escaped scot-free. Somebody managed to drop a concrete block on one parked police car; nobody was injured, but the cops inside were shaken up. At another point, a gold-braided police officer being driven around to survey the action got a sack of wet garbage thrown at him through the open window of his car; a direct hit was scored, and soggy coffee grounds dripped down the officer's face as he tried to maintain a stoic expression. Still later, as some hundred people were being chased down Waverly Place by two cops, someone in the crowd suddenly realized the unequal odds and started yelling, "There are only two of 'em! Catch 'em! Rip their clothes off! Fuck 'em!" As the crowd took up the cry, the two officers fled.

Before the police finally succeeded in clearing the streets—for that evening

only, it would turn out—a considerable amount of blood had been shed. Among the undetermined number of people injured was Sylvia's friend Ivan Valentin; hit in the knee by a policeman's billy club, he had ten stitches taken at St. Vincent's Hospital. A teenager named Lenny had his hand slammed in a car door and lost two fingers. Four big cops beat up a young queen so badly—there is evidence that the cops singled out "feminine boys"—that she bled simultaneously from her mouth, nose, and ears. Craig and Sylvia both escaped injury (as did Jim, who had hung back on the fringe of the crowd), but so much blood splattered over Sylvia's blouse that at one point she had to go down to the piers and change into the clean clothes Gary had brought back for her.

Four police officers were also hurt. Most of them sustained minor abrasions from ticks and bites, but Officer Scheu, after being hit with a rolled-up newspaper, had fallen to the cement sidewalk and broken his wrist. When Craig heard that news, he couldn't resist chuckling over what he called the "symbolic justice" of the injury. Thirteen people (including Dave Van Ronk) were booked at the Sixth Precinct, seven of them Stonewall employees, on charges ranging from harassment to resisting arrest to disorderly conduct. At three-thirty-five a.m., signal 10-41 was canceled and an uneasy calm settled over the area. It was not to last.

...

On the three hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Pilgrims' landing on Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts officials planned a celebration, and asked Wamsutta (Frank B.) James to deliver a speech. But James, an Aquinnah Wampanoag and a member of the United American Indians of New England, was never allowed to deliver the speech. Officials who checked the speech refused to let him speak the truth about the history of the colonization of Wampanoag lands. James and many other Native activists came to Plymouth Rock to declare a "National Day of Mourning for Native Americans," beginning a now-annual Thanksgiving Day protest against the genocide of the first peoples of the United States. Here is the speech James planned to deliver at Plymouth, Massachusetts, on September 10, 1970.

Wamsutta (Frank B.) James, Suppressed Speech on the 350th Anniversary of the Pilgrim's Landing at Plymouth Rock (September 10, 1970)³

I speak to you as a man—a Wampanoag Man. I am a proud man, proud of my ancestry, my accomplishments won by a strict parental direction ("You must succeed—your face is a different color in this small Cape Cod community!"). I am

a product of poverty and discrimination from these two social and economic diseases. I, and my brothers and sisters, have painfully overcome, and to some extent we have earned the respect of our community. We are Indians first—but we are termed “good citizens.” Sometimes we are arrogant but only because society has pressured us to be so.

It is with mixed emotion that I stand here to share my thoughts. This is a time of celebration for you—celebrating an anniversary of a beginning for the white man in America. A time of looking back, of reflection. It is with a heavy heart that I look back upon what happened to my People.

Even before the Pilgrims landed it was common practice for explorers to capture Indians, take them to Europe and sell them as slaves for 220 shillings apiece. The Pilgrims had hardly explored the shores of Cape Cod for four days before they had robbed the graves of my ancestors and stolen their corn and beans. Mourt's Relation describes a searching party of sixteen men. Mourt goes on to say that this party took as much of the Indians' winter provisions as they were able to carry.

Massasoit, the great Sachem of the Wampanoag, knew these facts, yet he and his People welcomed and befriended the settlers of the Plymouth Plantation. Perhaps he did this because his Tribe had been depleted by an epidemic. Or his knowledge of the harsh oncoming winter was the reason for his peaceful acceptance of these acts. This action by Massasoit was perhaps our biggest mistake. We, the Wampanoag, welcomed you, the white man, with open arms, little knowing that it was the beginning of the end; that before 50 years were to pass, the Wampanoag would no longer be a free people.

What happened in those short 50 years? What has happened in the last 300 years? History gives us facts and there were atrocities; there were broken promises—and most of these centered around land ownership. Among ourselves we understood that there were boundaries, but never before had we had to deal with fences and stone walls. But the white man had a need to prove his worth by the amount of land that he owned. Only ten years later, when the Puritans came, they treated the Wampanoag with even less kindness in converting the souls of the so-called “savages.” Although the Puritans were harsh to members of their own society, the Indian was pressed between stone slabs and hanged as quickly as any other “witch.”

And so down through the years there is record after record of Indian lands taken and, in token, reservations set up for him upon which to live. The Indian, having been stripped of his power, could only stand by and watch while the white man took his land and used it for his personal gain. This the Indian could not understand; for to him, land was survival, to farm, to hunt, to be enjoyed. It was not to be abused. We see incident after incident, where the white man sought to

name the “savage” and convert him to the Christian ways of life. The early Pilgrim settlers led the Indian to believe that if he did not behave, they would dig up the ground and unleash the great epidemic again.

The white man used the Indian's nautical skills and abilities. They let him be only a seaman—but never a captain. Time and time again, in the white man's society, we Indians have been termed “low man on the totem pole.”

Has the Wampanoag really disappeared? There is still an aura of mystery. We know there was an epidemic that took many Indian lives—some Wampanoags moved west and joined the Cherokee and Cheyenne. They were forced to move. Some even went north to Canada! Many Wampanoag put aside their Indian heritage and accepted the white man's way for their own survival. There are some Wampanoag who do not wish it known they are Indian for social or economic reasons.

What happened to those Wampanoags who chose to remain and live among the early settlers? What kind of existence did they live as “civilized” people? True, living was not as complex as life today, but they dealt with the confusion and the change. Honesty, trust, concern, pride, and politics wove themselves in and out of their daily living. Hence, he was termed crafty, cunning, rapacious, and dirty.

History wants us to believe that the Indian was a savage, illiterate, uncivilized animal. A history that was written by an organized, disciplined people, to expose us as an unorganized and undisciplined entity. Two distinctly different cultures met. One thought they must control life; the other believed life was to be enjoyed, because nature decreed it. Let us remember, the Indian is and was just as human as the white man. The Indian feels pain, gets hurt, and becomes defensive, has dreams, bears tragedy and failure, suffers from loneliness, needs to cry as well as laugh. He, too, is often misunderstood.

The white man in the presence of the Indian is still mystified by his uncanny ability to make him feel uncomfortable. This may be the image the white man has created of the Indian; his “savageness” has boomeranged and isn't a mystery; it is fear; fear of the Indian's temperament!

High on a hill, overlooking the famed Plymouth Rock, stands the statue of our great Sachem, Massasoit. Massasoit has stood there many years in silence. We the descendants of this great Sachem have been a silent people. The necessity of making a living in this materialistic society of the white man caused us to be silent. Today, I and many of my people are choosing to face the truth. We are Indians!

Although time has drained our culture, and our language is almost extinct, we the Wampanoags still walk the lands of Massachusetts. We may be fragmented, we may be confused. Many years have passed since we have been a people together. Our lands were invaded. We fought as hard to keep our land as you the whites did to take our land away from us. We were conquered, we became the American prisoners of war in many cases, and wards of the United States Government, until only recently.

Our spirit refuses to die. Yesterday we walked the woodland paths and sandy trails. Today we must walk the macadam highways and roads. We are uniting. We're standing not in our wigwams but in your concrete tent. We stand tall and proud, and before too many moons pass we'll right the wrongs we have allowed to happen to us.

We forfeited our country. Our lands have fallen into the hands of the aggressor. We have allowed the white man to keep us on our knees. What has happened cannot be changed, but today we must work towards a more humane America, a more Indian America, where men and nature once again are important; where the Indian values of honor, truth, and brotherhood prevail.

You the white man are celebrating an anniversary. We the Wampanoags will help you celebrate in the concept of a beginning. It was the beginning of a new life for the Pilgrims. Now, 350 years later it is a beginning of a new determination for the original American: the American Indian.

There are some factors concerning the Wampanoags and other Indians across this vast nation. We now have 350 years of experience living amongst the white man. We can now speak his language. We can now think as a white man thinks. We can now compete with him for the top jobs. We're being heard; we are now being listened to. The important point is that along with these necessities of everyday living, we still have the spirit, we still have the unique culture, we still have the will and, most important of all, the determination to remain as Indians. We are determined, and our presence here this evening is living testimony that this is only the beginning of the American Indian, particularly the Wampanoag, to regain the position in this country that is rightfully ours.

• • •

The pathbreaking poet Adrienne Rich, an outspoken feminist and lesbian, dedicated her book *Of Woman Born* to her grandmothers and "to the activists working to free women's bodies from archaic and unnecessary bonds." Through the book, Rich helped encourage a new discussion about the politics of motherhood, of sexuality, and of the body, topics that often were ignored or dismissed as apolitical. This selection appeared as the afterword to the first paperback edition of the book.

Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born* (1977)⁴

To seek visions, to dream dreams, is essential, and it is also essential to try new ways of living, to make room for serious experimentation, to respect the effort even where it fails. At the same time, in the light of most women's lives as they are now

having to be lived, it can seem naive and self-indulgent to spin forth matriarchal utopias, to "demand" that technologies of contraception and genetics be "turned over" to women (by whom, and under what kinds of effective pressure?); to talk of impressing "unchilded" women into child-care as a political duty, of boycotting patriarchal institutions, of the commune as a solution for child-rearing. Child care as enforced servitude, or performed out of guilt, has been all too bitter a strain in our history. If women boycott the laboratories and libraries of scientific institutions (to which we have barely begun to gain access) we will not even know what research and technology is vital to the control of our bodies. Certainly the commune, in and of itself, has no special magic for women, any more than has the extended family or the public day-care center. Above all, such measures fail to recognize the full complexity and political significance of the woman's body, the full spectrum of power and powerlessness it represents, of which motherhood is simply one—though a crucial—part.

Furthermore, it can be dangerously simplistic to fix upon "nurturance" as a special strength of women, which need only be released into the larger society to create a new human order. Whatever our organic or developed gift for nurture, it has often been turned into a boomerang. . . .

When an individual woman first opposes the institution of motherhood she often has to oppose it in the person of a man, the father of her child, toward whom she may feel love, compassion, friendship, as well as resentment, anger, fear, or guilt. The "maternal" or "nurturant" spirit we want to oppose to rapism and the warrior mentality can prove a liability so long as it remains a lever by which women can be controlled through what is most generous and sensitive in us. Theories of female power and female ascendancy must reckon fully with the ambiguities of our being, and with the continuum of our consciousness, the potentialities for both creative and destructive energy in each of us.

I am convinced that "there are ways of thinking that we don't yet know about." I take those words to mean that many women are even now thinking in ways which traditional intellect denies, decries, or is unable to grasp. Thinking is an active, fluid, expanding process; intellection, "knowing" are recapitulations of past processes. In arguing that we have by no means yet explored or understood our biological grounding, the miracle and the paradox of the female body and its spiritual and political meanings, I am really asking whether women cannot begin, at last, to think through the body, to connect what has been so cruelly disorganized—our great mental capacities, hardly used; our highly developed tactile sense; our genius for close observation; our complicated, pain-enduring, multi-pleasured physicality.

I know of no woman—virgin, mother, lesbian, married, celibate—whether she aims her keep as a housewife, a cocktail waitress, or a scanner of brain waves—for whom the body is not a fundamental problem: its clouded meanings, its fer-

commissioner and people to come there, to give up some token, to give up some lineament. And now you got, you know, forty-three peoples in all, thirty-nine they say that got killed on the retaking, that's dead today.

...

The political prisoner and Native American activist Leonard Peltier was born on the Anishinabe/Chippewa Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota. Moved by the treatment of indigenous peoples, Peltier joined the American Indian Movement (AIM) and in 1972 took part in the Trail of Broken Treaties. The protest, a response to the years of the United States breaking promise after promise in its treaties with Native peoples, culminated with the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, D.C. Here is Peltier's account of the takeover.

Leonard Peltier on the Trail of Broken Treaties Protest (1999)⁷

In November 1972, we brought our grievances to Washington, D.C., in a mass demonstration for Indian rights. We called that cross-country march and demonstration the "Trail of Broken Treaties." It was our hope and intent to set up a series of wide-ranging meetings with government agencies to discuss a twenty-point spectrum of crucial issues, including an overhaul of the BIA, putting it under Indian control, and also the establishment of a commission to examine treaty violations by the U.S. government. What was to have been a peaceful meeting turned into an impromptu sit-in when government officials, reneging on their promises to see us, had BIA security guards try to oust us from the building. When the security guards started using strong-arm tactics on our women and Elders, the sit-in escalated into a tense confrontation.

We were not about to turn and run. The spirit of Crazy Horse was with us. We seized the BIA building right in the center of downtown Washington, allowed all employees to leave peaceably, and occupied it for five days—much to the outrage of the American public, who were, as usual, totally misinformed as to what had happened, or why. We were portrayed in the press as "thugs" and "hoodlums" and "violent militants." Yes, we "sacked" the BIA building, looking for—and finding in abundance—files that would reveal the government's duplicity in dealing with Indians. We piled up desks and anything else we could find to build barricades against the government's threatened assault. We broke sealed windows so that tear gas couldn't be used to suffocate us and force us out. The police themselves broke most of the lower-floor windows. Sure, some of the younger guys, infuriated by

the government's lies and brutal mistreatment, started just breaking things up. We quickly put a stop to that. I remember Clyde Bellecourt announcing that, for every broken window in the BIA building, there were ten thousand hearts the BIA had broken in Indian country. He should have said a hundred thousand, even a million—that would have been nearer the mark.

One old Grandfather, a victim of the BIA throughout his life, took a fire ax, jumped up on the BIA commissioner's big mahogany desk, and split it in two! He laughed and wept ecstatically all the while, singing his death song as he chopped. "There . . . take *that* . . . and *that* . . . and *that*!" he cried between his gasps and his chants, righting an ancient wrong with every blow. It was beautiful. He was Crazy Horse incarnate at that moment.

Outside, the police and SWAT teams were gathered. If they wanted a bloodbath, we were prepared to give them one. We were ready to rain down desks and typewriters and filing cabinets and Molotov cocktails if they stormed the building. Some of the warriors put on their war paint. Every one of us was Crazy Horse. Seeing our resolve, the government itself had second thoughts. Murder four hundred Indians in a massacre a few blocks from the White House only days before the 1972 presidential election? No way. The FBI decided to end this thing for the moment, then hunt us down later one by one, which, indeed, is exactly what they did. That's when my name, as a security chief during the BIA takeover, appeared high on their list of secret targets as an "AIM agitator" and "key extremist." I'd already been arrested during the Fort Lawton take-over. I was permanently marked.

The government finally started negotiating with us, but only to end the occupation of the BIA building, not to resolve our original twenty-point list of grievances. We felt we'd made at least one point—that point being that *we exist*! We'd proven that. The government promised to look into our grievances (they never did) and they also promised not to prosecute us for the BIA takeover (a promise broken like all the others). We didn't believe them anyway. To defuse the situation and end their own embarrassment, they actually provided vehicles and an early-morning police escort out of town plus under-the-table money to pay our return travel expenses. Some of the Elders even received first-class tickets back home! The government thought they were sweeping us once more under the rug. But this time we were not about to be swept.

...

The mid-1970s saw a general disillusionment in the nation with the president, the Congress, and government agencies like the FBI and the CIA. Part of this was a reaction to the Vietnam War, part a reaction to the "Watergate" scandal of President Nixon, whose men staged a break-in to the Democratic Party's National Committee

• Would you rather build one less of the planned 226 MX missiles that will cost us \$110 million each, and that we still can't find a place to hide, or eliminate poverty in 101,000 female headed households a year? If we cancel the whole MX program we could eliminate poverty for all 12 million poor children and have enough left over to pay college costs for 300,000 potential engineers, mathematicians, and scientists who may not be able to afford college. Which investment do you think will foster longer term national security? President Reagan has cut safety net programs for poor families. He's building the MX missiles.

• Would you rather spend \$100 million a year on 100 military bands or put that money into teaching 200,000 educationally deprived children to read and write as well as their more advantaged peers? American high school bands would be delighted to volunteer to provide music for patriotic events, I'll bet. President Reagan has cut compensatory education. He's not touched military bands.

• Would you rather keep or sell the luxury hotel the Department of Defense owns at Fort Dean Russey on Waikiki Beach which has a fair market value of \$100 million, or provide Medicaid coverage for all poor pregnant women, some of whom are being turned away from hospital emergency rooms in labor? President Reagan has cut Medicaid. No one has seriously suggested curbing military luxuries like this hotel.

• We plan to build 100 B-1 bombers at a cost of \$250 million each. If we build 91—nine fewer—we could finance Medicaid for all poor pregnant women and children living below the poverty level. Do you think this will threaten our national security?

• Whose hunger would you rather quench? Secretary Weinberger's or a poor child in child care? Every time Secretary [of Defense Caspar] Weinberger and his elite colleagues sit down in his private Pentagon dining room staffed by 19, they pay \$2.87 a meal and we taxpayers pay \$12.06. This \$12.06 could provide 40 mid-morning milk and juice and cracker snacks. President Reagan has forced poor children of working mothers in child care centers to give up. I think we should urge Secretary Weinberger to eat in one of the four other Pentagon executive dining rooms and give one million food supplements back to poor children instead.

Just as I believe we ought to weigh military nonessentials against civilian essentials—and apply the same standards of national purpose, efficiency and effectiveness to military programs as we do to domestic ones—I also believe that the non-needy should bear a fair portion of the burden of economic recovery. They have not. . . .

As you go out into the world, try to keep your eye on the human bottom line. I also hope you will understand and be tough about what is needed to solve problems, change attitudes, and bring about needed changes in our society. Democracy is not a spectator sport.

• • •

The farm worker leader César Chávez was born in Arizona, and grew up in migrant labor camps. In the early 1960s, he helped found the National Farm Workers Association, a precursor to the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and, eventually, the United Farm Workers (UFW) union. Chávez came to international attention in March 1968, when he announced a boycott of California grapes. The popular boycott, in protest of the anti-union efforts of California growers, led to millions of dollars in losses for agribusiness and led to historic contracts with the UFW. But many of the growers broke the contracts or refused to negotiate new ones. In this speech, given in San Francisco in 1984, Chávez describes the unfinished struggle of farm workers for justice.

César Chávez, Address to the Commonwealth Club of California (November 9, 1984)²

Twenty-one years ago last September, on a lonely stretch of railroad track paralleling U.S. Highway 101 near Salinas, 32 Bracero farm workers lost their lives in a tragic accident.

The Braceros had been imported from Mexico to work on California farms. They died when their bus, which was converted from a flatbed truck, drove in front of a freight train. Conversion of the bus had not been approved by any government agency. The driver had "tunnel" vision. Most of the bodies lay unidentified for days. No one, including the grower who employed the workers, even knew their names.

Today, thousands of farm workers live under savage conditions—beneath trees and amid garbage and human excrement—near tomato fields in San Diego County, tomato fields which use the most modern farm technology. Vicious rats crawl on them as they sleep. They walk miles to buy food at inflated prices. And they carry in water from irrigation pumps.

Child labor is still common in many farm areas. As much as 30 percent of Western California's garlic harvesters are under-aged children. Kids as young as ten years old have voted in state-conducted union elections since they qualified as workers.

Some 800,000 under-aged children work with their families harvesting crops across America.

Babies born to migrant workers suffer 25 percent higher infant mortality than the rest of the population.

Malnutrition among migrant worker children is 10 times higher than the national rate.

Farm workers' average life expectancy is still 49 years—compared to 73 years for the average American.

All my life, I have been driven by one dream, one goal, one vision: To overthrow a farm labor system in this nation which treats farm workers as if they were not important human beings. Farm workers are not agricultural implements. They are not beasts of burden—to be used and discarded. That dream was born in my youth. It was nurtured in my early days of organizing. It has flourished. It has been attacked.

I'm not very different from anyone else who has ever tried to accomplish something with his life. My motivation comes from my personal life—from watching what my mother and father went through when I was growing up; from what we experienced as migrant farm workers in California.

That dream, that vision, grew from my own experience with racism, with hope, with the desire to be treated fairly and to see my people treated as human beings and not as chattel. It grew from anger and rage—emotions I felt 40 years ago when people of my color were denied the right to see a movie or eat at a restaurant in many parts of California. It grew from the frustration and humiliation I felt as a boy who couldn't understand how the growers could abuse and exploit farm workers when there were so many of us and so few of them.

Later, in the '50s, I experienced a different kind of exploitation. In San Jose, in Los Angeles and in other urban communities, we—the Mexican American people—were dominated by a majority that was Anglo. I began to realize what other minority people had discovered: That the only answer—the only hope—was in organizing.

More of us had to become citizens. We had to register to vote. And people like me had to develop the skills it would take to organize, to educate, to help empower the Chicano people.

I spent many years—before we founded the union—learning how to work with people.

We experienced some successes in voter registration, in politics, in battling racial discrimination—successes in an era when Black Americans were just beginning to assert their civil rights and when political awareness among Hispanics was almost non-existent. But deep in my heart, I knew I could never be happy unless I tried organizing the farm workers. I didn't know if I would succeed. But I had to try.

All Hispanics—urban and rural, young and old—are connected to the farm workers' experience. We had all lived through the fields—or our parents had. We shared that common humiliation. How could we progress as a people, even if we lived in the cities, while the farm workers—men and women of our color—were condemned to a life without pride? How could we progress as a people while the farm workers—who symbolized our history in this land—were denied self-respect? How could our people believe that their children could become lawyers and doctors and judges and business people while this shame, this injustice was permitted to continue?

Those who attack our union often say, "It's not really a union. It's something else: A social movement. A civil rights movement. It's something dangerous." They're half right.

The United Farm Workers is first and foremost a union. A union like any other. A union that either produces for its members on the bread and butter issues or doesn't survive. But the UFW has always been something more than a union—though it's never been dangerous if you believe in the Bill of Rights. The UFW was the beginning! We attacked that historical source of shame and infamy that our people in this country lived with. We attacked that injustice, not by complaining; not by seeking hand-outs; not by becoming soldiers in the War on Poverty. We organized!

Farm workers acknowledged we had allowed ourselves to become victims in a democratic society—a society where majority rule and collective bargaining are supposed to be more than academic theories or political rhetoric. And by addressing this historical problem, we created confidence and pride and hope in an entire people's ability to create the future.

The UFW's survival—its existence—was not in doubt in my mind when the time began to come—after the union became visible—when Chicanos started entering college in greater numbers, when Hispanics began running for public office in greater numbers—when our people started asserting their rights on a broad range of issues and in many communities across the country.

The union's survival—its very existence—sent out a signal to all Hispanics: That we were fighting for our dignity.

That we were challenging and overcoming injustice,

That we were empowering the least educated among us—the poorest among us. The message was clear: If it could happen in the fields, it could happen anywhere—in the cities, in the courts, in the city councils, in the state legislatures.

I didn't really appreciate it at the time, but the coming of our union signaled the start of great changes among Hispanics that are only now beginning to be seen. I've traveled to every part of this nation. I have met and spoken with thousands of Hispanics from every walk of life—from every social and economic class.

One thing I hear most often from Hispanics, regardless of age or position—and from many non-Hispanics as well—is that the farm workers gave them hope that they could succeed and the inspiration to work for change.

From time to time you will hear our opponents declare that the union is weak, that the union has no support, that the union has not grown fast enough. Our obituary has been written many times. How ironic it is that the same forces which argue so passionately that the union is not influential are the same forces that continue to fight us so hard.

The union's power in agriculture has nothing to do with the number of farm workers under union contract.

It has nothing to do with the farm workers' ability to contribute to Democratic politicians.

It doesn't even have much to do with our ability to conduct successful boycotts. The very fact of our existence forces an entire industry—unionized and non-unionized—to spend millions of dollars year after year on improved wages, on improved working conditions, on benefits for workers. If we're so weak and unsuccessful, why do the growers continue to fight us with such passion? Because so long as we continue to exist, farm workers will benefit from our existence—even if they don't work under union contract.

It doesn't really matter whether we have 100,000 members or 500,000 members. In truth, hundreds of thousands of farm workers in California—and in other states—are better off today because of our work. And Hispanics across California and the nation who don't work in agriculture are better off today because of what the farm workers taught people about organization, about pride and strength about seizing control over their own lives.

Tens of thousands of the children and grandchildren of farm workers—and the children and grandchildren of poor Hispanics—are moving out of the fields and out of the barrios and into the professions and into business and into politics. And that movement cannot be reversed!

Our union will forever exist as an empowering force among Chicanos in the Southwest. And that means our power and our influence will grow and not diminish.

Two major trends give us hope and encouragement:

First, our union has returned to a tried and tested weapon in the farm workers' non-violent arsenal—the boycott! After the Agricultural Labor Relations Act became law in California in 1975, we dismantled our boycott to work with the law.

During the early- and mid-'70s, millions of Americans supported our boycotts. After 1975, we redirected our efforts from the boycott to organizing and winning elections under the law. The law helped farm workers make progress in overcoming poverty and injustice.

At companies where farm workers are protected by union contracts, we have made progress in overcoming child labor, in overcoming miserable wages and working conditions, in overcoming sexual harassment of women workers, in overcoming dangerous pesticides which poison our people and poison the food we all eat. Where we have organized, these injustices soon pass into history.

But under Republican Governor George Deukmejian, the law that guarantees our right to organize no longer protects farm workers—it doesn't work anymore! In 1982 corporate growers gave Deukmejian one million dollars to run for governor of California. Since he took office, Deukmejian has paid back his debt to the growers with the blood and sweat of California farm workers. Instead of enforcing the law as it was written against those who break it, Deukmejian invites growers who break the law to seek relief from the governor's appointees.

What does all this mean for farm workers?

It means that the right to vote in free elections is a sham!

It means that the right to talk freely about the union among your fellow workers on the job is a cruel hoax!

It means the right to be free from threats and intimidation by growers is an empty promise!

It means the right to sit down and negotiate with your employer as equals across the bargaining table—and not as peons in the field—is a fraud!

It means that thousands of farm workers—who are owed millions of dollars in back pay because their employers broke the law—are still waiting for their checks.

It means that 36,000 farm workers—who voted to be represented by the United Farm Workers in free elections—are still waiting for contracts from growers who refuse to bargain in good faith.

It means that, for farm workers, child labor will continue.

It means that infant mortality will continue.

It means malnutrition among our children will continue.

It means the short life expectancy and the inhuman living and working conditions will continue.

Are these make-believe threats? Are they exaggerations?

Ask the farm workers who are still waiting for growers to bargain in good faith and sign contracts!

Ask the farm workers who've been fired from their jobs because they spoke out for the union!

Ask the farm workers who've been threatened with physical violence because they support the UFW!

Ask the family of René Lopez, the young farm worker from Fresno who was shot to death last year because he supported the union. . . .

History and inevitability are on our side. The farm workers and their chil-

dren—and the Hispanics and their children—are the future in California. And corporate growers are the past!

Those politicians who ally themselves with the corporate growers and against the farm workers and the Hispanics are in for a big surprise.

They want to make their careers in politics. They want to hold power 20 and 30 years from now.

But 20 and 30 years from now—in Modesto, in Salinas, in Fresno, in Bakersfield, in the Imperial Valley, and in many of the great cities of California—those communities will be dominated by farm workers and not by growers, by the children and grandchildren of farm workers and not by the children and grandchildren of growers.

These trends are part of the forces of history that cannot be stopped! No person and no organization can resist them for very long. They are inevitable! Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed.

You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.

Our opponents must understand that it's not just a union we have built. Unions, like other institutions, can come and go. But we're more than an institution. For nearly 20 years, our union has been on the cutting edge of a people's cause—and you cannot do away with an entire people; you cannot stamp out a people's cause.

Regardless of what the future holds for the union, regardless of what the future holds for farm workers, our accomplishments cannot be undone! "La Causa"—our cause—doesn't have to be experienced twice. The consciousness and pride that were raised by our union are alive and thriving inside millions of young Hispanics who will never work on a farm!

Like the other immigrant groups, the day will come when we win the economic and political rewards which are in keeping with our numbers in society. The day will come when the politicians do the right thing by our people out of political necessity and not out of charity or idealism.

That day may not come this year.

That day may not come during this decade.

But it will come, someday!

And when that day comes, we shall see the fulfillment of that passage from the Book of Matthew in the New Testament, "That the last shall be first and the first shall be last."

And on that day, our nation shall fulfill its creed—and that fulfillment shall enrich us all.

• • •

Since its takeover of Puerto Rico in 1898, the U.S. government has treated it as a colony, using its land for military purposes whenever it wanted. The Puerto Rican islands of Culebra and Vieques were used for bombing practice, uprooting people from their homes, mutilating the countryside, causing a number of deaths. A long campaign of protest finally ended the bombing practice in Culebra in 1975, although residents complain that the toxic waste from the years of misuse still has not been cleaned up. Activists carried out a similar struggle on Vieques, as described in the following statement by a Vieques school teacher in 1979. The speaker, Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz, who had organized one of the first protests in Vieques against the U.S. military in 1964, was arrested after giving the address. In 1999, a Navy bomb killed a civilian guard on Vieques, David Sanes. Four years later, in 2003, the movement to free Vieques finally forced the U.S. military to end its use of the island for military practice.

Testimony of Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz on Vieques, Puerto Rico (October 2, 1979)³

My name is Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz. I am thirty-five years old. All my life I have lived in Vieques. For the past thirteen years I have been a high school teacher in the public school system of Vieques.

Many years ago, I began to fight for the right of my Viequense brothers to live in peace. Since 1978 I have been one of the directors of the Crusade to Rescue Vieques. This organization, that includes Viequenses of diverse political ideologies, religious philosophies, and various social positions, have carried on their shoulders the responsibility to unite in order to be most effective in our struggle against the U.S. Navy. When I speak of the struggle against the U.S. navy in Vieques, and what the presence of this armed force represents on our land, I am speaking of something concrete.

The violation of our land by the U.S. Navy began before I was even born. When I was born, La Isla Nena was already physically occupied and divided by this navy that today presumes to bring us here as the accused.

Today, I come here not as the accused, I come as the accuser. I accuse the U.S. Navy and the court of the U.S. in Puerto Rico, of conspiring to commit against all Viequenses, one of the greatest abuses ever brought against a people in our America.

I am not exaggerating. I accuse the U.S. Navy and its legal arm, the federal court, of expropriating and throwing into the street, thousands of human beings

1. **WOMEN'S LIBERATION:** summarizing earlier statements, 1) they are our closest ally; we must try hard to get together with them. 2) a lesbian caucus is probably the best way to attack gay guys' male chauvinism, and challenge the straightness of women's liberation; 3) as males we must be sensitive to their developing identities as women, and respect that; if we know what *our* freedom is about, *they* certainly know what's best for *them*.

2. **BLACK LIBERATION:** This is tenuous right now because of the uptightness and supermasculinity of many black men (which is understandable). Despite that, we must support their movement, particularly when they are under attack from the establishment; we must show them that we mean business; and we must figure out which our common enemies are: police, city hall, capitalism.

3. **CHICANOS:** Basically the same problem as with blacks: trying to overcome mutual animosity and fear, and finding ways to support them. The extra problem of super up-tightness and machismo among Latin cultures, and the traditional pattern of Mexicans beating up "queers" can be overcome: we're both oppressed, and by the same people at the top.

4. **WHITE RADICALS AND IDEOLOGUES:** We can look forward to coalition and mutual support with radical groups if they are able to transcend their anti-gay and male chauvinist patterns. We support radical and militant demands when they arise, e.g. Moratorium, People's Park; but only as a group; we can't compromise or soft-peddle our gay identity . . .

5. **HIP AND STREET-PEOPLE:** A major dynamic of rising gay lib sentiment is the hip revolution within the gay community. Emphasis on love, dropping out, being honest, expressing yourself through hair and clothes, and smoking dope are all attributes of this. The gays who are the least vulnerable to attack by the establishment have been the freest to express themselves on gay liberation . . .

6. **HOMOPHILE GROUPS:** 1) reformist or pokey as they sometimes are, they are our brothers. They'll grow as we have grown and grow. Do not attack them in straight or mixed company. 2) ignore their attack on us. 3) cooperate where cooperation is possible without essential compromise of our identity.

Conclusion: An Outline of Imperatives for Gay Liberation

1. Free ourselves: come out everywhere; initiate self defense and political activity; initiate counter community institutions.
2. Turn other gay people on: talk all the time; understand, forgive, accept.
3. Free the homosexual in everyone: we'll be getting a good bit of shit from threatened latents: be gentle, and keep talking & acting free.
4. We've been playing an act for a long time, so we're consummate actors. Now we can begin to *be*, and it'll be a good show!

HUEY P. NEWTON

The Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements

1970

"We saw the maleness . . . pushing us to walls" writes the African American poet Gwendolyn Brooks in "Malcolm X" (1968). Brooks's description of uber-masculinity typified representations of both Malcolm and the Black Panther Party (BPP)—termed supermasculine by Carl Wittman in his manifesto "Refugees from Amerika" (1970). Some called the BPP a cult of black masculinity and black power an assertion of patriarchy. The lesbian poet Audre Lorde later observed: "The existence of Black lesbian and gay people was not even allowed to cross the public consciousness of Black America."

In the early 1970s, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was keen to align itself with revolutionary movements. It confronted in some black liberationists a racial machismo that had mutated into a homophobic hostility to coalition. Journalists for *GAY*, America's first gay weekly newspaper, protested H. Rap Brown's use of the word "faggot" and Eldridge Cleaver's statement that "Homosexuality is a sickness." But GLF members persisted with coalition building. Some spoke in support of the Panther 21 in May 1970, Jim Fouratt telling the crowd, "We call upon every radical here today to Off the word faggot . . . there will only be a revolution when all oppressed people work together." In August 1970, the BPP leader Huey Newton (1942–1989) announced in the letter reprinted here that he was willing to work with the gay liberation and women's movements toward common revolutionary goals. He invited GLF members to attend the BPP's Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention of September 1970.

The GLF and the Gay Activist Alliance went on to form affiliated groups for African Americans. Lesbians were prominent in the black feminist group Combahee River Collective, which described in 1977 the "interlocking" system of "racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression." The National Coalition of Black Gays was founded in 1978, and the first Black Lesbian and Gay Pride March took place in 1991. Black gay activists still take inspiration from Newton's letter as well as from James Baldwin's 1985 statement: "We are all androgynous . . . each of us, helplessly and forever, contains the other—male in female, female in male, white in black and black in white. We are a part of each other."

Further reading: Keith Boykin, *One More River* (1996); bell hooks, *We real cool* (2004).

During the past few years strong movements have developed among women and among homosexuals seeking their liberation. There has been some uncertainty about how to relate to these movements.

IV. On Oppression

... A lot of 'movement' types come on with a line of shit about homosexuals not being oppressed as much as blacks or Vietnamese or workers or women. We don't happen to fit into their ideas of class or caste. Bull! When people feel oppressed, they act on that feeling. We feel oppressed. Talk about the priority of black liberation or ending imperialism over and above gay liberation is just anti-gay propaganda.

1. **PHYSICAL ATTACKS:** We are attacked, beaten, castrated and left dead time and time again. There are half a dozen known unsolved slayings in San Francisco parks in the last few years. "Punks," often of minority groups who look around for someone under them socially, feel encouraged to beat up on "queens" and cops look the other way. That used to be called lynching...

2. **PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE:** Right from the beginning we have been subjected to a barrage of straight propaganda. Since our parents don't know any homosexuals, we grow up thinking that we are alone and different and perverted. Our school friends identify 'queer' with any non-conformist or bad behavior. Our elementary school teachers tell us not to talk to strangers or accept rides. Television, billboards and magazines put forth a false idealization of male/female relationships, and make us wish we were different, wish we were 'in.' In family living class we're taught how we're supposed to turn out. And all along, the best we hear if anything about homosexuality is that it's an unfortunate problem.

3. **SELF-OPPRESSION:** As gay liberation grows, we will find our uptight brothers and sisters, particularly those who are making a buck off our ghetto, coming on strong to defend the status quo. This is self oppression: 'don't rock the boat'; 'things in SF are OK'; 'gay people just aren't together'; 'I'm not oppressed.' These lines are right out of the mouths of the straight establishment. A large part of our oppression would end if we would stop putting ourselves and our pride down.

4. **INSTITUTIONAL:** Discrimination against gays is blatant, if we open our eyes. Homosexual relationships are illegal, and even if these laws are not regularly enforced, they encourage and enforce closet queerness. The bulk of the social work psychiatric field looks upon homosexuality as a problem, and treats us as sick. Employers let it be known that our skills are acceptable as long as our sexuality is hidden. Big business and government are particularly notorious offenders.

The discrimination in the draft and armed services is a pillar of the general attitude towards gays... Hell, no, we won't go, of course not, but we can't let the army fuck us over this way, either.

V. On Sex

... I like to think of good sex in terms of playing the violin: with both people on one level seeing the other body as an object capable of creating beauty when they play it well; and on a second level the players communicating through their mutual production and appreciation of beauty. As in good music, you get totally into it—and coming back out of that state of consciousness is like finishing a work of art or coming back from an episode of an acid or mesaline trip. And to press the analogy further: the variety of music is infinite and varied, depending on the capabilities of the players, both as subjects and as objects. Solos, duets, quartets (symphonies, even, if you happen to dig Romantic music!) are possible. The variations in gender, response, and bodies are like different instruments. And perhaps what we have called sexual 'orientation' probably just means that we have not yet learned to turn on to the total range of musical expression...

VI. On Our Ghetto

We are refugees from Amerika. So we came to the ghetto—and as other ghettos, it has its negative and positive aspects. Refugee camps are better than what preceded them, or people never would have come. But they are still enslaving, if only that we are limited to being ourselves there and only there.

Ghettos breed self-hatred. We stagnate here, accepting the status quo. The status quo is rotten. We are all warped by our oppression, and in the isolation of the ghetto we blame ourselves rather than our oppressors... Our ghetto certainly is more beautiful and larger and more diverse than most ghettos, and is certainly freer than the rest of Amerika. That's why we're here. But it isn't ours. Capitalists make money off of us, cops patrol us, government tolerates us as long as we shut up, and daily we work for and pay taxes to those who oppress us.

To be a free territory, we must govern ourselves, set up our own institutions, defend ourselves, and use our own energies to improve our lives. The emergence of gay liberation communes, and our own paper is a good start. The talk about gay liberation coffee shop/dance hall should be acted upon. Rural retreats, political action offices, food cooperatives, a free school, unalienating bars and after hours places—they must be developed if we are to have even the shadow of a free territory.

VII. On Coalition

... face it: we can't change Amerika alone: Who do we look to for collaboration?

straight or non-straight. Also, many gays got turned off to the ways men are supposed to act with women and vice-versa, which is pretty fucked-up. Gays will begin to turn on to women when 1) it's something that we do because we want to, and not because we should, and 2) when women's liberation changes the nature of heterosexual relationships . . .

3. **HETEROSEXUALITY:** Exclusive heterosexuality is fucked up. It reflects a fear of people of the same sex, it's anti-homosexual, and it is fraught with frustration. Heterosexual sex is fucked up too; ask women's liberation about what straight guys are like in bed. Sex is aggression for the male chauvinist; sex is obligation for the traditional woman . . .

II. On Women

1. **LESBIANISM:** It's been a male-dominated society for too long, and that has warped both men and women. So gay women are going to see things differently from gay men; they are going to feel put down as women, too. Their liberation is tied up with both gay liberation and women's liberation . . .

2. **MALE CHAUVINISM:** All men are infected with male chauvinism—we were brought up that way. It means we assume that women play subordinate roles and are less human than ourselves. (At an early gay liberation meeting one guy said, "Why don't we invite women's liberation—they can bring sandwiches and coffee.") It is no wonder that so few gay women have become active in our groups.

Male chauvinism, however, is not central to us. We can junk it much more easily than straight men can. For we understand oppression. We have largely opted out of a system which oppresses women daily—our egos are not built on putting women down and having them build us up. Also, living in a mostly male world we have become used to playing different roles, doing our own shit-work. And finally, we have a common enemy: the big male chauvinists are also the big anti-gays.

But we need to purge male chauvinism, both in behavior and in thought among us. Chick equals nigger equals queer. Think it over.

3. **WOMEN'S LIBERATION:** They are assuming their equality and dignity and in doing so are challenging the same things we are: the roles, the exploitation of minorities by capitalism, the arrogant smugness of straight white male middle-class Amerika. They are our sisters in struggle . . . We must come to know and understand each other's style, jargon and humor.

III. On Roles

1. **MIMICRY OF STRAIGHT SOCIETY:** We are children of straight society. We still think straight: that is part of our oppression. One of the worst of straight

concepts is inequality. Straight (also white, English, male, capitalist) thinking views things in terms of order and comparison. A is before B, B is after A; one is below two is below three; there is no room for equality. This idea gets extended to male/female, on top/on bottom, spouse/not spouse, heterosexual/homosexual, boss/worker, white/black and rich/poor. Our social institutions cause and reflect this verbal hierarchy. This is Amerika.

We've lived in these institutions all our lives. Naturally we mimic the roles. For too long we mimicked these roles to protect ourselves—a survival mechanism. Now we are becoming free enough to shed the roles which we've picked up from the institutions which have imprisoned us. "*Stop mimicking straights, stop censoring ourselves.*"

2. **MARRIAGE:** Marriage is a prime example of a straight institution fraught with role playing. Traditional marriage is a rotten, oppressive institution . . . Gay people must stop gauging their self-respect by how well they mimic straight marriages . . . To accept that happiness comes through finding a groovy spouse and settling down, showing the world that "we're just the same as you" is avoiding the real issues, and is an expression of self-hatred.

3. **ALTERNATIVES TO MARRIAGE:** People want to get married for lots of good reasons, although marriage won't often meet those needs or desires. We're all looking for security, a flow of love, and a feeling of belonging and being needed.

These needs can be met through a number of social relationships and living situations. Things we want to get away from are: 1. exclusiveness, propertied attitudes toward each other, a mutual pact against the rest of the world; 2. promises about the future, which we have no right to make and which prevent us from, or make us feel guilty about, growing; 3. inflexible roles, roles which do not reflect us at the moment but are inherited through mimicry and inability to define equalitarian relationships.

We have to define for ourselves a new pluralistic, role-free social structure for ourselves . . .

4. **GAY 'STEREOTYPES':** The straight's image of the gay world is defined largely by those of us who have violated straight roles. There is a tendency among 'homophile' groups to deplore gays who play visible roles—the queens and the nellys. As liberated gays, we must take a clear stand. 1) Gays who stand out have become our first martyrs. They came out and withstood disapproval before the rest of us did. 2) If they have suffered from being open, it is straight society whom we must indict, not the queen.

5. **CLOSET QUEENS:** This phrase is becoming analogous to 'Uncle Tom.' To pretend to be straight sexually, or to pretend to be straight socially, is probably the most harmful pattern of behavior in the ghetto . . . If we are liberated we are open with our sexuality. Closet queenery must end. *Come out. . .*

CARL WITTMAN

From Refugees from Amerika:

A Gay Manifesto

1969

If the gay liberation movement began on the East Coast with the Stonewall riots, it began on the West Coast with the publication of "Refugees from Amerika." Carl Wittman (1943–1986) was an antiwar and civil rights activist, previously the national secretary of Students for a Democratic Society. His influential manifesto links the gay rights struggle to other protest movements and acknowledges the inspiration of civil rights activism. He examines the daily realities of gay childhood and adulthood and instructs gay people to end self-oppression and begin self-determination.

Written before Stonewall, though not published until later, "Refugees from Amerika" grew out of numerous discussions and meetings on gay rights. Wittman wrote it for gay people, to continue discussion, also hoping that straight people might read it and understand. He notes that San Francisco was a refugee camp, a self-protective ghetto that bred self-hatred and exploitation, and offers a vision of a free, self-governed territory. The idea of a free territory was as popular within the gay liberation movement as it was among black radicals: L. Craig Schoonmaker, the leader of Homosexuals Intransigent!, suggested migration to certain city neighborhoods and the takeover of election districts to create gay majorities; and the activist Don Jackson wanted to take over Alpine County, in California, and turn it into a "Stonewall Nation."

"Refugees from Amerika" quickly became a blueprint for gay activism, if not for a gay colony. It was taken up by the Gay Liberation Front, and one Marxist group, The Red Buttefly, responded to Wittman's manifesto by quoting Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*: "Today the fight for Eros, the fight for life, is the political fight." The personal was now political. Wittman had painted the art of the possible. A line from Gwendolyn Brooks's poem "In Montgomery" (1971) aptly describes his manifesto's power: "To make a might of a movement you need a Resolution."

Further reading: John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics* (1983); Jeffrey Escoffier, *American Homo* (1998).

San Francisco is a refugee camp for homosexuals. We have fled here from every part of the nation, and like refugees elsewhere, we came not because it is so great here, but because it was so bad there. By the tens of thousands, we fled small towns where to be ourselves would endanger our jobs and any hope of a

decent life; we have fled from blackmailing cops, from families who disowned or 'tolerated' us; we have been drummed out of the armed services, thrown out of schools, fired from jobs, beaten by punks and policemen.

And we have formed a ghetto, out of self-protection. It is a ghetto rather than a free territory because it is still theirs. Straight cops patrol us, straight legislators govern us, straight employers keep us in line, straight money exploits us. We have pretended everything is OK, because we haven't been able to see how to change it—we've been afraid.

In the past year there has been an awakening of gay liberation ideas and energy. How it began we don't know; maybe we were inspired by black people and their freedom movement; we learned how to stop pretending from the hip revolution. Amerika in all its ugliness has surfaced with the war and our national leaders. And we are revulsed by the quality of our ghetto life.

Where once there was frustration, alienation, and cynicism, there are new characteristics among us. We are full of love for each other and are showing it; we are full of anger at what has been done to us. And as we recall all the censorship and repression for so many years, a reservoir of tears pours out of our eyes. And we are euphoric, high, with the initial flourish of a movement . . . Our group consciousness will evolve as we get ourselves together—we are only at the beginning.

I. On Orientation

1. WHAT HOMOSEXUALITY IS: Nature leaves undefined the object of sexual desire. The gender of that object is imposed socially. Humans originally made homosexuality taboo because they needed every bit of energy to produce and raise children: survival of species was a priority. With overpopulation and technological change, that taboo continued only to exploit us and enslave us.

As kids we refused to capitulate to demands that we ignore our feelings toward each other. Somewhere we found the strength to resist being indoctrinated, and we should count that among our assets. We have to realize that our loving each other is a good thing, not an unfortunate thing, and that we have a lot to teach straights about sex, love, strength, and resistance.

Homosexuality is *not* a lot of things. It is not a makeshift in the absence of the opposite sex; it is not a hatred or rejection of the opposite sex; it is not genetic; it is not the result of broken homes except inasmuch as we could see the sham of American marriage. *Homosexuality is the capacity to love someone of the same sex.*

2. BISEXUALITY: Bisexuality is good; it is the capacity to love people of either sex. The reason so few of us are bisexual is because society made such a big stink about homosexuality that we got forced into seeing ourselves as either

their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness. Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged because of sex, race, color, creed or national origin" . . . I am hopeful that our decision will be accepted by those thoughtful citizens who believe that same-sex unions should not be approved by the State. I am not referring here to acceptance in the sense of grudging acknowledgment of the court's authority to adjudicate the matter. My hope is more liberating. The plaintiffs are members of our community, our neighbors, our coworkers, our friends. As pointed out by the court, their professions include investment advisor, computer engineer, teacher, therapist, and lawyer. The plaintiffs volunteer in our schools, worship beside us in our religious houses, and have children who play with our children, to mention just a few ordinary daily contacts. We share a common humanity and participate together in the social contract that is the foundation of our Commonwealth. Simple principles of decency dictate that we extend to the plaintiffs, and to their new status, full acceptance, tolerance, and respect. We should do so because it is the right thing to do. The union of two people contemplated by G.L.c. 207 "is a coming together for better or for worse, hopefully enduring, and intimate to the degree of being sacred. It is an association that promotes a way of life, not causes; a harmony in living, not political faiths; a bilateral loyalty, not commercial or social projects. Yet it is an association for as noble a purpose as any involved in our prior decisions." *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479, 486 (1965). Because of the terms of art. 1, the plaintiffs will no longer be excluded from that association.



FROM SAIGON

TO

BAGHDAD

The Vietnam War
and Beyond

class citizens. In reaching our conclusion we have given full deference to the arguments made by the Commonwealth. But it has failed to identify any constitutionally adequate reason for denying civil marriage to same-sex couples . . . Barred access to the protections, benefits, and obligations of civil marriage, a person who enters into an intimate, exclusive union with another of the same sex is arbitrarily deprived of membership in one of our community's most rewarding and cherished institutions. That exclusion is incompatible with the constitutional principles of respect for individual autonomy and equality under law . . . For decades, indeed centuries, in much of this country (including Massachusetts) no lawful marriage was possible between white and black Americans. That long history availed not when the Supreme Court of California held in 1948 that a legislative prohibition against interracial marriage violated the due process and equality guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment, *Perez v. Sharp*, 32 Cal. 2d 711, 728 (1948), or when, nineteen years later, the United States Supreme Court also held that a statutory bar to interracial marriage violated the Fourteenth Amendment, *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1 (1967).^[16] As both *Perez* and *Loving* make clear, the right to marry means little if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice, subject to appropriate government restrictions in the interests of public health, safety, and welfare. See *Perez v. Sharp*, supra at 717 ("the essence of the right to marry is freedom to join in marriage with the person of one's choice"). See also *Loving v. Virginia*, supra at 12. In this case, as in *Perez* and *Loving*, a statute deprives individuals of access to an institution of fundamental legal, personal, and social significance—the institution of marriage—because of a single trait: skin color in *Perez* and *Loving*, sexual orientation here. As it did in *Perez* and *Loving*, history must yield to a more fully developed understanding of the invidious quality of the discrimination . . . In their complaint the plaintiffs request only a declaration that their exclusion and the exclusion of other qualified same-sex couples from access to civil marriage violates Massachusetts law. We declare that barring an individual from the protections, benefits, and obligations of civil marriage solely because that person would marry a person of the same sex violates the Massachusetts Constitution.

GREANEY, J. (concurring). I agree with the result reached by the court, the remedy ordered, and much of the reasoning in the court's opinion. In my view, however, the case is more directly resolved using traditional equal protection analysis. (a) Article 1 of the Declaration of Rights, as amended by art. 106 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution, provides: "All people are born free and equal and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending

Goodridge v. Department of Public Health

2003

In 1989 Thomas Stoddard predicted that gay people would "earn the right" to marry "sooner than most of us imagine." He cited the economic and practical advantages of legal marriage, and explained that the issue was not the desirability of marriage, but rather the *right* to marry. The same year Paula Ettelbrick protested the idea of "emphasizing our sameness to married heterosexuals in order to obtain this 'right.'"¹⁶ It meant "mimicking all that is bad about the institution of marriage in our effort to appear to be the same," and would outlaw gay and lesbian sex outside of marriage. There would still be a "two-tier system of the 'haves' and the 'have nots.'"¹⁷ In 1999 Michael Warner called the desire for legal same-sex marriage a "false consciousness," the same force in history that meant "young men have marched gaily off to be slaughtered on behalf of deities and nations."¹⁸

This debate came to a head in November 2003, when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rejected the Commonwealth's claim that the primary purpose of marriage was procreation and held that a ban on same-sex marriage violated the Massachusetts Constitution, which forbids the creation of second-class citizens. The court order went into effect in May 2004. Hundreds of couples were legally married in Massachusetts, and the ruling set off legal battles across the country. But some activists have been surprised by the focus on same-sex marriage, calling it a far less urgent issue than AIDS or homophobic violence. Less divisive within the activist community was another high-profile case of 2003 (*Lawrence v. Texas*), this time addressing the issue of sodomy. In 1998 two men were charged with violating Texas's anti-sodomy statute, and in 2002 they filed a petition with the Supreme Court. The statute was struck down, and the decision invalidated similar sodomy laws across the United States.

MARSHALL, C. J. Marriage is a vital social institution. The exclusive commitment of two individuals to each other nurtures love and mutual support; it brings stability to our society. For those who choose to marry, and for their children, marriage provides an abundance of legal, financial, and social benefits. In return it imposes weighty legal, financial, and social obligations. The question before us is whether, consistent with the Massachusetts Constitution, the Commonwealth may deny the protections, benefits, and obligations conferred by civil marriage to two individuals of the same sex who wish to marry. We conclude that it may not. The Massachusetts Constitution affirms the dignity and equality of all individuals. It forbids the creation of second-

ern is a Mafioso-on-the-job training school for dum-dum hoods. It is just such grievances as these which have sparked the revolutionary movements of history.

Through mutual respect, action, and education COME OUT hopes to unify both the homosexual community and other oppressed groups into a cohesive body of people who do not find the enemy in each other.

We will not be gay bourgeoisie, searching for the sterile "American Dream" of the ivy-covered cottage and the good corporation job, but neither will we tolerate the exclusion of homosexuals from any area of American life.

Because our oppression is based on sex and the sex roles which oppress us from infancy, we must explore these roles and their meanings. We must recognize and make others recognize that being homosexual says only one thing: emotionally you prefer your own sex. It says nothing about your worth, your value as a human being. Does society make a place for us . . . as a man? A woman? A homosexual or lesbian? How does the family structure effect us? What is sex? What does it mean? What is love? As homosexuals, we are in a unique position to examine these questions from a fresh point of view. You'd better believe we are going to do so—that we are going to transform the society at large through the open realization of our own consciousness.

Item in *San Francisco Free Press*

IN THE STREETS FOR THE REVOLUTION. Nothing is more pathetic as a Black who denies his culture and tries to pass for white . . . unless it's one of our Gay brothers who denies his Gayness to get along in the straight plastic culture. Both have become less than men and sunk to the level of imitations. Luckily for the souls of Black folk they have awakened to their beauty and cultural integrity in time. Luckily, also, for the Blacks, racial differences make passing difficult. Unluckily for us passing is the easiest thing in the world. . . . We have had confrontations with all kinds of Auntie Toms who are comfortable living half lives as imitation men and sucking up to the Almighty Dollar to make up for the parts of their lives that are missing. We have seen the effect of years of oppression—poor, tired, sickly imitation men and women who would continue their own oppression and the oppression of their brothers and sisters. We've seen the society in which we live . . . We will build the new society in the streets, not by giving up on our brothers and sisters who have accepted their oppression, but by continuing to hammer at the chains that bind all of us. The new world will be built by new people who are in the open, free of chains; by proud men and women of all colors . . . by men and women who know love and live it. And it begins in the streets.

Editorial in *Homosexual Renaissance*

Homosexuals can effectively demand respect from others only if we first respect ourselves—as homosexuals. That requires that we admit to ourselves that we are homosexual . . . Say it! aloud: "I am homosexual." Shout it, whisper it. Laugh it, cry it. State it, proclaim it, confess it in sobs, but say it: "I am homosexual." Say it today, say it tomorrow, say it the day after that. Say it when you wake up, when you go to bed, when you find yourself thinking of someone of your own sex. Say it as often as you need to until you realize that it is true and that the fact that it is true forces you to adjust your attitudes and actions to make the very best of your life as a homosexual. "I am homosexual." Not "Leonardo da Vinci was homosexual," but "I am homosexual." Not "Gore Vidal is homosexual," but "I am homosexual." Not "one man of every six, one woman of every eight is homosexual," but "I am homosexual." Not even "some of the finest, most beautiful, and most talented people in the world are homosexual," but "I am homosexual."

Steve Kuromiya in *Philadelphia Free Press*

We came battle-scarred and angry to topple your sexist, racist, hateful society. We came to challenge the incredible hypocrisy of your serial monogamy, your oppressive sexual role-playing, your nuclear family, your Protestant ethic, apple pie and Mother. We came to New York holding hands and kissing, openly and proudly, waving 15-foot banners and chanting 'HO-HO-HOMOSEXUAL!' In one fell swoop, we came to destroy by our mere presence your labels and stereotypes with which you've oppressed us for centuries. And we came with love and open hearts to challenge your hate and secrecy.

Gay Liberation Front Flier

DO YOU THINK HOMOSEXUALS ARE REVOLTING? YOU BET YOUR SWEET ASS WE ARE. We're going to make a place for ourselves in the revolutionary movement. We challenge the myths that are screwing up this society. MEETING: Thursday, July 24th, 6:30 PM at Alternate U, 69 West 14th Street at Sixth Avenue.

Mattachine Society Leaflet

HOMOSEXUALS ARE COMING TOGETHER AT LAST. To examine how we are oppressed and how we oppress ourselves. To fight for gay control of gay businesses. To publish our own newspaper. To these and other radical ends.

Student Homophile League Manifesto

A RADICAL MANIFESTO: THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT MUST BE RADICALIZED!

1) We see the persecution of homosexuality as part of a general attempt to oppress all minorities and keep them powerless. Our fate is linked with these minorities; if the detention camps are filled tomorrow with blacks, hippies and other radicals, we will not escape that fate, all our attempts to dissociate ourselves from them notwithstanding. A common struggle, however, will bring common triumph.

2) Therefore we declare our support as homosexuals or bisexuals for the struggles of the black, the feminist, the Spanish-American, the Indian, the Hipster, the Young, the Student, and other victims of oppression and prejudice.

3) We call upon these groups to lend us their support and encourage their presence with NACHO and the homophile movement at large.

4) Our enemies, an implacable, repressive governmental system; much of organized religion, business and medicine, will not be moved by appeasement or appeals to reason and justice, but only by power and force.

5) We regard established heterosexual standards of morality as immoral and refuse to condone them by demanding an equality which is merely the common yoke of sexual repression.

6) We declare that homosexuals, as individuals and members of the greater community, must develop homosexual ethics and esthetics independent of, and without reference to, the mores imposed upon heterosexuality.

7) We demand the removal of all restriction on sex between consenting persons of any sex, of any orientation, of any age, anywhere, whether for money or not, and for the removal of all censorship.

8) We call upon the churches to sanction homosexual liaisons when called upon to do so by the parties concerned.

9) We call upon the homophile movement to be more honestly concerned with youth rather than trying to promote a mythical, non-existent "good public image."

10) The homophile movement must totally reject the insane war in Viet Nam and refuse to encourage complicity in the war and support of the war machine, which may well be turned against us. We oppose any attempts by the movement to obtain security clearances for homosexuals, since these contribute to the war machine.

11) The homophile movement must engage in continuous political struggle on all fronts.

12) We must open the eyes of homosexuals on this continent to the increasingly repressive nature of our society and to the realizations that Chicago may await us tomorrow.

Statement and Editorial from *Come out!*

Gay Liberation Front is a revolutionary group of homosexual women and men formed with the realization that complete sexual liberation for all people cannot come about unless existing social institutions are abolished. We reject society's attempt to impose sexual roles and definitions of our nature. We are stepping outside these roles and simplistic myths. We are going to be who we are. At the same time, we are creating new social forms and relations, that is, relations based upon sisterhood, cooperation, human love and uninhibited sexuality. Babylon has forced us to commit ourselves to one thing . . . revolution.

Come out for freedom! Come out now! Power to the people! Gay power to the gay people! Come out of the closet before the door is nailed shut! COME OUT, a newspaper for the homosexual community, dedicates itself to the joy, the humor, and the dignity of the homosexual female and male. Come-out has COME OUT to fight for the freedom of the homosexual; to give voice to the rapidly growing militancy within our community; to provide a public forum for the discussion and clarification of methods and actions necessary to end our oppression. COME-OUT has COME OUT indeed for "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Make no mistake about our oppression: it is real, it is visible, it is demonstrable. In New York a homosexual is legitimate as an individual but illegitimate as a participant in a homosexual act. Hell, every homosexual and lesbian in this country survives solely by suffering, not by law or even that cold state of grace known as tolerance. Our humanity is questioned, our choice of housing is circumscribed, our employment is tenuous, our friendly neighborhood tav-

Homophile Youth Movement Flier

GET THE MAFIA AND THE COPS OUT OF GAY BARS. The nights of Friday, June 27, 1969 and Saturday, June 28, 1969 will go down in history as the first time that thousands of Homosexual men and women went out into the streets to protest the intolerable situation which has existed in New York City for many years—namely, the Mafia (or syndicate) control of this city's Gay bars in collusion with certain elements in the Police Dept. of the City of New York. The demonstrations were triggered by a Police raid on the Stonewall Inn late Friday night, June 27th. The purported reason for the raid was the Stonewall's lack of a liquor license. Who's kidding whom here? Can anybody really believe that an operation as big as the Stonewall could continue for almost three years just a few blocks from the 6th Precinct house without having a liquor license? No! The Police have known about the Stonewall operation all along. What's happened is the presence of new "brass" in 6th Precinct which has vowed to "drive the fags out of the Village."

Many of you have noticed one of the signs which the "management" of the Stonewall has placed outside stating "Legalize Gay bars and lick the problem. Judge Kenneth Keating (a former US Senator) ruled in January, 1968 that even close dancing between Homosexuals is legal. Since that date there has been nothing legal, per se, about a Gay bar. What is illegal about New York City's Gay bars today is the Mafia (or syndicate) stranglehold on them. Legitimate Gay businessmen are afraid to open decent Gay bars with a healthy social atmosphere (as opposed to the hell-hole atmosphere of places typified by the Stonewall) because of fear of pressure from the unholy alliance of the Mafia and elements in the Police Dept. who accept payoffs and protect the Mafia monopoly.

We at the Homophile Youth Movement (HYMN) believe that the only way this monopoly can be broken is through the action of Homosexual men and women themselves. We obviously cannot rely on the various agencies of government who for years have known about this situation but who have refused to do anything about it.

Therefore we urge the following: 1) That Gay businessmen step forward and open Gay bars that will be run legally with competitive pricing and a healthy social atmosphere. 2) That Homosexual men and women boycott places like the Stonewall. The only way, it seems, that we can get the criminal elements out of gay bars is simply to make it unprofitable for them. 3) That the Homosexual citizens of New York City, and concerned Heterosexuals, write to Mayor Lindsay demanding a thorough investigation and effective action to correct this intolerable situation.

Stonewall Documents

1969–1970

Allen Ginsberg stopped by Christopher Street two nights after the Stonewall riots and spoke to the activists there. "Gay power! Isn't that great!" he remarked. "It's about time we did something to assert ourselves." He told a journalist afterward, "the guys there were so beautiful—they've lost that wounded look that fags all had 10 years ago."

Stonewall was a spontaneous rebellion, not organized by any group in particular. On June 27, 1969, at around midnight, eight New York City police officers raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village. They served a warrant for selling liquor without a license, and ordered patrons to leave. Black, white, and Latino drag queens threw bricks and bottles, and the Tactical Patrol Force arrived to help the police officers. A crowd outside swelled to more than 500. Over the next few days hundreds of gays and lesbians arrived in Sheridan Square. Several factors had come together: anti-war protestors and feminists were making themselves heard; the hippie movement advocated sexual liberation; and the civil rights movement provided a model of oppressed minorities fighting back. In 1970 the activist Leo Skir observed, "This time our time had come." It was, he said, "like the black woman who wouldn't give up her bus seat . . . we're not going back to the Closet, the back-of-the-bus." And, echoing Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, Don Jackson announced in 1969: "I have a recurring daydream. I imagine a place where gay people can be free . . . freedom at last."

Homophile organizations had existed before Stonewall. But the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), which formed in the wake of the riots, was the most ambitious and radical gay rights group to date. Its members considered themselves to be to gay liberation what the Black Panthers were to black liberation, and also took inspiration from antiwar protestors. On Christmas Eve 1969, members of the New York GLF handed out a flyer in Sheridan Square: "Homosexual men and women have served willingly in every one of America's wars . . . we fought and bled and we died beside our straight brothers and sisters. [Yet we] are denied our birthright and are branded criminals for claiming the right to the self-determination of our own bodies." But the GLF meetings often featured heated arguments over the group's responsibility to other protest movements, and certain members' support of the antiwar effort and the Panthers forced a split. In December 1969, twelve New York members formed the Gay Activist Alliance, which was exclusively focused on gay liberation.

Further reading: Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (1993); Jim Kepner, *Rough News* (1998).

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving
hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an
angry fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to
the starry dynamo in the machinery of night,
who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking in
the supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating across the tops
of cities contemplating jazz,
who bared their brains to Heaven under the El and saw Mohammedan
angels staggering on tenement roofs illuminated,
who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating
Arkansas and Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war,
who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene
odes on the windows of the skull,
who cowered in unshaven rooms in underwear, burning their money
in wastebaskets and listening to the Terror through the wall,
who got busted in their pubic beards returning through Laredo with a
belt of marijuana for New York,
who ate fire in paint hotels or drank turpentine in Paradise Alley,
death, or purgatoried their torsos night after night
with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock
and endless balls,
incomparable blind streets of shuddering cloud and lightning in the
mind leaping toward poles of Canada & Paterson, illuminating all
the motionless world of Time between ...

.....
who broke down crying in white gymnasiums naked and trembling
before the machinery of other skeletons,
who bit detectives in the neck and shrieked with delight in policecars
for committing no crime but their own wild cooking pederasty and
intoxication,
who howled on their knees in the subway and were dragged off the
roof waving genitals and manuscripts,
who let themselves be fucked in the ass by saintly motorcyclists, and
screamed with joy,

who blew and were blown by those human seraphim, the sailors, ca-
resses of Atlantic and Caribbean love,
who balled in the morning in the evenings in rosegardens and the
grass of public parks and cemeteries scattering their semen freely to
whomever come who may ...

From Howl

1956

"Stonewall didn't just happen," declared the Homosexuals Intransigent! president Craig Schoonmaker in 1979. "Gay Liberation rose at Stonewall from a launch pad created 20 years earlier by men of inspiring courage who dared, in the Fifties, to speak the unspeakable." Allen Ginsberg (1926–1997) was one of those men; his long poem "Howl," which rejects rigid form and restrictive content, shattered the stifling silence of the 1950s. He first unleashed "Howl" at a gathering in San Francisco, in October 1955. When Lawrence Ferlinghetti's press, City Lights, published the poem in 1956, Ferlinghetti was brought to trial on charges of obscenity. But after a widely publicized case, the judge ruled that "Howl" was not obscene, and the way was opened for more literature of homosexual love and sex.

Halfway through Ginsberg's first reading of "Howl" in 1955, his friend and fellow Beat writer Jack Kerouac began chanting "Go! Go!"—the poem was a communal, oral event, breaking down the dichotomies of oral/written and individual/community. "Howl," like Ginsberg's own fluid sexuality and persona, also broke down dichotomies of male/female, sacred/profane, madness/sanity, mystical/everyday. Ginsberg then bridged another divide, between the 1940s–1950s Beats and the 1960s radicals: he marched for civil rights, against the Vietnam war, and with the Black Panthers.

"Howl," with its long catalogues, revises Walt Whitman's euphoric lists in *Leaves of Grass* (1855), and one passage directly echoes it. Whitman had written, "I make holy whatever I touch or am touched from," and Ginsberg writes, "The tongue and cock and hand and asshole holy!" Whitman was more than a footnote in gay history, though summoned here in Ginsberg's "Footnote" to "Howl." Ginsberg later made the same observation of Whitman that activists made of Ginsberg: "Whitman opened up a lot of political space, simply by changing poetry from a very fixed and classical form, to an open form that anybody could participate in." He even claimed Whitman as a lover four times removed.

Other gay liberationists looked back to Whitman, claiming him as a prophet of gay rights, and his poems were read aloud at Gay Liberation Front meetings in the early 1970s. Whitman's promise, "I shall . . . filter and fibre your blood," was then resonant for AIDS protest writers: in Tony Kushner's play *Perestroika* (1991), the Angel echoes Whitman ("I stop down the road, waiting for you"), and in 1997 the activist Jack Nichols, who edited *GAY*, America's first gay weekly newspaper, from 1969 to 1973, observed, "I can hear him now, speaking in the midst of the AIDS crisis, he who once traversed bloody battlefields as a male nurse."

Further reading: Nicholas Edsall, *Toward Stonewall* (2003); Michael Schumacher, *Dharma Lion* (1994).