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***Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology.*** By Ellen Lewin and William L. Leap, eds. (Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 2002. Pp. 329, ISBN 0-252-07076-3, pbk.)

Given the modest presence of lesbian and gay and/or queer studies in folklore, at least in some institutions, I read this book with great curiosity and expectation. A companion volume to *Out in the Field*, an exploration of lesbian and gay experiences in anthropology, *Out in Theory* presents lesbian and gay anthropology as a “distinct” area of study and addresses the theoretical issues that have defined, and continue to define, the emerging field. The history of gay and lesbian studies in the social sciences makes this book worth the read, as do some of the complex and very interesting essays that grapple with issues such as power, gender, sexuality, poverty, archeology, and sex. Because of the varied nature of this collection, I feel it is worth offering brief overviews of each chapter. At the outset, this collection includes a forward by Esther Newton, an introduction by the editors, followed by eleven chapters from various scholars interested in gay and lesbian and/or queer studies.

In the forward Ester Newton praises the scholarly work of anthropologists who have been central to the emergence of lesbian and gay studies in the field, and makes clear that *Out in Theory* is an important and advancing collection. In their introduction, the editors call *Out in Theory* “a moment of disciplinary reflection.” Arriving six years after *Out in the Field* (1996), Lewin and Leap suggest that *Out in Theory* has helped to create a professional visibility in anthropology and a link between lesbian and gay studies and the overarching American Anthropological Association (AAA). *Out in Theory* takes a step further by addressing the kinds of theoretical dilemmas that lesbian and gay anthropologists are taking up.

In Chapter one Gayle Rubin acknowledges anthropology as a discipline that has expanded and grown over the years, and restates the disconnection between anthropology’s strong intellectual contribution to academia and its weak institutional presence in gay and lesbian studies. Rubin contextualizes the ethnographic study of gay, lesbian, and “other minority sexual populations” in urban centers of North America and looks at the ways in which early anthropological and other social science scholarship contributed to the articulation of new theories and paradigms of sexuality in the 1970s. In Chapter two Evelyn

Blackwood explores two polar theories of sexuality articulated in the 1970s and 1980s: sexuality as a male-defined institution as suggested by “radical feminists,” and the masculinist scholars model based on men’s sexual practices. Blackwood ponders the ways in which these theories are complicated by ethnographic studies of women’s same-sex sexualities. For instance, by addressing women’s relationships in particular communities Blackwood disrupts the radical feminist assertion that lesbian relationships are forms of resistance by showing that many of these relationships are deeply meshed in the social fabric. Like Rubin and Blackwood, Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy grounds her work in the history of anthropological studies by offering a narrative of why anthropology was important to her in co-writing her 1993 *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of the Lesbian Community* (Routledge). Nine years later Lapovsky Kennedy argues for the importance of anthropology’s contributions to gay and lesbian studies. Recognizing that anthropology was “ridden with homophobic skewing of social facts and homophobic interpretation” (99), the author reminds us of the importance of feminisms and gay and lesbian community studies that aided in opening some of the minds and hearts of anthropologists in and outside of the academy.

In “Another Unhappy Marriage? Feminist Anthropology and Lesbian/Gay Studies,” Ellen Lewin makes use of the straight(forward) marriage metaphor to think about the relationship between sex and gender studies in relation to gay men and lesbians. While the editors propose that *Out in Theory* contributes to marking gay and lesbian studies as a “distinct” field within anthropology, Lewin’s essay points out a divisiveness within this “distinct” sub-field of anthropology. She suggests that there are two lines of scholarship within gay and lesbian studies in anthropology: the “patriline” that studies men’s sexual behaviours as a means to come to some understanding of gay male culture, and the “matriline,” which has found itself through the politics of feminist anthropology. Lewin sees this divisiveness as problematic because it refuses to see the varied and interwoven lives of lesbians and gay men by naturalizing gay men and sex, and lesbians and politics. In search of some framework that will redirect some current anthropological scholarship in lesbian and gay studies, Lewin rules out queer theory by drawing on scholars who have rejected queer writings in anthropology: “queer perspectives draw momentum from a vilification of feminist theory as old-fashioned, conformist, anti-sexual, and beholden to

mainstream assumptions” (Walters in Lewin: 122). Lewin offers no way out of this problem within anthropology but ends with this assertion: “Our intellectual foundation lies in the heritage of feminist anthropology and studies of gender that gives our field its character. Any effort to erase these origins in favor of a sexier, younger, and queerer spouse will surely be met with swift vengeance from an anthropological ‘First Wives Club’” (124).

In Chapter five William Leap considers language and representation. He traces lesbian and gay language studies starting in the late 1960s and suggests some of the pedagogical implications for the study of gay and lesbian languages by considering what this kind of research reveals about the experience of same-sex desire and identities; how what Leap calls “text-making” and textual products provide representation for gay and lesbian desires and identities; and, finally, and most interestingly, how studies of textual production open up questions about social and historical dimensions of lesbian and gay life in parts of North America. Leap points to anthropology’s long-standing discomfort with “out” discussions of the sexual/gendered margin that restricts and limits inquiry. For Leap and others, “Upstaging that discomfort becomes an important part of efforts to help anthropology ‘come out’ (146). In Chapter six, archeology comes out. In his essay Robert Schmidt suggests that the study of sexuality and particularly homosexuality in relation to archeological findings is of great importance, and without it, some portion of the archeological record will have been lost. The author suggests reasons why homosexuality is relevant to the archeological explorations of past societies, and offers up three case studies in the field that have uncovered evidence about variation in homosexual expression. In the last part of this essay Schmidt suggests the continued incorporation of queer studies into archeological theory and practice. He ends with this lovely thought: “The more that archeologists can expand society’s understanding of the myriad ways people have found to be human, the richer all our futures may become” (180).

Chapter seven, Benjamin Junge’s essay is difficult, and takes up the complex debates surrounding HIV/AIDS and queer men’s sexuality. Junge describes the emergence and history of “barebacking” (unprotected sex between two men) as a recognized and concrete sexual practice within some queer men’s sexual landscapes. He makes use of three themes — Risk and Public Health, Rights, Responsibilities, and Group Identities, and Risk and Pleasure — to show the complexities

and links between “scientific and popular understandings of risk on the one hand and individual sexual subjectivity on the other” (189). Junge grapples with this difficult and painful topic and argues that ideas about risk originating in public health education and promoted in safer sex have played a key role in illuminating the ways that both pleasure and stigmatization are linked to bareback sex.

In Chapter eight, David Valentine addresses the multifaceted debates surrounding the word “transgender”. He offers a history of this complicated term and the identities it implies, and offers some insight into how queer theory, or “queer anthropology” can account for the complexities that transgendered identities pose. Chapter nine takes us traveling with Martin Manalansan to explore the ways in which globalization, “as evident in the processes of immigration, tourism, migration, and other forms of travel, has reshaped gay modernity if not totally transformed its contours” (246-247). By drawing on an ethnographic study of Filipino gay and queer men in Manila and New York City, the author argues that there is no one global gay or queer identity. Instead, Manalansan focuses on the experiences of diasporic Filipino men to illuminate the transnational travels of gay cultures, but also the proliferation of “technologies, inequalities, and bodies” that are part of post-colonial struggles within U.S. based communities of people of colour. In Chapter ten, “Do We All Reek of the Commodity? Consumption and the Erasure of Poverty in Lesbian and Gay Studies,” Jeff Maskovsky points to sexual minority communities who have been overlooked and overshadowed by gay consumerism. By bringing poor sexual minorities into view, the author re-enforces the need to look at the ways in which systemic ideologies and institutional practices (of work and social welfare) create barriers between the poor and the affluent in sexual minority groups.

Finally, in Chapter eleven, Deborah Elliston calls on anthropology to do some restructuring. The question motivating her essay is “whether sexual practice is the appropriate touchstone for identifying and entering into the analysis of homosexualities” (289). Elliston asks: “If not sex, then what?” Embracing queer theory, she adopts the category *queer anthropology* as a way to open up LGBT studies, “beyond acts and identities and into a much more open-ended set of concerns with, and approaches to, the ways in which sexuality, gender, power, and culture are produced and brought into relationship” (290). To test out queer anthropology, Elliston examines the ways in which Polynesians in the

Society Islands forge productive relationships between gender and sexuality. In the end, Elliston finds that refusing to use sex as the opening moment to studying homosexualities, and instead turning to a queer cross-cultural inquiry, it is possible to understand that desire gains meaning in social histories and experiences through different approaches to the production of knowledge and understanding.

*Out in Theory* is a curious collection. The first half historicizes and pays tribute to those in anthropology who helped to advance gay and lesbian studies when it was very risky to do so. An amazing amount of gay and lesbian history contextualized within the social sciences is contained within the first half of this book. Curious is that in the introduction the editors suggest that queer theory is “detached theorizing,” and they maintain their stance as articulated in *Out in the Field*, that queer theory is not the stuff of building bridges and making connections with people’s lives in anthropology. While they were putting together this present collection they maintain that they were not able to find a scholar who would address connections between queer theory and anthropology. Yet, some of the essays in the second half of *Out in Theory* illuminate the direction of queer studies in anthropology today. The final chapter (eleven) suggests queer theory as a method of inquiry to further anthropology’s progression or “coming out.” The tension that is present in this book, between lesbian and gay studies and queer theory, suggests that there are many and overlapping and complicated ways to take up these issues. However, I am left wondering what the next book will look like if the editors of *Out in Theory* do not refuse queer theory’s implications for such matters as disciplinary foundations and identity politics. As context for the history of gay and lesbian studies in the social sciences, *Out in Theory* is worth reading. For the student who is familiar with some of what gay and lesbian studies and queer theory have to offer, *Out in Theory* as a collection, feels more like a beginners survey of this complicated terrain.

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