

Gay for Pay: The Role of Philanthropy in Upholding Homonormative Nonprofit Agendas in
LGBT Advocacy Organizations

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A misguided notion that gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender identified individuals constituted a demographic that possessed substantial wealth emerged in the early 1990s. Since this time, scholars have conducted randomized, representative research indicating that LGBT incomes are comparable to, if not lower than their heterosexual counterparts. While most LGBT organizations, both mainstream and progressive, have critiqued the myth of affluence among their communities, organizational agendas and practices often times continue to perpetuate this stereotype. These trends in giving have contributed to a problem among LGBT organizations which some have coined “homonormativity,” a term Lisa Duggan defines as “a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption” (Duggan 2003, 50).

In this project, I explore the ways in which the fundraising efforts of both mainstream and progressive LGBT organizations, constrained by a conservative philanthropic culture and national mood, have failed to challenge homonormative images and ideals. Mainstream and progressive organizations differ in ideals and strategies, which makes fundraising particularly challenging for progressive nonprofit organizations. I use examples from LGBT organizations to illustrate these challenges. In addition, shifts in political culture have created a receptive environment for LGBT income stereotypes, which come with political consequences for the LGBT movement. Some organizations have used the myth of affluence to their advantage, particularly to produce outputs that validate their work to both their constituents and potential funders, but these successes are limited in who they benefit and how. Emphasis on movement work to benefit affluent individuals both obscures progressive organizations’ work and prevents them from building both economic and social capital that could potentially grow visibility and support of their own agendas. After taking into consideration the delicate balance between missions and funding, I propose fundraising recommendations for both mainstream and radical

organizations, as well as outline tools foundations can use in supporting new philanthropic visions for social change.

Mainstream vs. Progressive Organizations

Understanding the significance of the funding gap between mainstream and progressive grassroots organizations requires a general discussion of these organizations and their methodologies for implementing social change. Though scholars have not formulated a precise definition of what constitutes a mainstream or grassroots organization, and organizations can engage in practices spanning this spectrum, these organizations are typically characterized by distinct practices and ideologies. Mainstream organizations have a strong presence in the public eye. They tend to be national in scope, and have a “top-down,” ideology in both their management and approach to social change. Such an approach assumes that oppressed individuals can achieve equality by gaining access to institutions that freely welcome the more privileged. Mainstream organizations typically rely on lobbying, legal action, and above all, the political support of powerful allies to establish laws or policies that legally guarantee specific rights to individuals who are discriminated against. Conversely, grassroots organizations typically operate at a local, community-based, or “bottom-up” level and emphasize the political power held at this level. In addition to community-based work, they may address issues of identity and interest held by specific groups of people. Finally, they tend to be less formalized than mainstream organizations and are typically volunteer run or have small staffs (Bothwell 2002). Grassroots organizations have a tendency to practice radical or progressive politics. Unlike mainstream organizations, their objective is not to redistribute rights and power within existing social institutions, but rather question the validity of these institutions and reform them

such that oppressive forces are removed. Similarly, Queer radical politics situates oppression as systematic rather than targeted, placing less emphasis on categorical oppression, and instead seeks to identify ways in which oppressions are shared, with the goal of eradicating these oppressions through systematic reform (Bernstein Sycamore 2008). Put another way, whereas a liberal approach views one's LGBT identity as the basis for LGBT oppression, Queer radical politics views LGBT oppression as a function of systems of power and privilege that disadvantage diverse groups in similar ways, and seeks to form alliances among these groups so that they can work together to dismantle the systems that collectively oppress them. As such, Queer grassroots organizations are more likely to be in touch with intersecting concerns among marginalized subgroups of LGBT individuals.

While mainstream LGBT organizations have often failed to address the intersections of racial, class, gender and other identities within the LGBT community, grassroots organizations frequently lack the training, resources or motivation necessary for seeking and securing financial resources that would help them promote a politics addressing these multiple identities. While it should be noted that mainstream organizations face many of the same problems, the financial consequences are less severe as they typically are older and better-established in terms of both social and economic capital. Lesser-known organizations, therefore, are at a disadvantage as it is difficult for them to compete with larger, mainstream organizations for public attention and resources. The increasing invisibility of progressive agendas and strategies that results from such competition is dangerous, not because grassroots strategies are necessarily superior to their mainstream counterparts, but because both "top-down" and "bottom-up" strategies are critical to the success of social movements (Kenney 2003, Kingdon 1995).

Philanthropic Trends and Tradeoffs within Nonprofit Organizations

LGBT movement work is typically funded by individuals or groups aligned with the cause, foundations seeking social change, or businesses pursuing a corporate interest. (Because LGBT movement work tends to focus on lobbying and policy change, government funding is typically not available for such activities, though government grants have funded many LGBT social service organizations.) Because funding is limited, organizations often feel pressured to respond to the demands of donors, thereby straying from their original organizational priorities. While certain giving practices are more prevalent among specific funding sources, whether they are individuals, corporations, foundations or government agencies, most donors want to ensure that they are making worthwhile investments and often seek recognition for their contributions. Donors' motives are not always in conflict with an organization's mission, but nearly any source of funding comes with both organizational benefits and drawbacks, with some more evident than others. Such tradeoffs cause many organizations to struggle to find a balance between addressing organizational goals and the priorities of their donors.

Individual Giving

Most philanthropic contributions come from individual donors. In 2006, Giving USA found that individuals constituted over 75% of philanthropic giving (Collins 2008, 20). Individual contributions can come from major donors making substantial gifts or from smaller gifts such as membership fees or event admission. Perhaps the greatest benefit to accepting contributions from individuals is the fact that they are more likely than government, corporate or foundation representatives to be close to the work an organization performs. Because they are more likely to identify with the work of an organization, individual donors are easier to attract

due to their responsiveness to organizational facts, emotional appeals, and the social networks with which an organization has ties (Lindahl 2010). However, individual contributions are not ideal in all situations. Individual donors may give because they have a personal agenda, and often give to an organization that they feel supports this agenda or because they think contributing will give them enough leverage within the organization to pursue it. Donors often contribute to organizations who embody cultures or leadership with which they can identify (Ostrower 1995), meaning organizations stand to benefit from catering to the needs and interests of affluent individuals. Similarly, individuals who can contribute or secure large sums of money are often invited to participate on nonprofit boards of directors (Ostrower 1995). Because these governing bodies control the agenda of the organization, there exists much potential for the organizational agenda to reflect the personal agendas of its board membership. Conversely, while an organization's non-elite constituency may have roles as volunteers, clients, or staff, they usually do not have the same opportunities for leadership and influence within the organization (Vaid 1995).

Corporate Philanthropy

Corporate philanthropy has been growing as nonprofit need has grown in the past few decades (Mananzala and Spade 2008). Corporate funding has some benefits over other sources, but also comes with tradeoffs. First, unlike solicitations to a large number of individuals or to foundations, the paperwork required to obtain corporate funding is often minimal. Corporate funding also typically comes with fewer restrictions than foundation money (Lindahl 2010), though due to their public images and brands, corporations are frequently reluctant to support controversial political advocacy (Chasin 2000a). Such a relaxed attitude about how money is

spent may stem from motives more aligned with product advertising than dedication to an organization's mission. Corporations always have a business motive for contributing to an organization, and want to advertise their brand to a particular demographic. It is also not uncommon for corporations to give to organizations who are polar opposites in mission and work; for example, as has been the case in the LGBT community, corporations such as Coors Brewing Company, which have contributed to organizations performing LGBT movement work have been even greater supporters of far-right, anti-gay groups, or otherwise compromise organizational principles (Mirken 2001, Roybal 2008). Sponsorships under such conditions may be an attempt to hold onto the LGBT market. LGBT organizations must first decide if they want to enter such a relationship as well as the impact their constituents' responses will have on their organization.

Corporate funds are attractive to LGBT organizations for a number of reasons. First, as the government sector increasingly shifts social services into the nonprofit sector while cutting funding for these services, service agencies are increasingly reliant on corporate grants to perform their work (Mananzala and Spade 2008). Due to the restrictions place on foundations by the Tax Reform Act of 1969, which prohibits foundation grants to for the purpose of influencing legislation or political campaigns, foundations can be weary of funding advocacy work, as the line between advocacy and political work is often blurred (Collins 2008). This caution increases nonprofit demand for corporate dollars to support their political, organizing and advocacy work. Finally, because corporate contributions are more of a marketing technique than a philanthropic investment, recipients have more flexibility in what they can do with these contributions (Chasin 2000a, 204). Conversely, though corporations are more flexible than foundations, the more political an organization's event is, the less likely it is to see corporate funding. Because

contributions are a means of marketing, corporations are fearful of public (market) backlash for supporting extreme viewpoints. For example, it is more likely that corporations will fund the Gay Games, an LGBT Olympic-like sporting event, than activities commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion as a call to action (Chasin 2000a). Corporate dollars can also bring legitimacy to a group. Corporate sponsors often proudly display their contributions to charity, bringing visibility to the groups they fund. As the public sees this support, LGBT individuals slowly become “affirmed” through this publicity (Chasin 2000a, 205). Yet, this affirmation only comes to those who can afford the commodities these corporations are selling, which likely do not represent the entire group. Corporate philanthropy can create the illusion that buying from a company that contributes to LGBT causes is in and of itself political action (Chasin 2000a), while diluting cultural critiques and distracting from other forms of political action.

Foundation Funding: Upholding the Status Quo

Many benefits come from foundation funding. In addition to increased revenue, applicants know the foundation’s mission and application process in advance, giving them a greater understanding of whether or not solicitation will be a worthwhile investment. In addition, foundations are highly networked, and once an organization establishes a good relationship with a foundation, the organization gains access to resources that can often enrich its work (Lindahl 2010). Yet, as mentioned previously, the Tax Reform Act of 1969 bans foundations from supporting work that influences legislation or political campaigns. Because the line between lobbying and advocacy is often blurred, foundations are frequently reluctant to fund advocacy projects, particularly on highly controversial issues (Collins 2008).

Overall, private foundations have not focused much of their efforts on LGBT organizations as a whole, and foundations' tendency to contribute to mainstream organizations is consistent with philanthropic trends outlined previously. Some have argued that foundation funding of LGBT organizations has increased over the years (Johnson 2007); however, while this may be true in dollar amounts, the percentages remain roughly the same. Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues reports that the percentage of all giving by private foundations in the United States awarded to LGBT organizations has remained constant between 2002 and 2006, at a mere 0.1% (Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues, 2005; 2008). In 2006, the top ten grantmakers constituted 46% of all grants made to LGBT organizations, yet five of these organizations were LGBT-focused public foundations (Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues 2008). The Movement Advancement Project found that between 2003 and 2005, nearly two-thirds of grant awards went to organizations that were national in scope, with just over a quarter of funding going to local organizations (Movement Advancement Project 2007).

Trends in foundation giving demonstrate the lack of funding for multi-issue advocacy and giving to disadvantaged or lower-class LGBT individuals. In 2006, nine percent of the total grants awarded specifically targeted people of color, and just over one percent of grant dollars specifically targeted poor LGBT people, offenders and ex-offenders, women and sex workers combined [APPENDIX A]. Between 2002 and 2006, funding for multi-strategy organizing dropped by nine percent. The highest percentage of foundation grants went to civil rights initiatives, which included family recognition and adoption, employment, and other ballot initiatives, with an additional nine percent going specifically to marriage and civil union initiatives. Funding for civil rights initiatives, which includes ballot initiatives focusing on marriage and civil unions, employment discrimination, and anti-gay ballot initiatives, was second

only to HIV/AIDS,¹ climbing from 16.7% in 2002 to 23% of funding in 2006. Conversely, the percentage of funding towards community building fell over seven percentage points between 2002 and 2006 (Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues 2005; 2008). The trends in foundation support of LGBT issues demonstrate the tendency for funders to support middle-class appeals as opposed to those that would benefit people of color, low-income individuals, and other minority groups [APPENDIX B].

Foundation practices also uphold mainstream, homonormative agendas due to their reluctance to fund any LGBT causes, much less those at an extreme end of the political spectrum. Foundations have strict definitions of what constitutes output and what kinds of activities they will fund; again, foundations will often view highly controversial and political advocacy work as risky investments. In addition, because of the social taboo of sexuality and non-normative sexuality in particular, LGBT organizations may feel a need to “normalize” their constituency in order to gain support from both funders and the public at large, a practice that mainstream organizations have more readily accepted. For these reasons, mainstream organizations are better candidates for receiving foundation funding. If these organizations use their awards wisely, particularly if they are working on an original, innovative project, this publicity can also attract new foundation and individual donors who seek credible organizations for their investments. Clearly, if progressive LGBT organizations remain out of this circle due to the nature of their work or their inability or lack of desire to produce proposals this leaves a large, untapped market for potential support.

¹ Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues did not measure funding for HIV/AIDS specifically in its 2002 study. This explains the substantial observed increase in funding towards this issue area between 2002 and 2006, and suggests that the increase in funding of civil rights initiatives holds greater significance.

Funding: A Reward for the Resourced and Networked Organization

Progressive and radical organizations have outputs that differ greatly from mainstream organizations, which causes many to struggle with securing support from individual and institutional donors. Though economic resources are only one factor in determining organizational success, smaller, younger, and unconventional organizations are at a disadvantage due to their lower probability of receiving funds. This trend widens the funding gap between mainstream and more radical, progressive organizations, which increases the public visibility of mainstream agendas and tactics, thereby exacerbating public misconceptions about what kind of people make up the LGBT community and what types of policies would most benefit them [APPENDIX C].

Because many donors have very public profiles, whether they seek to reinforce their prestige and benevolence or use their philanthropy as advertising or to establish good public relations, donors want to ensure that their money is well spent to maintain their public image (Ostrower 1995). Investing in new projects can be risky, so donors frequently opt to donate to well-established organizations that already have a strong reputation of spending money wisely (Ostrower 1995). A 2002 study by Robert Bothwell found that among 22 foundation leaders representing a mix of the most and least supportive foundations to make gifts to grassroots organizations, funders did not feel that grassroots organizations had the skills or resources necessary to manage their money. In addition, foundation leaders felt that a strong constituent base and sustainability of non-grant income were important factors in deciding whether or not to fund a grassroots organization. Respondents also considered the types of networks that supported and collaborated with a particular organization to be very important (Bothwell 2002). Since a foundation's reputation for making good philanthropic investments is a top priority for

foundation leaders, foundations and their networks share information on their grantees, both what worked well and what did not. The positive influence these relationships have in determining grant awards creates a cycle of grant-based legitimacy mentioned earlier. Of course, those who already have relationships directly with foundations or are networked to funders through ties to other organizations will excel in this area, while those who do not will find it difficult to overcome the barriers that prevent them from developing the reputations that larger, better-staffed, and/or older organizations already have. Though a logical step, this practice puts organizations that are very new or small in size (thus unable to dedicate sufficient resources to development) at a disadvantage.

The evidence supporting philanthropists' tendency to direct their dollars towards large, established organizations is staggering among LGBT organizations. According to a report released by Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues, in 2006, 46% of the total grants made to LGBT organizations was held by 10 of the largest and most well-known LGBT organizations located in New York, California, and the District of Columbia (Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues 2008, 8). In terms of budgets, 80% of movement resources are concentrated again among 10 LGBT organizations (Movement Advancement Project 2007, 37), with six organizations overlapping both lists. Such a concentration of resources is particularly problematic for new organizations with agenda items or approaches to addressing LGBT inequalities that differ from mainstream organizations. Research has shown that LGBT organizations, from small local organizations to large mainstream ones, have received most of their funding from individual donors (Movement Advancement Project 2007), yet, as has been the trend among philanthropic giving, LGBT identified donors reported that they are more likely to give to organizations that are older and have a track record of wise spending (Working Group on Funding Lesbian and Gay Issues 1998).

Of course, an organization's size and visibility are not the only things philanthropists consider when contributing to an organization; an organization's ability to prove that it will use financial gifts wisely is equally important. One way philanthropists predict good investments is through an organization's logic model, a fundraising tool which outlines how an organization will use financial capital to produce outputs that bring an organization closer to its goals (Kellogg Foundation 2004). Yet, the logic model is a tool better equipped for evaluating the quick, quantifiable policy and legislative outputs that are often the symbols of mainstream organizations' successes. Potential funders are most responsive to outputs that can be produced quickly and that are easily defined, such as those associated with program services (Bothwell 2005). Funders typically contribute to projects where these outputs are produced between one and five years and are unambiguous and quantifiable. Though organizations working on advocacy, organizing and social justice do produce logic models to illustrate their theories for social change, their outputs are much more difficult to measure (Zemsky 2008) and it may take several years before change is visible (Puntenney 2002). When organizations are unable to demonstrate the smaller, perhaps less significant short-term accomplishments resulting from their work to potential funders, or when funders fail to acknowledge them, philanthropists often choose to support organizations with more demonstrable impact measures, and the funding gap between mainstream and nontraditional organizations grows.

Just as smaller size and invisibility have put progressive fundraisers at a disadvantage, so too has their challenge in measuring markers of success. Mainstream LGBT organizations often measure outputs in terms of pieces of legislation passed (or thwarted) or the number of endorsed candidates who won elections. These measures make the fruits of the organization's labor, and the impact of each dollar, both visible and measurable. Yet, the process of measuring outputs for

organizations performing broad-based work with marginalized groups is much more difficult to quantify. Because radicals and oppressed individuals are critical of the social institutions which oppress them, they may be reluctant to cooperate with formalized organizations as they think nonprofit organizational structures and cultures uphold systematic oppression. Many organizations working on behalf of the non-elite community are reluctant to declare their capacity building successes among them, as so not to appear as the voice of the communities in which they work. In other words, progressive social justice organizations may allow the communities in which they work to take credit for organizational initiatives because organizational leaders believe community members will find the experience empowering and then continue the work on their own. As a former National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Board Member described, “if these oppressed individuals question authority, are they going to want [another] organization shoved down their throat?” (Zemsky 2008). She goes on to list a number of initiatives that would not exist were it not for the Task Force, such as a confederation of resources in higher education and a religious roundtable on LGBT issues, none of which the Task Force has taken credit for. Because they frequently do not take credit for their version of organizational outputs, the Task Force receives less funding than other organizations (Zemsky 2008), and broad-based social justice work that the Task Force continues to do remains largely invisible to the general public.

Organizations working on issues outside of mainstream appeals may also be at a disadvantage due to their inexperience and informal atmospheres. Small and young organizations are often at a disadvantage when fundraising because of the overhead cost of fundraising (Magnus 2001). They often do not have the staff available to dedicate time to fundraising, particularly those with staffs too small to have specialized departments.

Furthermore, because of the attention philanthropists dedicate to larger, highly visible organizations, smaller organizations find that dedicating significant resources to fundraising is not a worthwhile investment as it distracts from their other work. In a study by Stephen Magnus (2001) of small LGBT organizations in Massachusetts, respondents reported that their grant proposals were seldom taken seriously by large foundations, and that even when they did receive funding, awards were too small for the venture to have been a worthwhile investment of resources. Small LGBT organizations' inability to secure substantial grants can discourage or prohibit them from applying for such funds, increasing the likelihood that mainstream organizations will receive funding that can increase mainstream visibility and productivity.

Another trend in philanthropic giving that puts radical and progressive organizations at a disadvantage is the culture gap between those who control foundations and those involved in social change organizations (Bothwell 2002). As one foundation leader noted, “[f]oundations don’t share the politics of grassroots organizations....it is not the culture of philanthropy to change power structures” (Bothwell 2002, 388). Like the non-traditional outputs that are the result of progressive or radical action, the fact that foundations are often run by “corporate and other people who are likely to be targets of grassroots action” makes it difficult for foundations to understand, identify with, and ultimately support progressive action (Bothwell 2002, 388). For organizations that may already consider themselves to be taking political risks by investing in LGBT organizations, facilitating mainstream, middle-class agendas is more palatable.

Yet another problem for organizations using universal approaches and broad-based appeals is the fact that potential supporters view such missions as undefined. For example, Urvashi Vaid explains that many viewed the short-lived, radical organizing group, Queer Nation, to have been more defined in what they were against than what they stood for. It was easy for

Queer Nation to say they were anti-establishment, yet when it came time to speak about what the group wanted to do to improve conditions for LGBT individuals, the group could not develop consistent platforms (Vaid 1995). Critics of broad-based social justice work performed by LGBT organizations, such as *The Advocate's* James Kirchick, say these organizations are trying to do too much, and wonder what issues such as reproductive health or Social Security reform have to do with being LGBT (Kirchick 2008). Whereas uniqueness, creativity, and specificity appeal to donors, an all-inclusive social justice agenda may convey a message that an organization does not have or cannot articulate a clear vision of what it stands for, which can be problematic both in terms of agenda setting and fundraising. While broad missions are not necessarily problematic, attempting to cover more ground than an organization can handle causes projects to be underdeveloped and thus, ineffective.

At the same time, when an organization narrows its agenda to focus on only those it feels need the most assistance, elites with the most power to fund their cause feel that their issues are no longer represented by the organization. Potential contributors, particularly those who are white, middle to upper class, and wealthy may be unable to identify with oppression beyond the basis of their sexual and/or gender identity and thus have a difficult time making connections between other forms of oppression and their experience of LGBT discrimination. As Dara Strolovitch (2007) has noted, members of advantaged subgroups do not see the irony in considering their own interests to be universal issues while viewing the concerns of other disadvantaged groups in their movement to be of lesser importance. Feeling their personal needs are unrepresented, elite donors may take their dollars elsewhere, again leaving the progressive organization struggling to find resources to sustain its unique work.

Perhaps the largest problem is that radical organizations who seek to reform institutions likely see fundraising as an offshoot of capitalism, which many radicals view as the main cause of various forms of oppression (Sycamore Bernstein 2008). At the same time, organizations want to avoid interference with their agendas, particularly as funders often favor supporting social service programs over political or social change philanthropy (Magnus 2001). Though it is true that the incentives for donor support often extend beyond altruism, extremely radical groups focus on the abuses of power associated with wealth, rather than the good that can be done with it. Refusing to uphold capitalistic tendencies and wanting to avoid co-optation at all costs, radical organizations may even avoid fundraising all together. As a wealthy lesbian supporter of progressive social change organizations, Léonie Walker observes that those working within the movement have held much contempt for wealthy individuals who make financial contributions toward their work (Walker and Sell 2001). Such sentiments can have disparaging effects on LGBTQ fundraising. To begin, it may cause those who are inclined to support progressive issues to become “closeted” about their wealth, donating anonymously. In turn, their invisibility makes fundraisers less visible to progressive organizations that could benefit from their contributions. Such hostility could also lead donors to take their support elsewhere, meaning to mainstream organizations who have more experience working with (and showing appreciation for) wealthy donors; these organizations arguably are less dependent on such dollars than smaller, newer, and more progressive organizations.

Giving trends among individual donors, foundations and corporations contribute to the problem of homonormative agendas among LGBT organizations. Because of their interest in measurable outputs, hesitancy to invest in highly political or controversial projects, and their tendency to fund organizations that are well established, and highly visible and networked,

organizations that deviate from this standard are left with less financial support. Again, this creates a funding cycle that is difficult to break. Because donor support can provide an organization with visibility and create avenues for both financial and political support for an organization, mainstream organizations' willingness to cater to traditional measures of organizational success prevents progressive organizations from gaining the support and visibility necessary to enter the funding cycle. In addition to philanthropic trends and organizational practices, shifts in political ideals and values of LGBT people add to the allure of upholding homonormative advocacy agendas.

Shifts in Political Climate and Neoliberalism

Beyond funding practices, both changes in the political mood and shifts in public opinion have helped to uphold homonormative organizational agendas. Political conservatism following a surge of civil rights activism in the 1960s and 1970s led progressives to change the way they sought policy change, making short-term, incremental advancements in areas such as housing policy and affirmative action. Policymakers left cultural advocacy to nonprofit organizations whose efforts became trapped in what Robert Bothwell has termed "policy silos," or advocacy and programming for narrowly defined groups. Akin to this concept is Martha Burk and Heidi Hartman's (1996) notion of "flea-market feminism" in which feminist organizations specialize in a single feminist issue area, thereby competing for funding, social capital and visibility within the feminist movement. Using the case of pro-choice activism versus equal pay and violence against women, Burk and Hartman argue that organizations focusing on the most sensationalized feminist issue at any one point in time emerge as the "voice" of a movement, despite the fact that other issues are more problematic both in terms of severity and the number of women impacted.

While specialization in a given issue area can be beneficial, the competition and hostility that arises from such specialization outweighs these benefits, particularly as the media encourages organizations to take extreme stances on their niche activism to gain visibility in the mainstream (Skocpol 1999). These niches more often than not reflect the interests of the most advantaged subgroup and rise to the top of organizational agendas (Strolovitch 2007). LGBT organizations are in the midst of such a dilemma, with homonormative issues such as marriage equality and employment non-discrimination becoming the focal point for many organizations.

The shift in broad-based social justice agendas to specific foci stems from a shift in the national mood and government policies. When the Democrats lost control of Congress in 1994, progressive policymaking was nearly impossible as conservatives pursued their own interests (Bothwell 2005). Lisa Duggan (2003) notes that the shift in public accountability during this time led to the reorganization of State institutions. This shift has commonly been referred to as “neoliberalism.” During this transition, policymakers either entirely dissolved institutions that were designed to benefit those who were economically disadvantaged or discriminated against, or instead placed such protections in private entities. As a result, policymakers have since rarely treated individual rights as an entitlement of citizenship, but rather something that must be “earned” (Duggan 2003). At the same time, as protective government services shifted to the nonprofit arena, social justice organizations felt increasingly pressured to shift their focus from advocating against such restructuring to providing relief services to their constituents (Mananzala and Spade 2008). These organizations’ preoccupation with a more immediate need of providing services prevented them from devoting much time to contesting such restructuring, allowing neoliberal ideals to gain momentum. The LGBT movement’s predominant themes of equal access to institutions of marriage and the workforce (versus universal benefits or welfare

reform, for example), not coincidentally, are two issues that promote economic consumption and are evidence of the impact of neoliberal restructuring.

One Dollar Equals One Vote? Capitalism and Citizenship among LGBT Individuals

In addition to shifts in the political landscape, market constructions of LGBT individuals as a wealthy class changed the predominant platforms as well as the tactics that many LGBT groups use to pursue LGBT liberation. Many organizations feel that the inclusion of gay and lesbian issues in political debates and changes in policies to accommodate LGBT people that surfaced in the early 1990s have been signs of progress. Other less publicly visible voices continue to argue these changes are unrepresentative of subgroups of LGBT people and that cultural change and institutional reform are more apt for ensuring fair treatment of LGBT people. Yet, because of the visibility and funding given to organizations engaging in mainstream work, the viewpoints and work of smaller or more radical organizations working towards these later goals largely goes unnoticed and underfunded. To better understand why LGBT organizations have had less political and financial success when performing multi-issue advocacy and grassroots organizing, the following section outlines how politicians and corporations have constructed LGBT rights as something that LGBT people should earn through consumption, a neoliberal trend.

In the 1990s, lesbians and gays began to appear more frequently in popular and political culture, with representations everywhere from television and magazines to the legislature (Chasin 2000a). The increasing visibility of lesbian and gay Americans in these arenas is undoubtedly connected to corporate belief in their wealth. In the early 1990s, publications such as the *Wall Street Journal* and *Advertising Age* began classifying LGBT individuals as an

untapped niche market, while Universities and marketers held conferences about this growing consumer base (Chasin 2000a). The idea that gay and lesbian households were likely to be highly educated and without children led marketers to believe that this demographic had large sums of disposable income. A few small research firms, in particular Simmons Market Research Bureau and Overlooked Opinions, published surveys corroborating this claim, reporting that, on average gays and lesbians had large household incomes, with the latter stating that gay and lesbian buying power totaled \$514 billion annually (Chasin 2000a, 36). However, these studies were inaccurate as this self-reported data came from an unrepresentative sample of lesbian and gay individuals, such as eventgoers and magazine subscribers. Despite the fact that randomized studies by the Yankelovich firm (Chasin 2000a) and M.V. Lee Badgett (1998) have since revealed that, although some LGBT individuals do fit this stereotype, the majority of LGBT Americans make comparable, if not lower salaries than the general population. Nevertheless, marketers and opponents to LGBT rights continue to cite discredited, outdated findings (Chasin 2000a). Meanwhile, wealthy LGBT individuals remain prime targets for corporate advertising, and media imagery catering to this demographic obfuscate the existence of other classes of LGBT people.

Many theorists have noted the role capitalism holds in defining rights and citizenship. LGBT individuals have often consolidated their identity through the acquisition of market commodities that embody this identity; because group identity has been central to building political power among disenfranchised groups, identity-based movements gain visibility through capitalism (Chasin 2000a). As illustrated above, as identity-based arguments have become increasingly central to LGBT organizing, the market responds by producing images of gay culture. Far too often this effect provides visibility for only a particular segment of LGBT

individuals, that is, ones with purchasing power (which, as noted earlier, is far fewer LGBT individuals that the public would care to believe). Consumption is dependent upon many things, yet two closely related factors that facilitate capitalism and have a presence in the LGBT movement are especially important: upholding the economic unit of family and ensuring access to labor from which one earns capital. Chasin's arguments about the acquisition of political power and the formulation of LGBT identity are apparent in the practice of cause-related marketing within the LGBT community. A growing trend in corporate philanthropy, corporations use cause-related marketing to advertise their brands by promising to donate a small portion of the profits to a charitable cause. Not only does this practice help individuals feel good about something they would do anyway, that is, purchasing goods they want or need, but also reassures them that they have done their part in the fight for social justice (King 2006). Though numerous organizations engage in this practice, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is the best example among LGBT organizations. HRC's website features not only a page dedicated to their corporate sponsors which lists the ways members can support HRC through purchasing goods and services and the special discounts they can receive for supporting HRC (Human Rights Campaign 2000a), but also a special HRC Equality Shop, featuring the slogan "Shop HRC and Buy into Your Future" (Human Rights Campaign 2009b). It would be more financially efficient for HRC to seek support from members directly, yet using cause-related marketing helps to brand the organization, while reinforcing the status of the LGBT citizen as a consumer and the social validation that is to be earned through consumption. Such promotion of domesticity and preserving gender roles through emphasis on consumption is essential to perpetuating consumption of market goods (Chasin 2000b). At the same time, capitalism promotes the freedom to acquire and retain employment to earn income to acquire these goods (D'Emilio

1983). Though such a construction has political benefits, it in many ways depoliticizes LGBT activism by reducing it to simplistic consumerism. In addition, because capitalism situates rights and citizenship on one's ability to consume, those who are commonly less capable of consuming, including Queers who are people of color, low-income, very young or old, and/or women, are frequently missing from marketing campaigns towards gays (Chasin 2000b).

As Alexandra Chasin notes “[p]olitical representation and media representation are closely linked; in nonprofit and for-profit spaces alike, representation of gay identity often amounts to representation of white people and their class interests, and/or men and their class interests (Chasin 2000a, 192-193). Chasin’s observation summarizes the cyclical pattern between consumption and visibility; the more the public views LGBT individuals as a market, the more likely they are to validate LGBT identities based on their ability to purchase commodities. Even though in reality the economic status of LGBT individuals does not mirror the public image they hold in the market, the façade of public and political support that results from these images gives many LGBT organizations the incentive to hold onto agendas that benefit the most visible and well-off LGBT individuals. The fact that mainstream LGBT organizations tend to focus on issues such as family recognition and employment issues underemphasize the concerns of underrepresented populations upholds the notion that one’s entitlement to rights is dependent upon his or her ability to contribute to a capitalist society. At the same time, organizations’ quests for financial resources rely heavily on individuals or institutions that benefit from or define this principle. Therefore, even while some mainstream organizations claim to challenge forces that oppress minorities within the movement, their agendas and practices in many ways maintain these systems.

The Homonormative Agenda and the Lure of Perpetuating the Myth of LGBT Affluence

Due to paradoxes in building LGBT political power and raising funds within LGBT organizations, the entirety of the LGBT agenda is absent from public view. The lure of normalizing and legitimizing LGBT individuals to make political advancements has been strong. Unfortunately, focusing on the images and ideals associated with white, middle class lesbians and gays in committed relationships, with family values and strong work ethics obscures the needs of other LGBT individuals. While issues of marriage and employment equality crowd media headlines and organizational action alerts, far less attention is paid to issues disproportionately affecting communities of color, immigrants, sex workers, youths, or low-income individuals, to name a few. A unique characteristic among LGBT individuals is that LGBT identity intersects across lines of race, class, age, gender and other identities. Yet, while mainstream organizations claim to address such issues, their work often fails dedicate sufficient time to conceptualizing, much less advocating, policies that would benefit the LGBT community across these categories. Furthermore, organizations who are dedicated to putting such efforts at the forefront of their agendas too often lack the resources to build support for such ideals. The cycle of funding and social resources mentioned earlier perpetuates this problem and creates a wedge between those who are and are not represented in the LGBT movement.

Like the strings attached to different funding sources, pros and cons also accompany the myth of LGBT affluence. While other movements have used upscale images to get away from negative stereotypes about their communities, this practice arguably has greater impact among LGBT individuals because of the social taboo associated with Queer sexual practices and lifestyles. Interestingly enough, this taboo has, to a great extent, been pushed to the side and misconceptions about LGBT wealth, particularly white gay men and recently emerging with the

stereotype of the “power lesbian” have become the new stereotype. Undoubtedly, certain LGBT leaders have used this image of normalcy to gain support from the general public and respectability from policymakers and elected officials (Endean 2006).

The LGBT movement has also used the concept of their niche market buying power in as a protest strategy through boycotts, which grew in number between 1985-1993, not coincidentally, the same time researchers began targeting gays and lesbians as a niche market (Chasin 2000a, 145). Perhaps the most famous LGBT boycott was that against Tropicana orange juice, when its spokesperson, pop singer and former Miss Oklahoma Anita Bryant, spearheaded a campaign to overturn an equal housing ordinance approved by Dade County’s Metro Commission. Some organizations were against the boycott, stating that the company should not suffer for comments Bryant made off the job, while others saw the boycott as not only necessary, but a means of uniting the LGBT community around a common cause. (Chasin 2000a). Of course, a boycott, though effective in creating awareness for a social issue and in some cases altering corporate practices, the boycott does not accurately represent a given community. As Chasin notes, the boycott disproportionately represents middle class interests, as it is these individuals who hold buying power, thereby again upholding the notion that economic clout is a prerequisite for political power. Chasin warns that LGBT leaders must consider the implications of “making social change on behalf of people who can participate in the process of change” (Chasin 2000a, 182).

LGBT economic influence has also come into play in elections. Since the emergence of the wealth myth in the 1990s, Democratic candidates have often tried to capture the LGBT vote as part of their campaign. Some LGBT organizations have even endorsed candidates, and urge their constituents not only to vote for these candidates, but also to contribute money or volunteer

time to their campaign. Particularly during democratic primaries, candidates appear in LGBT media with summaries on where they stand on different LGBT concerns. Just as has been the case for LGBT organizations, the candidate whose platform most closely represents the interests of wealthy LGBT individuals receives their dollars and further endorsement by organizations. Bill Clinton's presidential campaign was the first of its class to mention policies specifically targeting the LGBT community. According to George Stephanopoulos, Clinton's communications director, the campaign's inclusion of gays and lesbian issues was not necessarily due to principles of fairness, but rather because "[t]his [gays and lesbians] is a group with money and a group that votes" (Rayside 1998). LGBT groups had a strong presence at the 1992 Democratic Convention, and the party adopted several LGBT platforms, most notably, AIDS/HIV positions (Rayside 1998). Unfortunately, even though LGBT individuals have established a presence in politics and access to the formalized policy arena, policymakers frequently fail to adhere to their promises to the LGBT community, and legislation specifically protecting LGBT individuals continues to be lacking at the federal level as well as in many states and localities.

Finally, LGBT foundations perpetuate the image of affluence among LGBT individuals. LGBT foundations may adopt many of the practices of traditional foundations in terms of selecting award recipients and evaluating program success, though many are known to emphasize an organization's financial need over its reputation. Though there is diversity among LGBT foundation staff, foundation leaders and boards tend to represent the same interests of those donating directly to organizations and channel funds appropriately to represent these interests. As Susan Curry noted in her 1998 case study of a Twin Cities based LGBT foundation, donor demographics and interest played a key role in how the foundation distributed

funds (Curry 1998). Like organizations themselves, these foundations must uphold elite reputations to attract the donors that fund their work.

LGBT Mainstream Fundraising Practices and Homonormative Agendas

Thus far I have argued that philanthropic support of LGBT advocacy organizations promotes liberal over progressive or radical agendas within those organizations. Funders are more likely to contribute to large organizations that are national in scope and promote a white, male image of LGBT activism. As the public directs its attention and resources towards mainstream organizations, it diverts attention from the work of smaller and younger organizations and those that focus on discrimination beyond that of sexual or gender identity. Meanwhile, smaller, grassroots organizations struggle to promote their agendas without catering to unrepresentative mainstream agendas. As a result, large mainstream organizations using identity politics, or liberal appeals that seek equal rights for members of an oppressed group, emerge as the “leaders” of the LGBT movement, as opposed to those using progressive rhetoric which have called for revolutionizing the processes and institutions through which the government has historically granted rights to different groups. I will now examine how new trends in LGBT fundraising have contributed to homonormative political agendas.

In her 1995 book *Virtual Equality: The Mainstreaming of Gay and Lesbian Liberation*, Urvashi Vaid notes that despite the fact that the LGBT community represents individuals from diverse ethnic, cultural, and class backgrounds, their conferences, fundraisers, and movement building events disproportionately attract wealthy LGBT individuals. Just as has been the larger international and national trend, tensions have been increasing between wealthy and working-class or poor LGBT individuals. As the former Executive Director of the National Gay and

Lesbian Task Force and the current Executive Director of the Arcus Foundation, Vaid's criticisms hold substantial merit as she seeks solutions to the problems she has faced as an organizational leader within an elite fundraising culture. Vaid's observations speak volumes about LGBT organizations' tendency to focus their agendas on issues that concern middle-class and wealthy LGBT people. Vaid's critique of mainstream organizations is that their preoccupation with funding their organization's movement work forces them to cater to the wealthy. Such a focus often deters organizational agendas from becoming truly representative of the entire community of LGBT individuals that most organizations claim to represent. Furthermore, this method not only deters organizational resources from the political work the organization sought out to do, but creates the illusion that writing a check is more valuable to the movement than acts such as voter mobilization or lobbying. Vaid examines three principal revenue sources: special events, direct mail campaigns, and major donor cultivation, and reveals the ways in which these strategies lead to homonormative agendas within LGBT organizations.

Vaid first focuses on special event fundraisers for mainstream LGBT organizations, particularly the "black-tie" dinner that LGBT organizations have been using since the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) was the first LGBT organization to net significant revenues using such an event. Just as companies launched marketing campaigns increasingly towards what they perceived as a wealthy gay and lesbian niche market, so too grew the tendency for LGBT organizations to target wealthy donors through fundraising dinners in the 1990s. These parties, often featuring straight celebrities or politicians popular among LGBT communities, give elite LGBT individuals and their allied peers a chance to convene for a night of entertainment, networking, and most importantly, supporting the host organization. Such events are of course an opportunity for organizations to gain visibility in the public eye; some of HRC's parties had

even been featured on news broadcasts in the cities in which they were held (Endean 2006). As Steve Endean, founder of HRC noted, these events gave elite LGBT individuals a sense of belonging to the movement when, a decades earlier, the movement's radical tactics made gay elites feel unwelcome. Both Vaid and Endean claim that such events have played a key role in the financial success of LGBT organizations, though neither provides statistics on how large a role special events play in organizational budgets (Endean 2006, Vaid 1995).

These events, however, are not without drawbacks. It goes without saying that these parties cater to wealthy individuals; admission to such events can range from \$75 to upwards of \$250 per person, making them largely inaccessible to low-income individuals. Such a high ticket price perpetuates the invisibility of minority groups within the LGBT community, as these events gain much publicity both in the LGBT and mainstream press, yet only the wealthiest LGBT supporters are typically represented. In addition, these events sadly often draw larger crowds and can be more publicly visible than more politicized events, such as lobbies or protests that more accurately represent the movement's constituency and issues affecting the LGBT population. While these mainly social events are increasingly de-politicized, they also create the false impression that "checkbook activism" is more valuable than other essential tasks necessary for building political power (Vaid 1995). Clearly, attending these parties is more glamorous than canvassing, outreach, advocacy, and lobbying efforts that demand time and dedication from the people who perform them. As Vaid states, "[m]oney becomes another closet in which we can hide, another excuse to stop ourselves from committing more deeply to full freedom and equality" (Vaid 1995, 265).

Vaid also critiques numerous organizations' use of direct mail campaigns to acquire smaller donations from a general public. These methods can be beneficial as they can build

constituency and visibility for an organization, often while helping to achieve goals of outreach and advocacy. Yet, organizations share their mailing lists, meaning they compete for LGBT dollars. Despite the fact that this can help bring in revenue for organizations, they more often than not are “preaching to the choir.” Unfortunately, unlike the vast amount of time spent on organizing special events, most organizations do not dedicate sufficient time to seeking new supporters (Vaid 1995). Therefore, the pool of funders and volunteers in the LGBT community is spread increasingly thin, increasing the likelihood of future competition for support.

Organizational leaders invest much time in major donors and understanding their vision for the movement, sometimes to the point where it interferes with political priorities (Vaid 1995). Whereas LGBT activism in the 1970s was more connected to the constituency it represented, organizational leaders’ quest for funding has led them to become less informed about the concerns of those making smaller contributions or those who cannot afford to do so (Mananzala and Spade 2008). Such a lack of representation means that even if major donor dollars are not explicitly steering an organization’s agenda, their concerns may be the only ones that are heard and/or receive attention. Another way that the concerns of affluent donors receive priority is through organizational leadership. As Rickke Mananzala and Dean Spade (2008) argue, over the past few decades the leaders of gay and lesbian organizations have increasingly been those with educational, class and race privilege. This trend stems from fact that affluent donors frequently report contributing to an organization because of an ability to identify with the leadership (Bothwell 2005, Ostrower 1995). The corollary to this idea then is that when organizational leaders lack such privileges, raising money is more challenging (Chasin 2000b). As stated previously, just as leaders of LGBT organizations tend to be more affluent and white, so too are the individuals who are often asked to join non-profit boards, as those commonly invited to be on

a board either possess or can obtain large sums of money (Vaid 1995). Thus, elites' tendency to hold power in nonprofit organizations may contribute to an unrepresentative organizational agenda.

Clearly, mainstream LGBT organizations' practices have contributed to the movement's tendency to promote the interests of the most affluent LGBT individuals. Because these organizations hold upscale events, pursue the goals of wealthy funders and board members, and fail to successfully seek out new contributors, organizational agendas have been largely skewed towards serving the interests of the community's most well-off individuals. This trend is not only shaped by one's economic power, but further reinforces the notion that one's entitlement to rights is a function of his or her purchasing power, and unofficially limits who can participate in social change. While LGBT philanthropists and fundraisers claim to be representative of a diverse range of people, the disconnect between LGBT leaders and the general LGBT population speaks to Robert Putnam's (2007) ideas on the loss of social capital among organizations. Nonprofit use of special events, direct mail campaigns, and promotion of consumerism allows an exchange of ideas and political representation to occur only among a certain demographic within the larger LGBT population and largely reduces political involvement to writing a check. While financial support is an important piece of nonprofit advocacy work, the fundraising culture among LGBT nonprofits allows the most visible, affluent, and normalized LGBT individuals to set the agenda, and leaves much of the groundwork to non-elites whose needs are underrepresented by this agenda.

Ramifications of the LGBT Organizational Funding Gap

The myth of LGBT affluence has had varying consequences on the LGBT movement. On the one hand, right-wing conservative groups have used this myth to argue that LGBT individuals do not deserve “special rights,” that they have “disproportionate political power,” or that economic security is evidence that LGBT individuals are not discriminated against (Badgett 1998, iv-vi). Such setbacks are explicit and more easily refuted, but the movement impact of LGBT organizational practices and fundraising trends beyond these arguments requires further examination. Philanthropic trends have shaped the way LGBT organizations seek out and use funding. Organizational leaders tend to seek support from the best-off constituents, who may be more supportive of agendas that best fit their specific needs. Funding sources, primarily foundations, require organizations to deliver outputs that meet their expectations and definitions of effectiveness, which has in part influenced LGBT organizations to implement programs and strategies that deliver these outputs. Thus far, many organizations have secured funding by following these guidelines, but using such a rubric for movement successes oversimplifies social change processes and, to great extent, obscures inequalities rather than eradicating them.

More visible and tangible achievements of mainstream organizations frequently obscure broad-based advocacy work of progressive organizations. Creating social capital, a key output sought by LGBT organizations taking a social justice approach, is difficult to measure. Mainstream LGBT organizations may measure their successes more easily in terms of pieces of legislation passed or fair-minded candidates elected to office, and quantify the efforts leading up to these successes in terms of frequencies of voter contact, media advertisements, and lobbying events. Despite the fact that these outputs are measurable, the motivators behind them and the role they have played in benefitting LGBT individuals is less easily determined. For example, an

organization may take credit for its lobbying efforts leading up to the passage of a particular piece of legislation. Yet, as David Meyer and Steven Boutcher (2007) note, social movements are not only shaped by legislation, but also influence it. When mainstream organizations credit legislative victories to their own efforts, they may be overlooking grassroots work that shifted public opinion enough to allow the issue to be publicly challenged or debated.

At the same time, the passage of legislation does not guarantee LGBT rights, it simply means that a LGBT identified individual has the right access certain institutions or argue that he or she is entitled to protections based on his or her LGBT status. For example, in the case of employment discrimination, a LGBT person has the right to challenge unfair treatment, but making such a claim requires much time, energy, and money, which does little for those who do not have access to these privileges. Nor can legislation alone immediately provide the cultural change helps to deter social injustices from initially occurring. Another example is the hate crimes legislation including LGBT protections that passed in the House in April of 2009, which will do little victims of violence beyond harsher sentencing for their assailants. Over time, however, discussion of the incidence of violence among LGBT people and increased penalties for acts of violence against LGBT people may deter assailants from committing future violent acts. Simply put, legislative action is more effective when both judicial and public attitudes welcome and uphold policy change; getting to this point requires a social movement.

Despite its inefficiencies, nonprofits tend to favor legislative acts for a few key reasons. First, organizations better understand the process for winning legal battles (Meyer and Boutcher 2007). This is not to say that legal battles are not long or complicated, but rather that arguments based in legal doctrine may be more easily formulated, and opponents' arguments more easily predicted and contested than other forms of political advocacy. Advocates can also argue

litigation on the most “winnable” principle of law. For example, *Lawrence v. Texas* was won based on an individual’s right to privacy and due process rather than the morality of sodomy or gay identity. Finally, litigation is largely a defensive act. The legislative arena sees a constant tug of war between organizations on all sides of an issue. This ongoing battle keeps organizations working on litigation, even though other types of work are better equipped to pursue their organizational agendas. As has been common among LGBT cases, a legislative victory leads to backlash from opponents, which in turn stimulates further activism among proponents (Meyer and Boutcher 2007). Because of the perceived urgency for litigation, and because the roadmap for legislative battles is more clearly defined, foundations have become increasingly supportive of litigation based campaigns over other strategies (Meyer and Boutcher 2007).

Aside from being inaccessible to certain LGBT people, successes gained from using mainstream tactics can be extremely volatile. In recent years, mainstream organizations have placed much emphasis on securing the right to marry for LGBT couples. While same-sex marriage advocates have seen a handful of successes in the legislative arena in a few states, these successes have been met with a fleet of state constitutional amendments banning marriage across the nation. Perhaps the most devastating loss was the passage of Proposition 8, a ballot initiative reinstating a same-sex marriage ban in California in November 2008, less than five months after the state Supreme Court ruled in favor of gay marriage. On the other hand, we have seen that the discourse surrounding marriage has taken off in other states in which the courts have passed gay marriage or similar ordinances. On positive note, the increased debates over such legislation in other states shows promise, but the California example demonstrates that civil rights cannot be merely legislated; new policies cannot guarantee equal treatment or protection without a cultural

shift towards favoring social justice. The groundwork necessary to achieve such a shift is just as important as efforts towards progressive policymaking.

Also, as stated earlier, the myth of affluence has allowed LGBT individuals to access politicians interested in their financial support and votes. Many in the LGBT community feel that the fact that politicians are beginning to be concerned with their demographic is progress, and are happy to endorse candidates they believe will support the community. Unfortunately, electing fair-minded candidates is only half the struggle; once in office, the community has to hope that the candidate will adhere to his or her promises of supporting the LGBT and other minority communities, which due to other political pressures and priorities, is often easier said than done. The most obvious example has been the Clinton campaign, which sought political and financial support of the LGBT population. Despite Clinton's promises to support the LGBT community, he enacted numerous policies that hurt diverse segments of the LGBT population, including the Defense of Marriage Act, Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and Title V (abstinence only education funding). Merely electing a "LGBT-friendly" candidate does not promise policies that protect LGBT individuals; the movement must build public support beyond their demographic that will urge policymakers to prioritize this work.

Changing public perceptions and reforming institutions is an extremely slow process, arguably even slower than changing legislation. Efforts invested today may not see results for a number of years, by which time it is extremely difficult to attribute these changes to a single source (Puntenney 2002). Thus, mainstream organizations and their funders often view projects seeking systemic change as poor investments when more immediate threats exist. Though elected candidates and legislation are two very measurable outputs for LGBT organizations, the benefits they produce for the overall LGBT movement are less concrete as they may not be

sustainable and are not fully accessible to all LGBT individuals. Because the concerns of many LGBT subgroups are not reflected by elected officials or through legislation, it is important for LGBT organizations doing radical and cultural grassroots work to acquire resources that will allow them to both promote and sustain their work. The following section highlights tools that both mainstream and grassroots organizations can use to fund radical work, as well as alternative measures that funders can use to evaluate and support social justice work.

Recommendations for Organizations and their Funders

This paper has summarized the funding challenges that LGBT organizations face and how the pursuit of funding leads to homonormative agendas that benefit the most socially acceptable LGBT individuals. Some LGBT organizations are comfortable in following funding sources and addressing the issues that their dues paying members and other supporters have identified as the most important. Most organizations, however, feel conflicted about their funding streams and seek ways to introduce progressive action and platforms into their political agendas. At the same time, progressive and radical organizations may lack the skills, tools or resources necessary to invest in fundraising that would in part grow their organizations. Similarly, the fear that accepting funds from major donors or foundations will divert the mission of radical and progressive organizations, as has been clearly demonstrated in so many others, keeps these organizations from pursuing financial support. These combined forces, along with market images that portray LGBT individuals as wealthy prevents the broader spectrum of LGBT issues from being included in public discourse on LGBT rights. While some may feel that public support will come through emphasizing the economic power of LGBT individuals, one must wonder if support for this demographic based on perceived need would grow were a

more accurate representation of the diverse range of issues affecting LGBT people were to enter public discourse.

While public discussion and awareness of these issues are not entirely dependent on organizational budgets, and there exist phenomenal organizations working to bring these issues into the mainstream, these organizations more often than not find it difficult to compete with mainstream organizations for financial and political support. LGBT organizations, both mainstream and radical, could stand to benefit from changes in their fundraising practices and from modifications in foundation practices and ideals. LGBT organizations can adopt practices such as grassroots fundraising campaigns or creating giving circles to support their organizations or issue areas. Short of working on the issues themselves, mainstream organizations may find it beneficial to create small grants or foundations to help support work of smaller progressive organizations. Mainstream organizations and foundations can also work to create skill-building sessions for these organizations so that they can improve their fundraising capacities. Foundations should also become more sensitive to the non-traditional outputs that radical, progressive organizations may have, and realize the potential societal benefits that could potentially result from innovative investments.

One method that nonprofits can use to build support for their organization without the high ticket price for participants is a grassroots fundraising campaign or event. Rather than focusing on a few wealthy individuals, this tactic seeks small contributions from a greater number of donors. While organizing such an endeavor may require a staff time and resources, one could argue that a comparable amount of could be spend on getting a few major donors to contribute large gifts. The fact that these contributions come from a variety of people keeps the organization from having too much dependency on one person and from allowing a small group

of people to have significant influence over the organization, while allowing the community to feel as though they are stakeholders in the success of the organization. Queers for Economic Justice (QEJ), a progressive LGBT organization that focuses on issues of shelter, immigrants' rights, welfare reform and building a Queer Left, had much success using this method. Modeled after the television show "The Amazing Race," QEJ launched an event called the Amazingly Queer Race for Economic Justice. This event required minimal organizational resources, with the help of 22 volunteers, one intern and one staff member overseeing the event. The organization recruited 30 teams of 2 people each to raise around \$500 each through small donations from friends, family and other supporters. Teams raced around New York City finding historic LGBT landmarks, and awarded small, donated prizes to first team finishing the scavenger hunt. The event yielded \$15,000 from 400 donors, QEJ's most significant fundraising success (Desilva 2007).

Another funding option for both mainstream and non-mainstream organizations is to bring together a giving circle. Much like grassroots fundraising, a giving circle depends on smaller contributions from a larger number of donors. These giving networks can be designed directly by community members themselves or by organizations. For example, the Stonewall Community Foundation in New York City has established a "quarter-share" program that asks funders to contribute \$300 annually (\$25/month). From the resulting funds, three-fourths are to be reserved for day-to-day operations and one quarter is reinvested into a community organization voted on by contributors. Clearly, a giving circle designed directly by community members or by organizations themselves could have their own guidelines. The benefits of a giving circle are that it allows community members to have a large impact on organizations without them needing to donate large sums of money. The process of participating in a quarter

share also helps to create dialogue among funders about varying community issues through deliberation on grant awards (Stonewall Quarter Share 2007).

Of course, these ventures come with limitations. While grassroots fundraising and giving circles have their benefits, one downfall is that they can be equally as time consuming as high profile events, relationship building with major donors, or soliciting contributions from foundations or corporations. In addition to this problem, the fact that foundations make up the next largest funding resource for LGBT nonprofits makes it important that foundations begin to rethink their support for social change philanthropy when possible. As Deborah Puntenney of the Women's Funding Network notes, macro level, the institutional change process is too slow for foundations to feel that change has occurred, thus their tendency to invest in smaller projects that have more visible results (for example, direct assistance to women in poverty). Foundations erroneously use linear indicators to measure social change a process she describes as "rarely linear and never one-dimensional" (Putenney 2002, 8). The tendency for foundations to evaluate projects after a few short years and at distinct moments in time keeps them from recognizing progress that has happened more slowly over a longer period of time. To evade such evaluation problems, the Women's Funding Network has created the idea of the Achievement Vector, a tool which examines multiple elements of a social change project including advocacy work, direct service, research, media awareness and community organizing. The Achievement Vector evaluates projects on four levels: achievement, listening, collaboration and empowerment, and action and outcomes. To use the tool, nonprofit organizations rank their priorities and the amount of funding that is available for each, and reports this to a foundation. The women's funding network believes that such a model will allow organizations to report all the areas in which they use funding and how this fits into a broader organizational mission, while identifying

funding gaps that keep organizations from growing their organizations and meeting organizational goals. By seeing the role finances play in an organization beyond specific program costs, foundations can gain a better understanding of how their contributions can be best invested to produce favorable social change outcomes. Putteney also recommends that organizations hold dialogues with grantees to discuss how they measure and evaluate their own progress, and work together to develop benchmarks that are customized to fit organizational standards, rather than measuring organizational success by generic performance measures.

Conclusion

This project has summarized one determinant of the LGBT movement's increased support for homonormative policies; how organizations seek out and secure funding plays a key role in what kind of work they will be able to support. As competition for funding is increasingly fierce, many organizations have used tactics that would enable them to gain visibility and network access to large and elite funding sources. Litigation and campaign work have become measurable outputs for organizational success, though their impact can be limited without genuine public support. At the same time, the platforms of organizations that have been unable or unwilling to cater to elite needs have gone largely unnoticed by the public.

Shifts in ideas about capitalism and citizenship along with the construction of gays and lesbians as a wealthy class have also contributed to the problem of homonormative agendas. To say these trends have been good or bad would be to oversimplify the situation, as individuals within the movement see both pros and cons in these shifts. Yet, the aforementioned organizational practices have driven a wedge between mainstream and progressive organizations, with mainstream LGBT organizations claiming to hold a vested interest in diverse membership

within the LGBT community. This situation is not unique to the LGBT movement, but is common to organizations doing advocacy work on behalf of ethnic minorities, women, and economically disadvantaged individuals. Broad based progressive tactics play an equally important role in creating progressive change as do activities such as lobbying and litigation, yet a conservative philanthropic and political culture has increasingly reduced progressive organizations' ability to gain the visibility and resources necessary to facilitate this work. As a result, political advocacy has become increasingly narrow, and alternative viewpoints that help to formulate new perspectives on LGBT rights and build support for the movement are disappearing from public discourse. Without the essential shifts in culture that progressive organizations attempt to bring, it is uncertain whether opportunities for mainstream tactics will arise or if these tactics will ultimately be successful.

The recommendations I offer in this paper attempt to both steer financial resources into progressive organizations with minority viewpoints, as well as reconnect elites within these movements and the LGBT movement's larger constituency. While these suggestions may not be enough to eradicate the conflicts between these mainstream and progressive types, I am hopeful that such recommendations can serve as a starting point for fundraisers and donors from all organization types to begin a dialogue as to why both mainstream and progressive strategies are essential to creating social change.

APPENDIX A

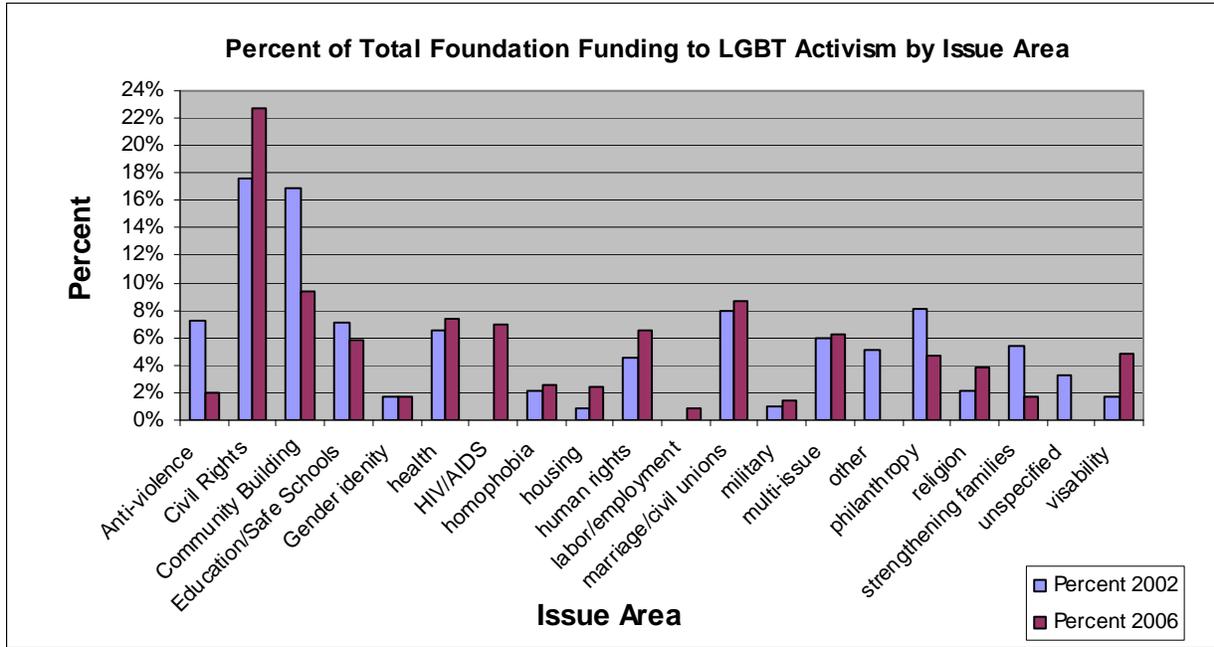
TOTAL FOUNDATION FUNDING TO LGBT ORGANIZATIONS BY PRIMARY POPULATION SERVED OR ADDRESSED, 2002 VERSUS 2006

Total Foundation Funding to LGBT Organizations by Primary Population Served or Addressed, 2002 versus 2006		
Population	Percent 2002	Percent 2006
Adults, General	0	7
Aging/Elderly/Seniors	4.6	3
Children & Youth	22.6	17
General Population	4.5	7
Immigrants/Newcomers/Refugees	0.5	1
LGBT People - Subtotal	58.4	58
Intersex	0.5	na
Gay Men	0.4	2
Lesbians	3.5	5
Bisexuals	0	0
Transgender	1	na
LGBT - General	53	49
Military/Veterans	0.9	1
Offenders/Ex-Offenders	0	0.3
Other Named Groups	3.4	2.5
People of Color (POC) - Subtotal	3.4	9
POC General	1.5	4
Asian/Pacific Islanders	0.3	1
People of African descent	0.5	3
Hispanics	1	1
Other Specified Groups	0	na
People with Disabilities	1.5	0.4
Poor/Economically Disadvantaged	0.4	0.4
Women - General	0.2	0.2

Source: Funders for Gay and Lesbian Issues: *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations* Calendar Years 2002 and 2006

APPENDIX B

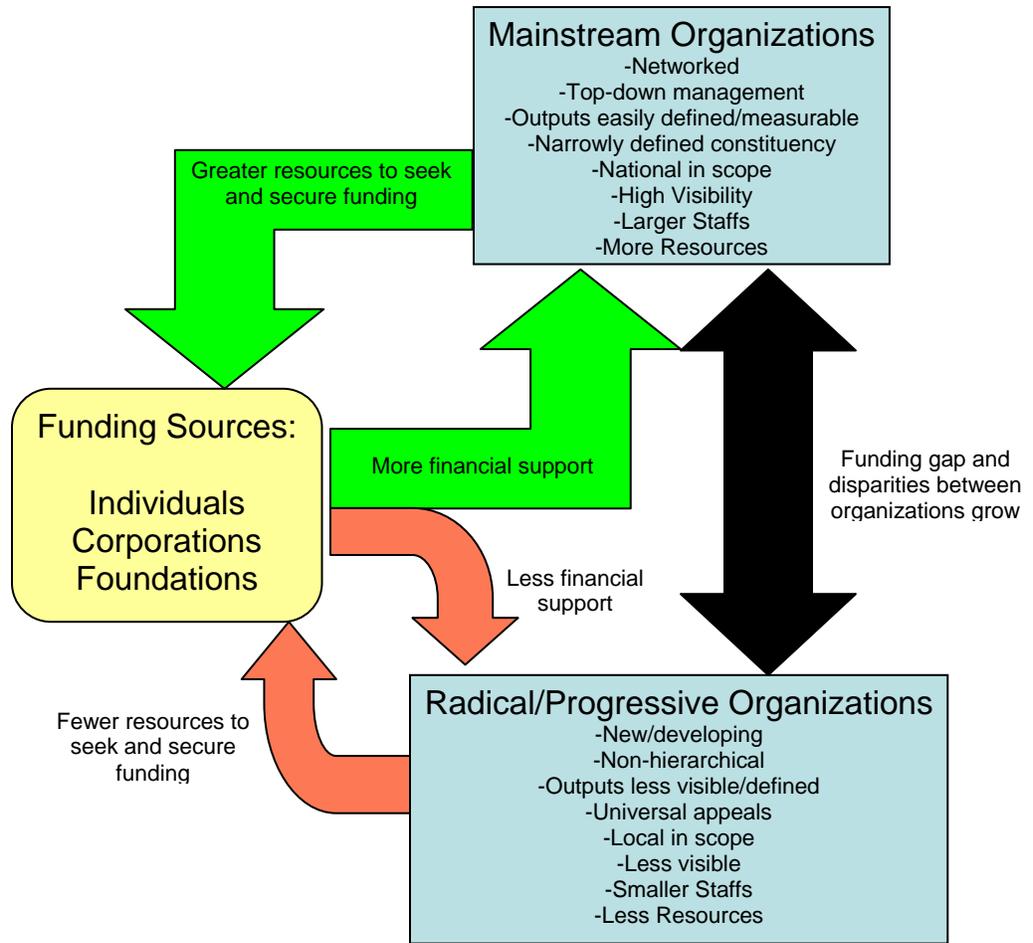
PERCENT OF TOTAL FOUNDATION FUNDING TO LGBT ACTIVISM BY ISSUE AREA,
2002 VERSUS 2006



Source: Funders for Gay and Lesbian Issues: *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations* Calendar Years 2002 and 2006

APPENDIX C

FUNDING CYCLE AND DISPARITIES AMONG MAINSTREAM AND PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATIONS



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