

INTRODUCTION

A Genealogy of Queer Ecologies

CATRIONA MORTIMER-SANDILANDS AND BRUCE ERICKSON

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Introduction: Queering Ecology on Brokeback Mountain

In a now-famous scene from Ang Lee's Academy Award winning film *Brokeback Mountain*,¹ characters Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist have had a bit too much whiskey to drink around the fire at their camp in the Big Horn Mountains of eastern South Dakota and Wyoming, where they are employed by Joe Aguirre in the summer of 1963 to herd and protect his sheep for the grazing season. In the middle of the scene, Ennis drunkenly insists on sleeping outside the tent by the dying fire, but in the middle of the night Jack calls him into the tent and Ennis staggers in. As a brilliant full moon surfs on top of the clouds, Jack reaches over and pulls a sleeping Ennis's arm around him; Ennis wakes and jolts himself away roughly but Jack pursues him and holds onto his jacket. A long second transpires as Jack looks into Ennis's eyes and Ennis meets his gaze, understanding. They have fast, fierce sex, and with no time for so much as a postcoital cigarette, the scene abruptly changes to the next morning, Ennis crawling out of the tent with a visible hangover, cocking his rifle, leaving the campsite without conversation. His next words to Jack are later that day. Rifle still in hand, he sits down beside him and says: "That was a one-shot thing we had going on there." Jack responds: "It's nobody's business but ours." Ennis insists: "You know I ain't queer." Jack agrees: "Me, neither." But that evening, in a warmly lit tent interior, they kiss tenderly and visibly relax into each other's bodies: they may not be queer, but a rose by any other name apparently smells as sweet.

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Although a lot more happens in *Brokeback Mountain* that is worthy of comment, notably the contrast between the heterosexual relationships both men develop and the deeply romantic and eventually tragic “high-altitude fucking,” to quote Jack, in which the couple engages periodically for the next twenty years, we begin this collection of writings on queer ecologies with that scene because it displays quite dramatically three important junctures at which lgbtq (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer) and environmental politics (both defined broadly) intersect.² First, Jack and Ennis’s shared refusal to name themselves as “queer” is part of an ongoing narrative strategy by which the film distances both men from the taint of urban, effeminate—what Judith Halberstam has called “metronormative”—articulations of gay male identity (2005, 36). Jack and Ennis are cowboys; they know about guns and horses; they eat baked beans and drink whiskey from the bottle rather than having cassoulet with cabernet sauvignon. When Ennis says that he is “not queer,” we understand that he means he is not *that* kind of queer: genteel, sensitive, feminine, “gay” in any sense of the word. He is an ordinary white, working-class, masculine-male ranch hand who just happens to have passionate sex and fall in love with an almost equally butch rodeo king.³ There is nothing queer about it; indeed, their masculine identities are repeatedly confirmed in both this scene and the film as a whole, and the sex unfolds almost *naturally* as part of a deepening, homosocial intimacy that would be as welcome in a camp full of Boy Scouts as it would in a group of urban gay men: indeed, possibly *more* welcome.

Although the politics are not simple and the movie is much commented upon,⁴ the point we emphasize is that the presentation of Ennis and Jack in this rural-masculine manner has the effect of “naturalizing” their relationship insofar as their attraction and love can be read as entirely separate and distinct from what have, throughout much of the twentieth century, been presented as “unnatural” or “degenerate” sexualities. We will return to this issue presently; what we stress here is that, for a popular audience, sympathy for and identification with Ennis and Jack’s tragic romance is based on the story’s effective disarticulation of same-sex love and desire from gay identity, the former of which is presented as natural—masculine, rural, virile—in opposition to the latter’s spectral invocation of historical and ongoing discourses of *perversion*. These discourses, as we will suggest below, are an important point of conversation between queer and ecological politics because they reveal the powerful ways in which understandings of nature inform discourses of sexuality, and also the ways in which understandings of sex inform discourses of

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nature; they are linked, in fact, through a strongly evolutionary narrative that pits the perverse, the polluted and the degenerate against the fit, the healthy, and the natural.

The second queer ecological connection going on in *Brokeback Mountain* is that it is not at all accidental that our sex scene takes place on Brokeback Mountain. Although, as we discover later in the film, even this remote space is not immune to the possibility of heteronormative surveillance, it is clear that, up in the mountains, Jack and Ennis are free to explore their sexual relationship in a way that is simply not possible in the small Wyoming town from which they set out. Wilderness is, in this film, portrayed as a vast field of homoerotic possibility; the two rugged men romp and tumble freely, watched, for the most part, only by rugged mountains. Their desire is both constituted and consummated in a lush hanging river valley surrounded by trees and dramatic, snow-striped peaks; wilderness becomes a “safe” place for outlaw sex, and although there is, later in the film, one sexual encounter between Jack and Ennis in a seedy motel, their ongoing relationship is almost completely located in this one, remote spot.

Clearly, there are relationships between Jack and Ennis’s virility and the virility of the wild landscape; the one’s masculinity confirms the other’s, and both are also affected by their explicit contrast to the claustrophobic and emasculating spaces of domesticity represented by Jack’s and Ennis’s wives and children.⁵ But there is also an interesting subversion of dominant discourses that attach wilderness spaces to performances of *heterosexual* masculinity. As we will discuss below, at least since the early twentieth century, wild spaces have been understood and organized in a way that presents nature—and its personal domination in the guise of hunting, fishing, climbing, and other outdoor activities—as a site for the enactment of a specific heteromascularity. Particularly in the late nineteenth century, a period that also saw the beginnings of the wilderness preservation and conservation movements, the vast changes that were taking place in North American cities—immigration, urban expansion, industrialization, women’s increasing economic independence, and the transformation of the economy from entrepreneurial to corporate capitalism, to name a few factors—created a huge amount of social anxiety, particularly for elite white men. Where once such men could be reasonably confident of their dominance, their power was now called quite radically into question, and outdoor pursuits came to serve as a new space for elite enactments of white male superiority. Again, to cut a long story short, white men came to assert their increasingly heterosexual identities in

the wilderness explicitly against the urban specter of the queer, the immigrant, and the communist, a legion of feminized men who were clearly not of the same manly caliber as the likes of Theodore Roosevelt.⁶ This second connection between queer and ecology is thus about the fact that different kinds of nature *spaces* have also come to be overlain with sexual meanings; wilderness areas are highly heterosexualized—increasingly so with the postwar rise of family camping—and urban nature spaces are organized by specific sexual ideals and practices, both in the dominant view and in the many resistances that have taken place to that view.

The third and final connection that is made between queer and ecological politics in that *Brokeback Mountain* scene actually concerns the sheep. Specifically, the presence of the sheep and the resulting fact that Jack and Ennis are *shepherds*, locates the film in a long history of pastoral depictions of nature and landscape and, indeed, an equally long history of pastoral representations of male same-sex eroticism. Beginning with ancient Greek “lyric poetry [such as Theocritus’s *Idylls*] depicting the life of shepherds or herdsmen” (Shuttleton 2000, 127), the pastoral tradition emphasizes rural simplicity and, indeed, paints the rustic life of the shepherd in the pasture as a sort of Arcadian, golden age of leisure and erotic play. In ancient Greece and Rome, much of that erotic play was between men, and despite subsequent “homophobic Christian and humanist ethical prescriptions . . . [that] have repeatedly sought to erase or veil pastoral’s queer libidinal economies to produce hetero-normative Arcadias” (127), gay scholars and authors (and others) have used this homoerotic literary and artistic tradition to imagine a queer history, a queer space, and indeed a queer nature: the idealized, bucolic “naturalness” of pastoral homoeroticism calls into question the idea that heterosexuality is the only “natural” sex around. Clearly, the portrayal of Jack and Ennis exploring their sexual relationship on a pasture in the mountains, surrounded by sheep and with little else to do (although this pastoral is interrupted by both homophobes and coyotes), ties their story, and the landscape of *Brokeback Mountain*, to a historical, homoerotic Arcadia,⁷ and possibly also to a tradition of representation that resists the normative pairing of nature with *heterosexuality*.

So there’s a lot going on in *Brokeback Mountain* that indicates an ongoing historical, political, spatial, and literary relationship between sex and nature. (Who would have guessed that two “not-queer” white guys fucking among the sheep would be so interesting?) As the film shows us clearly, ideas and practices of nature, including both bodies and landscapes, are located in particular productions of sexuality, and sex is, both

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historically and in the present, located in particular formations of nature. The critical analysis of these locations and co-productions is what we mean by “queer ecology”: there is an ongoing relationship between sex and nature that exists institutionally, discursively, scientifically, spatially, politically, poetically, and ethically, and it is our task to interrogate that relationship in order to arrive at a more nuanced and effective sexual and environmental understanding. Specifically, the task of a queer ecology is to probe the intersections of sex and nature with an eye to developing a sexual politics that more clearly includes considerations of the natural world and its biosocial constitution, and an environmental politics that demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which sexual relations organize and influence both the material world of nature and our perceptions, experiences, and constitutions of that world. Queer, then, is both noun and verb in this project: ours is an ecology that may begin in the experiences and perceptions of non-heterosexual individuals and communities, but is even more importantly one that calls into question heteronormativity itself as part of its advocacy around issues of nature and environment—and vice versa.

Hence this book. The thirteen authors gathered together in the pages of *Queer Ecologies* have all asked important questions at interrelated conjunctures of sex and nature, oriented to probing and challenging the biopolitical knots through which both historical and current relations of sexualities and environments meet and inform one another. Ranging from an analysis of “queer animals” as subjects of environmental and other popular fascination, to a political interrogation of colonial discourses organizing sex (especially sex between men) as an ecological threat, to histories of lesbian and gay creations of natural space, to a consideration of Ellen Meloy’s erotic, hybrid nature writing as a specifically ecological future for queer desire, the essays in this collection take up diverse challenges and possibilities posed by the powerful collision of sex and nature. Collectively, we ask: What does it mean that ideas, spaces, and practices designated as “nature” are often so vigorously defended against queers in a society in which that very nature is increasingly degraded and exploited? What do queer interrogations of science, politics, and desire then offer to environmental understanding? And how might a clearer attention to issues of nature and environment—as discourse, as space, as ideal, as practice, as relationship, as potential—inform and enrich queer theory, lgbtq politics, and research into sexuality and society?

In light of the rich range of issues and perspectives included in the following chapters, the role of this introduction is not to cover the same

territory in advance. Instead, and beginning with the triad of intersections between histories of sexuality and nature apparent in *Brokeback Mountain*, what we would like to offer is a sort of lightly sketched genealogy of the implicit question posed in the pairing of “queer” with “ecology”: What are some of the ways in which the terms have been related, and what kinds of intersection might be specified by their juxtaposition? Specifically, and although there are certainly other ways of conceiving of the histories of this convergence (in particular, we are overlooking a substantial literature on gender and technology that has significantly influenced many of the queer natures appearing in these pages, and also acknowledge the decided Anglo-American-centrism of our introductory account),⁸ we suggest that there have been three major areas in which issues of sexuality and nature have been caught up in the same question; these three strands of intersection are what bring us to this collection, even as the essays within it depart from that triad in significant ways. In this introductory essay, then, we will do three things to help narrate the coming-into-being of the project in which we are engaged. First, we will consider some of the historical connections that have been made between discourses of sexuality and nature, focused on the naturalization of particular sexual behaviors in the midst of the rise of evolutionary and sexological thought in the early twentieth century, and also on more recent scientific and critical work on animal sexual relations and environmental change as a sort of evolutionary/ecological practice of “putting sex into discourse.” Second, we will explore some ways in which historical and contemporary formations of natural space have been organized by changing understandings and agendas related to sexuality, and in particular, how nature-spaces were and are often designed to regulate sexual activity but with mixed results, including gay, lesbian, and other appropriations of landscapes for a wide variety of queer purposes. Finally, we will document some of the ways queer-identified scholars and others have envisioned a nascent ecology in a variety of literary, philosophical, and pedagogical projects that insist on highlighting, subverting, and transforming heteronormative nature relations. Spanning a wide range of disciplines and locations, these knots of inquiry are key traditions of queer ecological conversation upon which this collection rests.

Histories of Sexuality and Ecology: Un/naturalizing the Queer

As much feminist, queer, and post-Foucauldian scholarship has emphasized, there is nothing especially “natural” about the ways Euro-west-

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ern societies generally understand sex. As Jeffrey Weeks writes in *Against Nature*, for example, “the fact is . . . that, as Jonathan Katz has [also] said, when we explore the histories of terms like ‘heterosexuality’ or ‘homosexuality’ we can only conclude that Nature had very little to do with it” (1991, 88). But that fact has not prevented a whole raft of natures from appearing in biomedical and other discourses of sexuality, and certainly has not prohibited sexual categories, tensions, and assumptions from creeping into environmental and ecological thought. Indeed, the history of sexual understanding, particularly (qua Foucault) with the modern advent of a *scientia sexualis* emphasizing systematic sexual knowledge and proliferating a host of naturalizing sexual discourses linking individual sexual practice and experience with reproductive biology, is full of nature-talk, and nature-talk, including in its contemporary environmental forms, is full of sex.

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Historically, the rise of evolutionary thought in Charles Darwin’s wake generally coincided with the rise of sexological thought in Richard von Krafft-Ebing’s: new forms of biological and environmental knowledge jostled with new ideas about sex, and their commingling has had lasting results. In *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (1978), Foucault argues that the regulation of sexuality in modernity has been organized through two important discursive constellations: a biology of population and a medicine of sex. Although he understands these modes of biopolitical knowledge to be logically separate and distinct, it remains the case that the historical origins of modern understandings of sex, sexuality, sexual identity, and sexual orientation are grounded in biological discourses that are heavily influenced by evolutionary thought, and conversely, that evolutionary thought is supported by modern understandings of sex as an internal and essential category, and also by notions of natural sexuality from which nonreproductive sexualities are understood as deviant.

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Consider one trajectory as an example of this convergence. Darwin’s ideas on sexual selection, detailed especially in *The Descent of Man* (1871), focused on the ways in which competition occurred among males and among females of the same species in order to choose the “best” reproductive partner; although for Darwin certain traits clearly evolved as a result of natural selection (making the organism most able to survive its environment), other traits evolved from sexual selection (making the organism most attractive to reproductive partners of the same species). *Descent* details a huge range of activities and attributes, from nest building and tail feathers in birds to spear making and beards in human males, that found new prominence and significance as elements in a system of

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selection; sex became a matter of fitness, and individual attributes could now be evaluated based on their apparent adaptiveness to an organism's reproductive capacity. Indeed, although natural and sexual selection are different processes, in their co-relation as "selection," as modes of species adaptation, there was in Darwin a link between an organism's relationships to its environment and its sexual relations.

Foucault has argued that the very category of "the homosexual" was a creation of this Victorian period, a naturalizing move in such institutions as sexology and medicine in which sex came to be understood not as a set of acts but as a state of internal being (in this case, a deviant one), an "implantation of perversion" that had the effect of retroactively crafting heterosexuality as equally internal and constitutive: a question of one's nature. As he notes, modern medical institutions moved us from a regulation of sexual acts to an organization and "treatment" of sexual identities; where once there may have been women who had sex with women (to the extent that that particular conception was allowed to exist, which by many accounts it was not in the Victorian period), now there were formal bearers of sexual categories—"gender inverts," "tribades," and "lesbians"—whose sexual activities with other women could be linked to some basic biological fault. In short, in the early twentieth century, sexuality became naturalized; an individual's sexual desires were recoded as expressions of an inherent sexual condition, and that condition was understood in strongly biologized terms.

Evolutionary thinking (some of it only very loosely related to Darwin) gave this new series of sexualized "beings" an even greater narrative force. Not only was reproductive sexuality obviously necessary to the survival of the species, but individual moments of sexual and gendered behavior and physiognomy could now be tied to stories of evolutionary advantage and disadvantage (one neo-Darwinian teleology seems to be that if a trait exists it must be adaptive, and if that trait is gendered or sexualized then that adaptation must be sexually selected). Nature thus entered sex in powerful ways; although Darwin would likely cringe at some of the uses to which evolutionary thought has been put, with the popularization of his work came an increasing naturalization of sexual politics. For sexologist Havelock Ellis, for example, evolutionary narrative provided a way of explaining the existence of a diverse range of sexual phenomena, from modesty to masturbation to homosexuality. In his massive *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* ([1905] 1936), he combined biological with social Darwinism in a highly influential treatise on "sexual inversion," a term he used "to indicate that the sexual impulse is *organically and innately* turned

toward individuals of the same sex” ([1905] 1936, 4, emphasis added).⁹ Homosexuals became “natural.” Interestingly, for Ellis, the fact that inversion was congenital allowed it to be morally neutral; as a “fact of nature” it was, in fact, *part* of the narrative of evolution rather than its aberration. Predating Bruce Bagemihl’s theory of “biological exuberance” by almost one hundred years, Ellis wrote: “One might be tempted to expect that homosexual practices would be encouraged whenever it was necessary to keep down the population” (9).

But the naturalization and attendant moral neutrality of homosexuality were hotly contested by thinkers who were—also inspired by evolutionary ideas—committed to the idea of sexual perversion as a form of biosocial degeneracy, including Krafft-Ebing himself. As we will see below, some of these thinkers offered environmental causes for the appearance of homosexual degeneracy, including the emasculations caused by urbanization and industrialization: homosexuality, here, was a congenital *disease*, a threat to the fitness of the evolving human species rather than a simple abnormality, as Ellis would have it. As Dana Seitler (2004) narrates elegantly, competing physiognomic theories vied for prominence at the time, using what now appears to be an utterly arbitrary selection of physical traits to form “groups” of degenerates, whose physical peculiarities were taken as obvious indicators of their perversion, variously throwbacks to a “less evolved” state or, as degeneracy theories would have it, damaged or diseased cases caused by environmental or social mistake or decline. It is also worth noting, as does Magubane (2003), that these experimental forms of physical/environmental measurement were part of a larger emergence of scientific racism, in which different “races” were characterized by distinct physical characteristics as part of a colonial project of intellectual as well as economic dominance (sexual narratives intersected with and supported many of these racist stories, and both Darwin and Ellis use examples from “primitive” peoples to substantiate their evolutionary views). As with homosexuality, the application of evolutionary narratives to the explanation of race was fraught with difficulty: in particular, the ongoing tendency to equate reproductive fitness with the possession of those characteristics that happened to be (in their own minds, at least) associated with white, upper-class, western heterosexual men was certainly at play in many of the evolutionary and sexological accounts of the time.¹⁰

This rather self-congratulatory white heteronormativity was at play not only in the categorization of human bodies and sexualities; it was also amply present in the post-Darwinian development of evolutionary thought, especially that trajectory concerned with theories of sexual selec-

tion. Specifically, as heterosexuality came to be understood as a natural state of being (with nature understood, here, as a biological imperative against which deviant sexualities could be condemned as unnatural), theories of sexual selection had an increasingly difficult time coming to terms with the presence of same-sex but apparently sex-related activities and behaviors among the nonhuman species upon which so much of their evolutionary evidence rested. In a 1912 reconsideration of evolutionary theory, for example, Delage considers the presence of same-sex (potentially) erotic behaviors in certain animal species a bit of a perplexity for the theory of sexual selection: "The dancing swarms of many kinds of insects are found to be composed of males alone and no females are near enough to see" (1912, 103). As Jennifer Terry has documented extensively, reproductive sexual penetration is nonetheless a master-narrative in many evolutionary accounts, in which "nonreproductive behaviours have been seen as linked to the establishment of social relations, including cooperation and hierarchies, and have been interpreted not in terms of pleasure and desire but as signals of dominance, submission, reciprocity, and competition and an assumed struggle for survival" (2000, 154). In some cases, the assumption of heterosexuality has overridden otherwise pretty clear expressions of same-sex sex, requiring long and complicated explanations about, say, social hierarchy among primate females in order to bring the story back to the central issue of heterosexual copulation. "To many biologists and ethologists," writes Terry, "the problems presented by nonreproductive sexual behaviour have to do mainly with how it thwarts, disturbs, or, in the best light, merely supplements heterosexual reproduction" (154).

Although sexual selection is certainly not the only thing going on in evolutionary thought, and although one could argue that a robust understanding of *natural* selection could easily include diverse forms of sexual pleasure as a dimension of a given species' relations to its environments, it remains the case that heterosexuality also appears as a defining adaptive capacity in much ecological thought. In this model, heterosexual reproduction is the only form of sexual activity leading directly to the continuation of a species from one generation to the next; thus, logically, other sexual activities may turn out to be aberrant as a result of environmental transformations that exert their toxic effects on at-risk species by interfering with their reproductive capacities (as with the "effeminization" of bald eagles in the Great Lakes). If the ability of a species to survive in its environment is tied to its reproductive fitness, then "healthy" environments are those in which such heterosexual ac-

tivity is seen to be flourishing; if the environment is not optimal, then the effects may be experienced sexually, and can be seen most clearly in dysfunctional sexual biology or behavior such as homoeroticism. Clearly, this reasoning is not entirely sound, guided more by heteronormative assumptions than by a complex understanding of the diverse social relations of sexuality occurring in various animal species and environments. But it has had unfortunate consequences. In one case, well-meaning ecologists, convinced of the evolutionary pathology of same-sex sexual behavior, argued that the widespread presence of female homoerotic activity among seagulls in a particular location must be evidence of some major environmental catastrophe (Silverstone 2000). As it turns out, it wasn't: the world is apparently full of lesbian gulls. But this kind of "repro-centric" environmental position remains dominant; it has even been used to argue that the increasing prominence of transgendered individuals (human and other) is clear evidence of environmental contamination.¹¹ However much one might want to be able to pinpoint animal indicators of pollution or other environmental change, the *assumption* that gender dimorphic heterosexuality is the only natural sexual form is clearly not an appropriate benchmark for ecological research. It is clearly not the case that all sex leads to reproduction, for humans and other animals alike, yet the presence of nonreproductive sexual activities is frequently read as a sign of ecological decline: another twist on degeneracy theory. Indeed, the sexual blind spot in environmentalism is extensive: even in arguments about the environmental destruction caused by human population growth, the invisibility of anything like sexual diversity demonstrates that the paradigm of natural heterosexuality overrides the obvious existence of plenty of nonreproductive sexual options that might be more ecologically appropriate under the circumstances. (Bagemihl's [1999] "biological exuberance" notwithstanding, this option has not been taken seriously by proponents of sustainable development.)

Evolutionary thought has, of course, moved considerably away from some of the cruder teleologies noted above (many would argue that they were never present in Darwin to begin with), and the sleights of narrative hand by which nonreproductive sexual acts are rendered necessarily irrelevant, secondary, or degenerate in relation to reproductive sex have been challenged in many ways. Although this introduction is not the place to catalogue emergent perspectives in evolutionary theory, it is worth noting that several recent texts have responded to repro-centrism and extensively catalogued the existence of same-sex sexual activities in a wide variety of animal species, most prominently Bruce Bagemihl's *Biological Exuberance*

(1999), Joan Roughgarden's *Evolution's Rainbow* (2004), and Paul Vasey and Volker Sommer's *Homosexual Behaviour in Animals* (2006). To these significant texts, Myra Hird's important article "Naturally Queer" adds this summative insight: "Sexual 'difference' might be culturally significant, but [as nonlinear biology shows] this term obscures the much more prevalent sex diversity among living matter" (2004, 86), which includes a diversity of asexual modes of reproduction as well as several multi-gendered ones that appear to defy dominant, dimorphic accounts of sexual reproduction altogether. Indeed, in her 2006 "Animal Transex," she goes even further, arguing that "we need to resist the temptation to name certain species as queer . . . [and] consider how we might understand trans in humans, say, from a bacterial perspective" (2006, 45). The interplay of sociocultural understandings of queer with organismic sexual multiplicity is important, as Elizabeth Wilson insists, "because it renders the human, cultural and social guises of queer less familiar and more captivated by biological and social forces" (quoted in Hird 2006, 45, but note also the complex politics of representation and voyeurism, as discussed in Chris [2006] and also by Alaimo, Bell, and Sturgeon in this volume).

Queer Environments: The Sexual Politics of Natural Spaces

For a second intersection between sexuality and nature, we move to a consideration of the politics of natural *space* and the ways in which developing sexual politics, institutions, and practices have had an effect on the organization and regulation of nature as a socially produced set of places, and vice versa. In parallel with the ways that environmental science and related fields of knowledge have been shaped by heteronormativity—and in intersection with them, through discourses of health and degeneracy—modern nature-spaces have been deeply influenced by institutions and practices that have assumed and imposed particular sexual relations on the landscape. In turn, particular kinds of natures have been cultivated in order to produce and promote particular forms of sexual subjectivity. Both historically and in the present, then, sexual politics has had a distinctly environmental-spatial dimension, and landscapes have been organized to produce and promote (and prohibit) particular kinds of sexual identity and practice.

One of the most obvious sites in which heteronormativity has influenced ideas and practices of natural space is in parks, both wilderness and urban, not least because parks are publicly designated "nature" spaces and thus subject to more formal attention—and environmentally inflected

moral regulation—than other sites of human interaction in and with the natural environment. Indeed, it is worth noting that parks emerged as public institutions in much the same time period as the above-noted articulation of evolution and degeneracy: the naturalization of (apparently fragile) heterosexuality in the midst of a perceived proliferation of deviant sexual types and expressions began, in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, to create social anxiety about the state of white European masculinity, and the parks movement was heavily influenced by a desire to shore it up. In particular, anxiety was leveled at cities, and urbanization, industrialization, and environmental contamination (not to mention immigration) were held to blame for the social, moral, and even physical “decline” of the population said to be occurring at the time—as evidenced, apparently, by the increased visibility of homosexual activity in cities. Gay men were at the center of this anxious articulation. In part as a result of the idea that homosexuality was a sort of (creeping) illness, medical thinkers of the late nineteenth century came to believe that the environmental conditions of large urban centers actually *cultivated* the homosexuality that people were (they thought, increasingly) seeing; as Peter Boag writes, “medical experts associated ‘American’ homosexuality with the city, in part because of the urban center’s heavily immigrant population, but especially because of its environmental conditions. Pollution, tainted foods, and even the fast-paced nature of urban life ‘induced’ it” (2003b, 49). An array of explanations was offered for this supposed urban degeneration: the idea that the work men did in cities no longer brought them into close and honorable contact with nature; the completely inaccurate and highly racist belief that homosexuality was associated with immigrant populations; and the growing idea that homosexuality might, as a form of biological degeneracy, have environmental causes.

Parks were a curative response; with clear biopolitical overtones, they were created in part as places in which heterosexual masculinity could be performed and solidified away from the dramatic upheavals of American social and economic transformation, a restoration of the dominant social body through rigorous, health-giving recreation. As numerous authors have pointed out, beginning in the late-nineteenth century challenges to white, heteromascuine privilege in the form of (for example) women’s increasing economic independence, the restructuring of urban employment, the rapidly changing racial and ethnic politics of large cities, and the changing nature of sociality caused by the reorganization of patriarchal family relations under capitalism created a lot of public anxiety for the urban bourgeoisie (see D’Emilio 1983).¹² To state it rather baldly, white

men's economic supremacy was under threat, and with it many of the traditional anchors of discursive white masculine privilege. As Kimmel (2005) has pointed out, for example, a shift occurred in this period toward an increased corporealization of male power, a greater emphasis on the body and physical strength as signs and sources of male power. Theodore Roosevelt is the poster-boy for this transition: raised as a bookish child and politically rejected in his youth, he reinvented himself as a strapping, virile, and muscular man whose physical prowess came to be equated with and stand for his political strength. For our argument, it is no accident that Roosevelt found his body in the western wilderness of the United States; against the corporeally and even mentally enervating influences of civilization and urbanity, Roosevelt needed an elite and remote recreational space in order to reinvent and reassure his masculinity against the (effeminizing, changing) eastern city. Indeed, Haraway (1989) links the emergence of this Rooseveltian masculinity with the emergent taxonomic knowledge on display at the American Museum of Natural History. The corporealization of masculinity was clearly tied to the naturalization of heterosexuality, and primate taxidermy and display offered another material practice through which this emerging connection was established and made part of public discourse.

"Wilderness" was thus an important site for the cultivation of heteromascularity in several ways in this period (as, in many respects, it still is). Most importantly for our argument, perhaps, the rise of a preservationist movement in North America was a direct response to public concern with the declining nature of/in cities; combined with the rise of a public discourse of urban emasculation, the perception of a dwindling number of wild spaces in the continental United States came to be a focal point for urban anxieties about the loss of national character, coded as male (homosocial, *not* homosexual). Wilderness spaces such as parks came to be valued as sites to be preserved away from the corrupting influences of urban industrial modernity, and in particular, as places where new ideals of whiteness, masculinity, and virility could be explored away from the influence of emancipated women, immigrants, and degenerate homosexuals. The early parks movement was thus born partly from a desire to facilitate recreational practices that would restore threatened masculine virtues. Of course, this desire was also planted in the assumption that cities were sites of the particular moral degeneracy associated with homosexuality.

The joint construction of sexuality and nature is quite complex in this period; although we are not able pursue the idea here, it is also tied

to modern ideas of race and nation in both the United States and Canada (see Erickson 2003). There are, however, two sets of ideas to pull out. First, there is the assumption that homosexuality is a product of the *urban*, and that rural and wilderness spaces are thus somehow free from the taint of homoerotic activity. Nothing, in fact, could be further from the truth. At the end of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, the western wilderness was a space heavily dominated by communities of men. These men—prospectors, cowboys, ranchers, foresters—frequently engaged in homosexual activity. Indeed, if sexologist Alfred Kinsey's research was correct, there was in the nineteenth century *more* same-sex sexual activity among men in the remote wilderness than there was in the cities. As Boag documents extensively in his work on the regulation of homosexuality in the U.S. Pacific Northwest (2003a), homosocial sites such as logging camps and fishing operations included complex networks of sexual activity among men, and it was even the case that some urban men would leave the city in search of them.

Prior to the establishment and popularization of medical discourses establishing same-sex attachments as matters of biology and identity, such men were not understood as "homosexuals." To quote Kinsey, "these are men who have faced the rigors of nature in the wild. . . . Such a background breeds the attitude that sex is sex, irrespective of the nature of the partner with whom the relation is had" (in Boag 2003a, 52). It was not until homosexuality became coded as an inherent identity/condition that it came to be understood as a form of degeneracy and located in the artificiality of cities. Certainly, the increasing concentration of single male workers in some cities, and the rapid transformation of family relationships more generally, made it possible for interested men to find homoerotic contacts and/or social networks of men working in increasingly clerical occupations. Port cities such as New York, San Francisco, and Vancouver became very important places for homosexual men to carve out spaces for their fledgling sexual communities. But it was the growing *visibility* of these communities, and the increasing association of homosexuality with degeneracy, that tied the homosexual to the urban, *not* necessarily some quantitatively greater homoerotic presence (even though one must certainly acknowledge that urban conditions have allowed many aspects of gay male and lesbian culture to flourish, and that visibility has taken a particular shape as a result). The point is that the implantation of perversion was a distinctly urban phenomenon, and the fact of the proliferation of sexual possibilities in developing cities shaped the emergence of homosexuality as unnatural; emerging proto-environmental critiques of the

destructive artificiality of cities were thus instrumental in shaping ideas about the artificiality of gay men in particular (although these ideas were effectively contested, as we will describe below).

Lesbian history offers a slightly different inflection on these articulations of nature and sex. As noted above, invert and tribade became objects of intense and pathologizing medical scrutiny at about the same time as urbanization and economic transformation made it genuinely possible for (middle-class) women to achieve economic independence from men—meaning that sexual and other intimate relations between women became both visible and a threat.¹³ As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg documents (1985), in the developing conception of invert pathology, “unwholesome environments” made it possible for inverts to make advances on other women, especially (for Havelock Ellis, at least) on women who were not inverts but who might be predisposed to weakness for their advances. Such environments were ones that fostered women’s interactions independent of men: colleges and boarding schools, clubs, and political organizations. In terms of nature, then, on the one hand, women were encouraged to engage in supposedly wholesome activities, including recreational nature pursuits; the boys’ scouting movement was not opposed to the inclusion of girls, for example, even though it meant the encouragement of women’s friendships (perhaps because it strongly encouraged such activities as part of a woman’s cultivation of domestic competence, tying women’s nature-experiences directly back into patriarchal families). On the other hand, this inclusion was fragile and confined to a sort of domestic environmental border zone, in which (white) women were understood as bastions of effeminizing civilization in an essentially male wilderness. Lesbians could stand only as abominations in relation to this masculine ideal, and stories of women taking up gender-bending positions as male adventurers thrill in the double transgression involved: unnatural acts in nature.¹⁴

More recently, the pervasive assumption that gay and lesbian communities are essentially urban has had the lasting effect of erasing the ongoing presence of rural gay men and lesbians whose lives might not look much like white, metronormative, male-dominated Christopher Street: *Queer as Folk* and *The L-Word* could not have been set in Wisconsin or Saskatchewan, not because there are no gay men or lesbians in rural communities (see Bell and Valentine 1995b, Howard 1999, Kramer 1995, Osborne and Spurlin 1996, Riordan 1996, and Wilson 2000), but because gay and lesbian identity-production has been tied to particular urban formations as the spaces most authentically suited to the creation and expression of true gay and lesbian sexual culture. Indeed, as Kath Weston (1995) has pointed

out, the movement from rural to urban space has become symbolically overloaded in “coming-out” stories. Although it is certainly historically the case that migration of gay men and lesbians to particular urban areas has contributed to queer visibility, and thus to community vitality, the concomitant erasure of rural gay and lesbian possibilities has *contributed* to their ongoing flight from rural and suburban communities, to the ghettoization of queer culture as inherently and only urban, and to the widespread assumption that country spaces are inherently hostile to anything other than monogamous heterosexuality (and possibly polygyny). One cannot ignore violence perpetrated against gay men, lesbians, transgender and queer-identified individuals in rural settings, as it is certainly the case that homophobia is alive and well and living down on the farm: rural Christian conservatives in Oregon and Colorado nearly got homophobic ballot measures passed in their states in 1992 (which would, as Hogan describes in her chapter, have effectively criminalized public discussion of homosexuality in Oregon), and more recently have openly admitted the homophobic rationale behind the successful (although contested) 2008 “Unmarried Couple Adoption Ban” in Arkansas. But it is still clear that urban spaces are often *more* dangerous than rural ones and that systematic homophobic violence needs to be understood as a phenomenon with distinctly urban dimensions. The idea that natural spaces are always already hostile to gay men and lesbians, complete with the image of the homophobe lurking behind the trees, has the unfortunate status of being a self-fulfilling prophecy (see Bell 1997a, Filemyr 1997, and Romesburg 2007).

These spatial-sexual processes have also affected the spaces of *nature*, not only in formal and designated natures, but also across socionatural environments more broadly. On the one end of the spectrum, and most obviously, we see the physical concentration of gay men and lesbians in particular urban neighborhoods and their creation of distinct social, commercial, and recreational (including sexual) natures; in different cities in different ways, distinct patterns of gay and lesbian community *organize* urban nature in particular ways. As John Binnie and Gill Valentine write in their review of literatures in queer geography (1999), these “gay landscapes” (e.g., Manuel Castells’s San Francisco [1983] and Tamar Rothenberg’s Park Slope, New York [1995]) include both formal and informal institutions, and particular communities secure queer space in different ways, including occupations and organizations of the physical setting itself. As David Bell notes (1995, 1997b), for example, public sex is not only a form of physical occupation but also a practice of intimate citizenship, one that, we would argue, often demands and creates particular kinds of

public nature to accommodate and facilitate it (see van Lieshout 1997). In this case, a particular sexual sociality shapes physical nature-spaces—parks, ravines, paths, empty lots—as part of a public challenge to heteronormativity, and perhaps especially to the official heteronormativity of designated nature-space.

These heteronormative attempts to regulate sex in urban areas—including the ongoing active (and actively contested) prohibition of public homosexual activity—have also had lasting effects on urban environments. It is important to note that the urban parks movement was also a response to discourses of degeneracy, and public green spaces were promoted by a gamut of social reformers intent on improving the health and virtue of, in particular, the urban working class. In cities as well, the idea of park-nature as a space for the disciplined cultivation of virtue had an important sexual component. For their creators, following the lead of prolific landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, urban parks were “for the people”: parks were developed inside cities (e.g., Central Park, Mount Royal Park, and the Emerald Necklace—all Olmsted’s) to give urban inhabitants a public green space in which to gather and recreate. Certain kinds of activities were explicitly designed into these landscapes. For example, given the attachment of moral fitness to physical fitness demonstrated by organizations such as the Boy Scouts, sporting facilities such as ball fields were prominent in urban park development. In addition, there was a clear sense in Olmsted’s designs that parks were places to see and be seen; they were sites for public spectacle of a particular kind, including the conspicuous display of middle-class respectability and wealth. Parks were places for the public cultivation of morally upstanding citizens; they were thus advocated as sites of regulated sexual contact, in which courting heterosexual couples could “tryst” in an open space that was both morally uplifting and, given its visibility, highly disciplined. As Gordon Brent Ingram writes:

Many of the city centre parks in North America and Europe were first established or were redesigned in the late nineteenth century with an emphasis on the public promenade, the male gaze, suppression of public sexual contact, and team sports as a means to lift up working-class morality. Such public parks have usually been programmed for what are sometimes conspicuous displays of heterosexual desire, courtship, and conquest. (1997b, 102)

The design of urban parks, then, included an agenda of discouraging expressions of sexuality other than those formally sanctioned in the public

eye; morally and physically sanctioned heterosexual courtship was, in turn, built into the landscape with the strategic placement of such visibly pair-appropriate facilities as benches to punctuate the romantic stroll, open-walled gazebos, and wide “lover’s lanes” that provided for plenty of long-range visibility along straight corridors through the trees.

The heterosexist spatiality of cities and urban spaces is, as texts such as Bell and Valentine’s *Mapping Desire* (1995a) and Ingram, Bouthillette, and Retter’s *Queers in Space* (1997) document (and challenge), an increasingly public issue. (Petra Doan [2007] adds important transgender perspectives to literatures on the public contestation of urban space.) Less publicized, however, is the fact that heterosexism in rural landscapes has physically shaped what *rural* nature looks like—beyond the mere fact that the existence of parks, recreational and rural natures is directly marked with heterosexism.¹⁵ For one small example, think about public campgrounds. Particularly during and after the 1950s with the rise of the postwar auto-recreation culture (and the desire to get women to “return” to heterosexual domesticity after the war), camping was reinvented as a (car-based) family activity rather than an inherently rugged and masculine one (see Cerullo and Ewen 1984). In this era of heterosexualization, many camping facilities were created with an intentional design to resemble suburban cul-de-sacs—each campsite clearly designed for one nuclear family—and all camping occurring in designated “private” spaces away from “public” recreational activities such as swimming, hiking, and climbing (Hermer 2002). Trees were cut down in a pattern that screened campsites from one another, but not from the roadway or path, so that the rangers or wardens could still see in and make sure nothing illegal or immoral was taking place.

For a second and earlier example, consider Boag’s analysis of the settlement of much of the state of Oregon. As he notes, in the mid-nineteenth century, the Donation Land Act (DLA) encouraged a heterosexual pattern of colonization because of the way land was allotted to settlers. “A white male who was twenty-one or older . . . received a 160-acre parcel and an additional 160 acres for his wife” (2003b, 47). Women were not eligible for allotments as single people, and it was clearly in the advantage of men to have the two parcels, so “very young girls suddenly became marriageable and were soon wives” (Johanson, quoted in Boag 2003b, 47). Because of the comparatively large size of these allotments and the popularity of the program, not only did the DLA encourage heterosexual marriage along with the settlement of the west, but it imposed a monolithic culture of single heterosexual family-sized lots on the land, with significant effects

on the economic and environmental history of the region from nuclear family farming patterns, the inhibition of town development, and increased forestation.

As a result of the association of degenerate queers with cities, and rural and wilderness landscapes with men and/or heterosexual (Jeffersonian, agrarian) families, the idea that nature is a primary place in which to develop moral and physical fitness has had a lasting effect: as Roosevelt has already shown us, bodies are also key spaces for the spatial production of sex and nature. In the deployment of wilderness in the nineteenth century toward masculine identification, and also in the cultivation of visible heterosexual courtship rituals in urban spaces, it is clear that bodies have been organized to interact with nature-spaces in a particularly disciplined and heterosexualized manner. One more example adds a further dimension. As Bryant Simon's research has demonstrated, in the United States, the Great Depression and World War II were also periods of hotly contested masculinity, and wilderness—this time, as a workplace—was deployed to develop the male body as disciplined nature-object. Here, organizations such as the Civilian Conservation Corps provided unemployed young men with physically and morally healthy work in the wilderness. At apparent risk of degeneracy in cities—the twin specters, here, of homosexuality and communism—such men were located in camps far from urban centers and, between 1933 and 1942, strenuously “installed 89,000 miles of telephone line, built 126,000 miles of roads and trails, constructed millions of erosion control dams, planted 1.3 billion trees, erected 3,470 water towers, and spent over 6 million hours fighting forest fires” (Simon 2003, 80–81). All of these developments were markers of a national desire for a particular kind of man as much as they were about the infrastructural needs of particular landscapes: probably more so. But they also left a clear imprint on the landscape; many of these large infrastructural projects paved the way for postwar suburban and exurban development, in addition to road travel, hydroelectric generation, and forest conservation.

With capitalist globalization, a new host of spatial relations joining queer with ecology has emerged. Some of these conjoinings center on collisions of tourism with indigenous and other non-Western cultures and spaces, including gay and lesbian niche tourism as well as sex tourism that, in some cases, makes use of historical pastoral conventions to paint an exotic and sexualized (often Oriental) other (Altman 2000). Others involve the contestation of Western sexual categories by diverse sexual minorities whose lives, bodies, and natures are not nearly captured by even the pro-

liferating initials in the acronym “lgbtq” (Oswin 2007); as Gosine (2005a, 2005b) has documented, such contestations include challenges to international institutions and discourses of environment and development, not least because of strongly sexualized understandings of population and “good” environmental citizenship within the international development community. Still others make use of postcolonial theory to challenge the intersections of sex and nature in both historical and more recent imperialist practice, and indicate how culturally specific dominant Western ideas of sex and space turn out to be, both individually and together (see Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan 2002 and Spurlin 2006). Although these cross-cultural, transnational, and postcolonial investigations are only just beginning, they certainly highlight the fragility and specificity of the articulations of sex, bodies, and natures that are under consideration in this volume (for wider discussion of cross-cultural corporeal and sexual plurality, see Herdt 1996 and Nanda 2000).

Queering Ecological Politics

The final intersection we would like to explore in this introduction concerns the articulation of sexuality and nature as a form of eco-sexual *resistance*. Although, as apparent in the above discussions, resistances have been with us all along, it is worth specifically considering, again in a loosely genealogical way, a history of queer ecological attempts to confront and transform the kinds of ecologically implicated heteronormativity that we have begun to document here. This anthology may depart in significant ways from the trajectories thus far taken by nascent queer ecological critiques, but it is still part of a tradition of resistance that should be acknowledged here.

That said, if we were to judge from television shows such as *Queer as Folk* and *The L-Word*, we would hardly nominate gay men and lesbians as such as the world’s best nature stewards. Quite the opposite, in fact: gay culture, in the mainstream, is extraordinarily tied to lifestyle consumerism, particularly for white urban gay men but also increasingly for urban “lifestyle” lesbians as well. As Andil Gosine has written, “gay men, the story goes, shop. Urban gay men live in chic condominium apartments, buy a lot of hair and body care products, [and] have great taste in cars, clothes, and interior design” (2001, 35). Although one might be tempted to celebrate in these popular shows the general public’s apparently increased acceptance of gay so-called lifestyles, we offer that only a very narrow band of gayness—that portion tied to the fetishistic exchange of aesthetic

commodities—ends up being at all “acceptable.” Gay men and lesbians are OK not because they are queer, but because they are exemplary consumers in a society that judges all people by their ability to consume. Note that working-class queer folk, lower-income or anti-aesthetic lesbians, and older, sicker, or even HIV-positive gay men are not the ideal subjects of *Queer as Folk*. Not only is this band of British/North American “acceptance” of queer culture thus very narrow, but the continuing mainstream political process by which gay men and lesbians strive to be “accepted” in consumer society limits the full scope of political potential in gay, lesbian, bi, transgender, and other queer-identified communities. To quote Tony Kushner, “It’s entirely conceivable that we will one day live miserably in a thoroughly ravaged world in which lesbians and gay men can marry and serve openly in the army and that’s it” (in Gosine 2001, 35).

Our argument is thus that we should reorient our politics and take on something like a queer ecological perspective, a transgressive and historically relevant critique of dominant pairings of nature and environment with heteronormativity and homophobia, in order to outline possibilities responsive to these relations and, equally, explicitly critical of the continued organization of dominant metrosexualities through an environmentally disastrous (and often ethically void) lifestyle consumerism. Here, we are advocating a position not only of queering ecology, but of greening queer politics. The extension of queer into ecology is not, then, simply a question of making nature more welcome to gay inhabitation; it is also an invitation to open queer theory to ecological possibilities, and to thus produce a queering of ecocultural relations along the lines of Halberstam’s queering of space: “in opposition to the institutions of family, heterosexuality, and reproduction . . . according to other logics of location, movement and identification” (2005, 1). Queer ecology suggests, then, a new practice of ecological knowledges, spaces, and politics that places central attention on challenging hetero-ecologies from the perspective of non-normative sexual and gender positions.

This critical project is not entirely new. Gay men, lesbians, and others identified as “against nature” have historically used ideas of nature, natural spaces, and ecological practices as sites of resistance and exploration. In literature alone, one can find numerous examples of authors who have self-consciously deployed dominant nature discourses in the service of queer possibilities, who have brought conventions of nature writing to celebrate sexual diversity, who have taken dominant narratives of nature to task to create space for non-heterosexual possibilities, and who have written in new ways to reflect their views of the commingling of queer and

ecological possibilities. In other realms, one can see gay, lesbian, bi, transgender, and queer-identified individuals and communities insisting, in different ways, on the opening of nature spaces and ecological knowledges to sexually diverse—and sexually critical—possibilities. And most overtly, several recent works of environmental thought have carefully explored the ecological potentials of queer theory and practice, not only challenging the heteronormativity of mainstream environmental ethics and politics but offering new modes of theorizing human/more-than-human relationships. This section offers a few examples of these queer possibilities.

As noted above, pastoralism is a literary tradition with a decidedly queer history. As David Halperin (1983) and Byrne Fone (1983) have described, ancient bucolic poetry contained a range of sexual acts, desires, and preferences, and subsequent romantic reinventions of pastoral conventions have, despite homophobic attempts to the contrary, continued to include male homoeroticism as a central facet of the pastoral depiction of nature as a site for innocent, corporeal plenitude. In this pastoral literary tradition—which also meandered into the work of such writers as Walt Whitman and Henry David Thoreau, both highly recognizable figures in environmental history and literature—contemporary gay critics emphasize that natural settings have been important sites for the exploration of male homosexuality *as* a natural practice. Rural spaces in particular have served, in a wide range of literatures, as places of freedom for male homoerotic encounters (famously, in Forster's *Maurice* [1971], which was not published until after his death). In addition, *because* of the association of nature with ideas of innocence and authenticity, gay male writers have been able to use pastoral literary conventions as a way of making an argument for the authenticity of homosexuality. This "homophile pastoralism," as Shuttleton emphasizes, not only has been used by such writers as André Gide to make political claims for gay equality on the basis of the naturalness of homosexuality, but also has been used to challenge the very idea of the naturalness of *heterosexuality*. In Shuttleton's reading, Gide (in his ([1920] 1952) novel *Corydon*) tells a pastoral story in which shepherds not only engage in same-sex love but muse, together, on the mysteries of making love to girls. The young shepherd is a typical pastoral figure; he is close to nature in his daily work, and is also largely in the company of other young men, with whom he engages not only in the immediate pleasures of the flesh but also in the reflective dialogue associated with the young men's passage from a state of natural, youthful innocence to socialized manhood. What is key, here, is that same-sex passion is associated with that natural innocence, and opposite-sex eroticism is the thing that needs

to be *learned* in order to enter the adult social order. What we have, here, is a “reverse discourse” that pairs nature with the homoerotic, and artificiality with the heteroerotic; against an assumption of natural heterosexuality, Gide actually positions heterosexuality as a normative practice *into* which the young shepherds must be disciplined. As Shuttleton writes, “Gide launches a transgressively counter-intuitive argument that it is this compulsory heterosexuality which is constructed and inauthentic since it needs to be taught and culturally maintained” (2000, 134).¹⁶

Along similar lines, some lesbian authors have also used pastoral literary traditions to develop a reverse discourse that argues for the naturalness of women’s same-sex love relationships and/or the congenital equality of lesbians. These “lesbian pastoral” literatures have a history that extends well back into the nineteenth century, for example into the writings of such authors as Sarah Orne Jewett, for whom the institution of romantic friendship between women (as portrayed particularly in her novel *Deephaven*) was a privileged site from which to stage an exploration of natural environments. Most prominently, though, Radclyffe Hall actively deployed neo-pastoral conventions in her important novel *The Well of Loneliness* (1928). In *The Well*, Hall paints a portrait of her sexual invert protagonist, Stephen Gordon, as a quintessentially natural figure by locating her firmly in the homosocial male rituals of the English landed gentry. Stephen’s moral credentials are iteratively established in the novel as she participates in, and succeeds brilliantly at, riding and hunting (which she later rejects as cruel to the fox), as she demonstrates fairness and kindness in relation to animals and the landscape more broadly, and as she develops a romantically steeped commitment to stewarding the landscape that she will inherit. She can’t, and doesn’t, because she is an invert and not a “girl” and can’t be both *and* the inheritor of her aristocratic nature; Hall underscores, however, that the *fact* that she can’t is a matter of injustice, not degeneracy, and that the “congenital nature” of the invert (Ellis writes the opening commentary) is, perhaps, even more noble and natural than that of the ordinary heterosexual.¹⁷

But the pastoral is not the only literary form through which queer-identified authors have sought to engage and challenge relations between sexuality and nature. As Jonathan Dollimore demonstrates brilliantly (1991), Gide’s and Hall’s naturalizations of desire (among others) can be counterposed to the aesthetic of Oscar Wilde, for whom “insubordinate inversions” of ideas of nature and authenticity tied aesthetic to sexual transgressions in significant (and, for Wilde, personally risky) ways. His disruptions of conservative, Victorian articulations of sex, nature, and

nation “subverted the essentialist categories of identity which kept morality in place” (68), and indeed, his plays on surface and artifice called into question the entire project of articulating sexual identity with “deep” nature in any authentic way. Along similar lines, Stacy Alaimo (1999) reads a range of historical and contemporary feminist texts for the ways in which they engage, in varied ways, both natured discourses (including evolutionary thought) and natural environments. Among the works she discusses is Jane Rule’s (1964) novel *Desert of the Heart*, which Alaimo reads as intentionally *anti-pastoral* in that it rejects a celebratory idea of lesbian connection to nature and instead plays with a complex tension between an idea of nature as discursive *constraint* on lesbian sexuality and an idea of nature as a physical space that can both incite and represent lesbian desire. Dianne Chisholm similarly underscores the transgressive diversity of queer appropriations and rewritings of space, in this case, with a focus on urban spaces. Engaging the work of Walter Benjamin, she reads such authors as Samuel Delany as configuring specifically queer occupations and transformations of urban spaces, in which queer space “demarcates a practice, production, and performance of space beyond just the mere habitation of built and fixed structures . . . and designates an appropriation of space for bodily, especially sexual, pleasures” (2005, 10).

From Whitman and Thoreau to Gloria Anzaldúa and Jamaica Kincaid, many other works of literature have engaged sex and nature in significant and innovative ways and could be offered up to queer ecological reading (there are several examples of such reading included in this volume, ranging from Adrienne Rich to Derek Jarman); just as “nature” has been involved in complex ways in the organization and regulation of sexual knowledges, spaces, and practices, so too have writers challenged and worked with these involvements in order to queer them. To name one particularly self-conscious example, Eli Clare’s memoir *Exile and Pride* (1999) takes on the task of queering nature through a series of connected essays about his experiences growing up as a dyke (his term) in a rural Oregon logging community and his move into urban queer and environmental politics; these reflections are cross-cut with stories about his disability (cerebral palsy) and history of sexual abuse, and they centrally concern the ways in which his corporeal, class, and sexual experiences challenge not only dominant understandings of naturalized sexuality but also mainstream gay/lesbian and environmental politics (including both pastoralism and romanticism). The violences of his past in sexual and ecological conjuncture add up to a complex reading of the present: “My queer body: I spent my childhood, a tomboy not sure of my girlness, queer

without a name for my queerness. I cut firewood on clearcuts, swam in the river, ran the beaches at Battle Rock and Cape Blanco. When I found dykes, fell in love for the first time, came into a political queer community, I felt as if I had found home again" (10). And: "In writing about the backwoods and the rural, white, working-class culture found there, I am not being nostalgic, reaching backward toward a re-creation of the past. Rather I am reaching toward my bones" (11). And: "The mountain will never be home" (12).¹⁸

Neither are queer ecological resistances confined to the literary. As suggested in an earlier section, gay men and lesbians have not only engaged and transformed environmental discourses, but have also resisted and shaped natural environments themselves. For example, despite the attempts of park planners to discourage it, many gay men have made use of public urban green spaces as sites for both individual sexual contact and community-oriented activism. Ironically, exactly *in* the parks that were frequently designed to discourage homosexual activity, men have found and created a form of sexual community that, it could be argued, borrows pastoral elements that pair nature and homoeroticism in quite a transgressive way. There are at least two important elements to consider. In the first place, what is significant about public sex in parks is that it is *public*, meaning that it overtly challenges heteronormative understandings of what is appropriate behavior for public, natural spaces. Here, we must remember that public parks are *disciplinary* spaces, in which a very narrow band of activities is sanctioned, practiced, and experienced; only certain kinds of nature experience are officially allowed. In this context, one can consider public gay sex as a sort of *democratization* of natural space, in which different communities can experience the park in their own ways, and in which a wider range of natural experiences thus comes to be possible. As Grube recounts a sexual encounter in Queen's Park, Toronto: "I stayed there because I loved storms, love to see nature in its violence. . . . We enjoyed ourselves so much, and of course the rain had swept in and we were all wet, and all those soggy clothes to put on. But it was joyous. . . . I love wild, spontaneous moments like that where . . . it just goes crazy and it's wild" (1997, 134–35). Clearly, wild sex in a public park in a thunderstorm is a far cry from the prim courtship rituals embodied in Olmsted's formal promenades. While park sex remains controversial, it seems that gay men's—and lesbians' and others'¹⁹—re-appropriations of these socionatural spaces fosters an alternative and critical awareness of urban nature. Such awareness has, in some instances, galvanized gay communities to take environmental action; to give one example, shortly

after the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York, a popular cruising area in Queens, Kew Gardens, was destroyed by extensive tree cutting. “Within a week . . . there were public actions showing conscious visibility, and the first gay liberationist environmental group, Trees for Queens, was formed to restore the park” (Ingram, 1997a, 47).

As several essays in Rachel Stein’s collection *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice* (2004) demonstrate—several of which are penned by contributors to the current volume—this tradition of sexual/ecological politics can be conceived as a form of sexual environmental justice, not least because more mainstream framings of environmental issues tend to ignore the homophobic and heterosexist relations that provide the social context for many environmental issues. Nancy Unger (2004), for example, documents a rich history of sexed and sexual articulations of environmental justice and also documents the specific heterosexism of the backlash against Rachel Carson upon the publication of *Silent Spring*. Giovanna Di Chiro (2004) points to the sexual politics of the environmental genome project. Katie Hogan (2004) outlines the strong environmental justice narratives that appear in contemporary gay mystery fiction. And Noël Sturgeon (2004) unpacks recent environmental popular culture for children, revealing there both heterosexist and profoundly racist conventions. As Stein herself notes in the book’s introduction, beginning an understanding of environmental politics with issues of race, gender, and sexuality expands the understanding of what “counts” as an environmental issue; viewed as a site of articulation between ecological and social concerns, the environment, from a queer, feminist, and anti-racist perspective, comes to be understood as “where we live, work, play and worship” (2004, 1), a field open to a variety of intersectional analyses between sexual and environmental politics.

Gay men, lesbians, and other queer-identified groups and individuals have, in fact, created a variety of different spatial-political relationships to natural environments. Gay cruising areas in cities disrupt dominant understandings of public/private natures in acts of sexual appropriation, to be sure, but there have also been many other attempts to figure gay and lesbian community against the grain in suburban and rural natures as well. In the early twentieth century and influenced by strongly pastoral sentiments, English gay activist and utopian socialist Edward Carpenter was strongly committed to a rural socialist project of vegetarianism, voluntary simplicity, and manual agricultural labor; he also considered rural natures suitable places for what he called the “Uranian” temperament (indeed, it was a visit to Carpenter that inspired Forster to write

Maurice).²⁰ In the United States, and influenced by more recreational than socialist desires, as Esther Newton documents in her historical work on the gay resort at Cherry Grove, Fire Island, the barrier island landscape both allowed and fostered a queer, pre-Stonewall community “between escape and nesting, between voluntary exile and the longing to belong. . . . This resort, whose isolation from the mainland was the condition for its existence, is where gay people were able, not only in one way but in many, to achieve American ideals. It is also where an intrepid minority of heterosexuals adapted to and came to enjoy living in a gay-defined summer world” (1993, 7–8).

And perhaps informed by more overtly environmental ideals, back-to-the-land movements of both lesbians and gay men began in the 1970s and continue into the present. Communities such as the Womanshare Collective in southern Oregon were founded on the idea of rural nature as a privileged set of spaces in which women could find, “in the healing beauty of nature,” “a safe space to live, to work, to help create the women’s culture [they] dreamed of” (quoted in Sandilands 2002, 137). These “wimmin’s lands” had complex ecological goals, ranging from opening rural landscapes to women by transforming heterosexual relations of property ownership, to withdrawing the land from patriarchal-capitalist agricultural production and reproduction, to symbolically reinscribing the land with lesbian erotic presence, to creating a distinct lesbian “public sphere” founded on both lesbian separatist and overtly ecological concerns (see also Kleiner 2003).²¹ While many of these communities have disappeared, others are still there (as Unger’s chapter in this volume attests) as examples of what it looks like to live intentionally as a lesbian environmentalist. To quote one long-term resident: “Women’s land, lesbian land . . . [is] land that women have purchased and are living on [as lesbians]. It is intended to serve lesbians, not only the ones who live here, and it is intended to be lesbian land evermore. . . . And moving to the country stretches who a lesbian is” (Sandilands 2002, 142).²² According to Scott Herring, it can also stretch the definition of who a fag is: as demonstrated in the early years of the journal *RFD* (*Radical Faerie Digest*), rural gay men challenged the increasing metronormativity of gay politics by building what he calls a “critical rusticity” that offered “an intersectional opportunity to geographically, corporeally and aesthetically inhabit non-normative sexuality that offers new possibilities for the sexually marginalized outside the metropolis as well as inside it” (2007, 346). Related to the interconnected networks of lesbian separatist communities (including journals of their own such as *Maize*), the “faggot separatism” that the journal promoted

throughout the 1970s imagined a rural, queer public sphere in which ideas of nature, agriculture, stewardship, and human-animal relations could be challenged and rethought against and among the experiences of sexual minorities.

Finally, in the realm of environmental philosophy and politics, there have been concerted attempts to articulate formally a queer ecological position. Beginning with a special issue in 1994 of the Canadian environmental studies journal *Undercurrents* entitled “Queer/Nature,” several works have appeared offering a range of theorizations of the relationship between sexual and ecological politics. Perhaps the best known of these works is Greta Gaard’s article “Toward a Queer Ecofeminism” (1997), in which she explores the historical, philosophical, and religious roots of what she understands as a strong relationship between the oppression of queers and the domination of nature. Specifically, she examines, using a broadly ecofeminist framework of analysis, how “Western culture’s devaluation of the erotic parallels its devaluations of women and of nature” (115) and understands that “queers are feminized, animalized, eroticized and naturalized in a culture that devalues women, animals, nature, and sexuality” (119). One of the most valuable insights to come out of Gaard’s work is her emphasis on “erotophobia” as a key link between heterosexism and ecological degradation, as it opens the door to a consideration of environmentalism *as* a sexual politics, as a form of aesthetic and corporeal struggle against the disciplinary logics of heteropatriarchal capitalism; this connection has been taken up and refined by subsequent authors such as Lee and Dow (2001), and extended into other realms of environmental thought such as environmental education (Russell, Sarick, and Kennelly 2002). More phenomenologically inclined thinkers such as Elizabeth Grosz (1995, 2005) have also explored, beginning from the corporeal materiality of bodies and their interactions and agencies, ethical and political possibilities arising from sexual and erotic encounters with the more-than-human world, a queering that operates at the level of polymorphous bodies and pleasures as well as (or instead of) identities and discourses. As Grosz writes, “feminist, queer and other struggles around sexuality and pleasure may find their struggles are strengthened . . . [if] they acknowledge the pre-personal forces at work in the activities of sexed bodies, institutions and social practices” (2005, 195; see also Alaimo and Hekman 2008 and Sandilands 2001, 2004a).

To return almost full circle to the beginning of this genealogy, Ladelle McWhorter’s wonderful philosophical and personal account of bodies and pleasures (1999) insists on a problematization of sexual (and other) cor-

poreality that includes both the human body and the more-than-human world in its imagination. She outlines a dominant, modern understanding of sovereign or managerial bodies, in which relations of corporeal subjection offer up the flesh of the less powerful to, for example, the expert guidance of others (in which one can see, for example, homosexual nature explained and guided by sexology and evolutionary theory): “Those deemed deviant on any developmental scale are rightfully subject to those who are not deviant and who have the expertise to redirect development to bring it back into accord with the ideal norm” (160). In response, she argues—using both Foucault and tomatoes—for an appreciation of *deviation* as the basis of both a sexual and an ecological politics. “What is good is that accidents can happen and new things can emerge. . . . What is good is that the world remain ever open to deviation” (164). This kind of philosophical articulation, while beginning in a critical analysis of heteronormativity and sexual oppression, moves out into a wide-ranging exploration of what it might mean to “queer” a whole range of environmental philosophies, practices, and institutions.

Cognizant of the work of ecofeminist theorists and activists such as Sturgeon who point to the ongoing need to understand nature as a site of specifically *political* contestation (1997), we note that both queer and environmental activists have long since insisted that the redrawing of conceptual boundaries is intimately linked to the transformation of material practices involving both human and more-than-human natures. Although there are many other lines of political flight that we might have considered, this genealogy has suggested that “queering ecology” involves the opening up of environmental understanding to explicitly non-heterosexual forms of relationship, experience, and imagination as a way of transforming entrenched sexual and natural practices toward simultaneously queer and environmental ends. The essays included in this collection draw on a range of queer and ecological theories in order to do so, but they share this fundamental supposition: scrutinizing and politicizing the intersections between sex and nature not only opens environmentalism to a wider understanding of justice, but also deploys the anti-heteronormative insistences of queer politics to potentially more biophilic ends than has been generally imagined.

Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire

The essays in this anthology draw from, but are not confined by, these different genealogical currents of queer/ecological intersection. Thus, the

book is organized into three sections that, we feel, reflect potential sites for further theorizing queer ecologies, and although these sections clearly overlap the genealogical avenues mentioned above, they also overflow them in what we hope are productive ways. The three sections consist of important themes of conversation at the intersection of sexuality and nature: investigations of the “sexuality” of nature, the intersections between queer and ecological inflections of bio/politics (including spatial politics), and the queering of environmental affect, ethics, and desire.

AGAINST NATURE? QUEER SEX, QUEER ANIMALITY

In part 1, each of the four authors examines how sexual natures are produced through the concepts of animal and human, nature and culture. This debate has recently received a significant amount of popular attention, perhaps because, as Alaimo records in her chapter, the intimacy of humans and domestic animals has made the plurality of animal sexualities one of those “open secrets” that we all know. Bagemihl, Roughgarden, and Vasey and Sommer, among others, have clearly illustrated the astounding difference in sexual practices through the evolutionary chain, including dolphins, macaques, feral cats, and pink flamingos (John Waters vindicated!). Clearly this body of scientific research illustrates the mistaken accusation of queer acts as being against nature, a theme that is taken up in more than one contribution to this volume. Nonhuman same-sex acts, as both Bell and Alaimo argue, point us directly to the definition of nature and culture, for at the very least they change how we see the natural life of animals, and perhaps they also make us question the possibility of explaining nature as separate from culture. As these essays also demonstrate, Haraway’s reworking of nature and culture is a key trajectory for queer ecological thinking: “Cyborg unities,” she tells us, “are monstrous and illegitimate” (1991, 154). They question the distinction between animal and human and carve out a space to rethink the possibilities of inhabiting the material world at the end of the twentieth century. Drawing the complexities of these relationships into the twenty-first century, most recently with the help of her dogs, Haraway argues for a consideration of neither nature nor culture, but naturecultures as the interaction between the two.

While queer subjects have recently found support in the biological sphere, the opposition between nature and culture has more often been a hindrance, and the accusation of being against nature still holds much cultural power in religious and political spheres. Yet, instead of reclaiming the naturalness of queer activity, the authors in this section directly chal-

lenge the split between nature and culture upon which charges of being against nature rely. The chapters illustrate the multiple ways that social subjects (both human animal subjects and nonhuman animal subjects) carry these concepts in our daily lives, from the politics of animal and human reproduction to the acceptance of social diversity as strength. Taking up Haraway's call to investigate the space of illegitimate natures, these queer ecologies balance between legitimizing queer behavior (it is, after all, a profound part of life all over the planet) and delegitimizing the binary constructions of sexuality and animality that have informed scientific and cultural discussions of sex.

While Bagemihl invokes the biological exuberance of nature to illustrate just how limiting, and patently heterosexist, dominant scientific lenses are—just how much culture has infringed upon getting at the real life of animals—Alaimo recasts this excess in broader terms. The queerness of animals, Alaimo suggests in chapter 1, "Eluding Capture: The Science, Culture and Pleasure of 'Queer' Animals," also clearly illustrates the unassimilability of sexual diversity. The multiple, even astonishing, modes of sexual behavior amongst animals can inspire a challenge to the nature/culture dualism by eluding representation (as she confesses, "Who knew?"). The standard reductionist terrain of science works very imperfectly here, and Alaimo shows how this imperfection opens up the social and political options for a green queer theory of pleasure. Released from its biologically determined frames, pleasure takes up possibilities that force us to reconsider our notions of human and animal.

The acceptance of queer animals as a place of public debate hinges upon the broad public acceptance of diversity as beneficial to social groups. Yet when the rationale behind celebrating such diversity is questioned, as McWhorter remarks in chapter 2, often it is linked to a biologized understanding of the strength of a species: the more diverse the species, the more resistant it is to external threats or disease or disaster. In "Enemy of the Species," McWhorter forces us to examine the genealogy of this discourse of diversity, arguing that inherent within the biologically amorphous concept of species are those internal threats that impact the overall strength of the species. Historically, queers have been placed as part of this internal threat, along with people of color, people with disabilities, and chronically ill people. Given this lineage, any attempt to argue for sexual diversity as a biological asset of the species needs to challenge the ontological position of the species in our discussions.

Exploring the privileged position given to reproduction in discussions of animals and nature, Sturgeon (chapter 3) stretches out the threads

that link together notions of family, reproduction, and nature. From the Right's celebration of the documentary *The March of the Penguins* to the rather minor and conciliatory place that indigenous peoples of the Arctic have been given in discussions of global warming, Sturgeon illustrates the central normalizing position that heterosexual reproductive nuclear families have taken in popular discussions of the changing global environment. By examining these constructions of family through a reproductive justice lens, we can see how the material relationships are often excluded from the clichéd trope that we "belong to the same family." Penguins, as the children's book *And Tango Makes Three* will tell us, do not have only opposite-sex relationships, and their modes of reproduction, intimately integrated into the Antarctic environment, do not map neatly onto human sexual family patterns. Yet the privileging of Western family units of reproduction (which are closely aligned to Western modes of production) dominates popular discussions of both penguins and ecological change: Al Gore's most dramatic slide (aided by the use of a cherry picker) shows growing population as the major threat to a stable climate.

By intertwining stories of the sex performance group Fuck for Forests, queer animals, and the nudist movement, in chapter 4 Bell highlights the often contradictory ways in which nature and culture are mobilized through discourses of sexuality. Whereas Fuck for Forests sees cultural infringements upon nature in the context of both sex and nature, naturists take pains to separate culture from nature, represented in the nonsexual spaces to be nude. The recent literature on queer animals utilizes nature, in the form of queer animal sex, as a challenge to the cultural production of a heterosexist evolutionary format, whereby survival equals heterosexual reproduction. The diverse positions ascribed to nature and culture in these three lenses illustrate the dynamic of Haraway's naturecultures, a recognition of the necessarily intertwined relationship of nature and culture. Illustrating this commingling, Bell's stories of sexual natures highlight how naturecultures are themselves often very queer.

GREEN, PINK, AND PUBLIC: QUEERING ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Part 2 explores the practices of queer ecology that have taken root in different times and spaces. If a motherly Lois Gibbs and a fatherly David Suzuki are the fantasy champions of environmentalism, these chapters look beyond the heterosexual family unit to find a broader potential for environmental and queer politics. Specifically, the authors here illustrate not just the ideological nature of the environmental family unit, but also the productive use of the intersections between sex and nature as sites of

political engagement. Working against a metronormative stereotype of gay life as inherently consumerist, many queer activists have taken up the connections between nature and sexuality as a critique of the normalized subject positions (pink or green) that consumer subjectivity offers. While queer activists are struggling through the commodification of gay lifestyle in Calvin Klein ads, television shows such as *Queer as Folk* and *The L-Word*, and the marketing of gay and lesbian festivals (such as metropolitan Pride events or the Gay Games), environmentalists are faced with the crisis of green consumerism as it threatens to take the winds from the sails built up against consumer waste (Floyd 1998, Gosine 2001). The tensions between consumer politics and pink and green activism are broad and terminally unresolved, but they point to the increasing power of capital to territorialize moments of resistance. The dynamics of queer environmental politics, as the chapters in this section illustrate, offer places for both environmental and queer activists to counter the normalized subjectivities offered by mainstream political choices.

From sisterhood movements to toxic neighborhood tours, the authors in this section offer alternatives to the encroaching politics of normalized subjectivity by illustrating the coalitional possibilities of queer ecological questions. Yet these coalitions do not always fit easily together, and queer ecology involves a necessary critique of the heteronormativity and whiteness of environmental politics. Sexuality, gender, and race, as can be seen in discourses of reproduction, overpopulation, wilderness conservation, and gentrification, are as significant factors within environmental change as the supposedly straightforward processes of ecology. The trouble with wilderness, as William Cronon's landmark (1996) piece suggests, is that it presents a political agenda based upon our image of wilderness, a dated, racist, gendered, and sexualized wilderness. The task of clarifying a new politic in which Gibbs, Suzuki, and other political activists will not be typecast expectantly into the heterosexual family unit deals with building new understandings of the spaces of environmental practice.

The rather unfortunate and not always subtly racist analysis of overpopulation that haunts much American environmentalism—most recently, as both Gosine and Sturgeon note, in Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*—holds within it a longstanding revulsion against what Gosine illustrates as "the sex of others." Malthusian politics, he argues in chapter 5, links up with homophobic discourses about gay male sex through a concern for the public safety of a national culture. The genealogies of overpopulation and the criminalizing of sexual acts between men find common links in the anxieties of national space. Using colonial history to

show how nationalism is established through racialized heterosexuality, Gosine demonstrates how sex between men and non-white sex have been cast as dangers to nature, making them threats to public safety. Thus, a queer ecological framework not only would offer a possibility of coalitions between racial and sexual inequities, but also would necessarily provide an analysis of the contemporaneous development of race, sexuality, and nature through each other.

The recognition of queer ecologies is built upon the understanding that these alternative cultures of nature have been ongoing throughout both the environmental movement and gay and lesbian history. In chapter 6, Unger documents some of these practices that have played an important role within the construction of lesbian space in the United States. Starting with the bohemian freedom offered to black lesbians in Harlem and moving through the white rural lesbian retreat community of Cherry Grove, the back-to-the-land movement in Oregon, the Pagoda womynspace in Florida, and the proliferation of women's festivals such as the Michigan Women's Festival, to the recent experiences of Alapine Village, Unger argues that the alternative spaces were and are influenced by the environments around them. Not only that, though: these spaces provided examples of alternative environments that address the sexism, homophobia, and violence that have been adopted within larger environmental movements.

While environmental justice groups have long argued that the claim of the natural is a particular normalizing discourse, it is still often used as a rallying cry around which mainstream environmental problems are mobilized. In chapter 7, Di Chiro examines how the threat to presumably natural gender patterns has been the central organizing principle around recent activism on toxic pollution. Media and activists focus on the specific disruptions to hegemonic ideas of masculinity, femininity, and heterosexuality, taking issue with the size of alligator penises and the presence of intersex fish in particular environments. Without dismissing the absolute need to address the accumulation of toxic chemicals in the worlds we inhabit, Di Chiro shows how the misplaced concern over abnormal sexual difference apparent in several works by influential toxic activists tends to produce a heterosexist and transphobic hysteria instead of focusing on serious health problems, including breast, ovarian, and testicular cancer, immune system breakdown, diabetes, and heart disease. By acknowledging the politics of normalcy that operates within these toxic discourses, Di Chiro shows the possibility of a truly coalitional politics that embraces a wide variety of subjects and biological positions while

maintaining a critical perspective on the changing materialities of our bodies and environments.

Addressing the productive politics of coalition building, something that has long been a topic within both queer and environmental politics, Hogan demonstrates in chapter 8 how a queer ecological politics contests the use of nature to establish social hierarchies. Using Joseph Hansen's detective novel *Nightwork* and Heather MacDonald's film *Ballot Measure 9* as examples of coalition politics, Hogan's chapter exposes the ideological production of queers as against nature. In its discussion of the Oregon Citizens' Alliance's ballot initiative to drastically restrict the rights of gay and lesbians, *Ballot Measure 9* targets how the frame of nature is mobilized to portray queers as perverse and unnatural. *Nightwork* similarly contests "against nature" discourses to show that, rather than queers being a threat to nature and society, it is rather homophobia and capitalism that are toxic. To confront the politics of the naturalization of nature, these texts both develop a coalitional politics that address the complex racial, economic, and sexual dynamics that can help challenge "the ways in which nature and the natural are used to condemn, control, and stigmatize communities and groups."

For Ingram, the concern for the political consequences of queer space is one of the benefits of using queer theory in conjunction with landscape ecology. By queering the social and natural sciences within the field of landscape ecology, Ingram argues that queer ecologies can provide a useful material analysis to historical and emerging patterns in queer life. Using the production of Vancouver's West End as a specific, gay-positive neighborhood, chapter 9 illustrates the changing dynamics of political and spatial interests in the area and challenges urban discourses of gay enclaves as "ghettoes." The West End, often seen as a place of urban eroticization, tells a complicated story of economic interests pairing with both some specific queer subjectivities at the expense of others, and with the larger queer community at the expense of racial and economic minorities. By using a conceptual framework articulated in the pairing of queer urban history with landscape ecology, Ingram argues that these patterns of coalition and contradiction can be analyzed to provide us with a better description of the urban experience of queer subjectivities, along with a deeper vision of the modes of urban eroticization for which we should be looking.

DESIRING NATURE? QUEER ATTACHMENTS

In his discussion of the queer politics of Michel Foucault, Halperin argues that queer theorizing produces possibilities to counter the "paucity

of choices” for ways that we can become “infinitely more susceptible to pleasures” (1995, 81). This question is no doubt the one that Ennis and Jack are attempting to deal with on the shoulders of Brokeback, and it is a question that has arisen in a surprising number of places. While fist-fucking and S/M are Foucault’s (and Halperin’s) models, we can also see this expansion of pleasure in, say, Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s 2001 film *Amélie*, in which Audrey Tautou’s character finds solace in the touch of seeds and beans as an expression of her frustration with traditional heterosexuality, or even in Rachel Carson’s long-term romantic friendship with Dorothy Freeman (Carson 1995; see also Grosz 1995). Queer ecology allows us to understand the links provided by queer theory to understand that our pleasures are not merely between humans, but are expanded and significantly shaped by the production of nature and space around us.

Asking questions of what is desired in and through nature necessarily tours us through the politics of sexuality, mobilized through scientific, national, or literary codes. But like much else that goes on in the name of nature, desire is always surpassing the frames established for it, and a queer politics of desire allows us to become open to what exists beyond the discursive frameworks that have been established for these experiences. As Grosz argues, one of the tasks of queer politics is to “embrace the openness, to welcome unknown readings, new claims, provocative analyses—to make things happen, to shift fixed positions, to transform our everyday expectations and habitual conceptual schemas” (1995, 174). A similar openness to excess is found within much ecological writing, where the phenomenological interaction with the expanse of that which is beyond the human is reason enough for inquisitive openness to new pleasures. This desire for experience is at the heart of Annie Dillard’s *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974), the style and desire of which is queered in the work of Ellen Meloy, examined in this volume by Chisholm. The possibilities of queer desire for nature offer not just moments of pleasure, but, as the authors in this section illustrate, moments in which we can make the necessary connections between the policing of sexuality and the increasing destruction of nonhuman life. Queer attachments work both to celebrate the excess of life and to politicize the sites at which this excess is eradicated.

Exploring the potency of poetry to challenge naturalizations of heterosexuality, in chapter 10, “The Place, Promised, That Has Not Yet Been,” Stein draws upon the work of Adrienne Rich and Minnie Bruce Pratt to illustrate lesbian responses to the positioning of lesbian eroticism as a “crime against nature.” Both Rich and Pratt deploy intimate descrip-

tions of natural landscape paired with lesbian homoeroticism to embed forbidden desire in spaces that have been appropriated by homophobic regulation. Where Rich explores complex questions of identity, including sexuality, as they are embedded in natural landscapes, Pratt explicitly tackles crime-against-nature discourse, particularly as it appears in the U.S. anti-sodomy laws that saw her separated from her children. Both authors use the erotics developed between nature and poet to illustrate both lesbian love and the violence inherent in the naturalization of hierarchical social relationships. Indeed, in Pratt's and Rich's poetry, the crime against nature is enforced heterosexuality, not erotic same-sex desire.

Ecological texts mix with national spaces, and often those texts work to naturalize a sexual relationship within the national imagination of its citizens. Erickson's chapter 11, "fucking close to water," takes as its starting point a comic articulation of Canadian identity, "a Canadian is someone who knows how to make love in a canoe," and interrogates how the sexual identity mobilized by the canoe hides the naturalization of a nation built upon colonial soil. The citizenship idealized in this statement not only hides a heterosexuality connected intimately to nation and nature, but also presupposes the nation as a natural entity. As a leisured craft that was adopted from indigenous peoples, the canoe represents a particularly salient place to interrogate not merely the heterosexual politics of the nation, but also the ways the sexual politics are dependent upon the colonial assumption of superiority held by the state. Tomson Highway's novel *The Kiss of the Fur Queen* illustrates the destructive impact of colonial heterosexual institutions upon two Cree brothers, and requires us to think about the nation without assuming its continued existence.

It is part of the circumstances of queer relations of and to nature, given the devastating impact on both constellations that occur daily, that significant energy must be directed toward documenting, resisting, and, indeed, living through periods of loss. Yet, as Mortimer-Sandilands shows in chapter 12, "Melancholy Natures, Queer Ecologies," the impact of loss upon queer ecologies need not be immobilizing. Using recent reformulations of Freud's theory of melancholy, she argues that public acknowledgments of loss offer queer ecological activists a language in which to resist a commodification of nature that removes the specificity of nature, including the possibility of grieving for individual elements and instances of nature. Modern environmental concern is motivated by a need to mourn lost objects, but rarely is the value of what is lost recognized; instead there is a mad scramble to find replacements, replicating

through the commodity form the same relations of ecological destruction that created the loss in the first place. Using the work of Jan Zita Grover and Derek Jarman, writers who connect ecological devastation to their personal experiences of working and living with AIDS, Mortimer-Sandilands asks us to dwell on what has been lost and recognize the value of devastated landscapes instead of fetishizing the about-to-be-absences of more “pristine” nature.

Connections, assemblages, and becomings form central concerns for many queer and nature writers, and the possibilities offered by nature for models and metaphors are truly quite limitless. Chisholm, in her “Biophilia, Creative Involution, and the Ecological Future of Queer Desire” (chapter 13), takes nature writer Ellen Meloy as her guide to the rewriting of E. O. Wilson’s “biophilia,” the connections between human and animal. While not connected to LGBTQ politics specifically, Meloy’s musing on the desire of nature and the desire for nature radically resituate contemporary understandings of biological and sexual desire. Chisholm pairs Meloy with Deleuze and Guattari to show to how Meloy’s “biophilic” tendencies situate becomings as a possible queer ecological position. In this way, the chapter speaks to how cutting-edge ecological thinking understands queer desire to be the quintessential life force, since it is precisely queer desire that creates the experimental, co-adaptive, symbiotic, and nonreproductive interspecies couplings that become evolution.

In sum, all thirteen contributions to *Queer Ecologies* both draw on and stretch the boundaries of the queer ecological imaginings apparent in previous works in, for example, science studies, environmental history, queer geography, ecocriticism, and queer theory. Embodying profound epistemological revisions as well as philosophical, political, and aesthetic challenges to hegemonic pairings of sex and nature, the volume points to an ecology that embraces deviation and strangeness as a necessary part of biophilia, sexual pleasure and transgression as foundational to environmental ethics and politics, and resistance to heteronormativity as part and parcel of ecological science and green strategy alike. Against the commodification of nature as resource and as spectacle, and also against the fetishization of LGBTQ consumerist lifestyles, *Queer Ecologies* argues for a perspective based on the mobilization of queer perspectives and politics against “against nature” toward radical ecological ends.

NOTES

1. Early versions of parts of this introduction previously appeared in Mortimer-Sandilands (2005). *Brokeback Mountain* won the 2006 Academy Awards for Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Score. The film is based on the short story "Brokeback Mountain" by E. Annie Proulx in *Close Range* (1999).

2. There are various versions of this abbreviation in current usage—glbt, lgbltq, etc. We have, in this volume, retained each author's individual choice.

3. Although we do not have space to explore this point here, Jack is actually a bit more "gay" than Ennis, and this characterization is quite important. Jack allows himself to dream of the two men sharing a life and a future together; Ennis cannot or will not. Jack eventually pursues other men; Ennis does not. Jack is killed, possibly as a result of homophobic violence; Ennis is not. At the end of the day, the film does not leave much space open for positive expressions of gay identification, let alone same-sex relationships. And as Kathleen Chamberlain and Victoria Somogyi (2006) point out, while the opening of the film in 1963 could be read as an accurate portrayal of the absence of public representations of gay male community at the time, the fact that the film also ends, in the mid-1980s, with no change to that absence erases the entire history of the post-Stonewall emergence of gay men and lesbians into public life and unwittingly reinforces the story in which rural places are only and always dangerous places for queers.

4. For a selection of critical perspectives on the film, see the Fall 2006 issue of *Intertexts* (Lubbock) and the Spring 2007 issue of *Film Quarterly*.

5. There are ways in which both Jack and Ennis are *imperfectly* virile in the heteromasculine mode, especially in their class positions, which leave Jack married to a woman who approves of his death and Ennis living in a trailer afraid to talk to his daughter. We consider also that their unsuitability for heterosexuality effectively de-naturalizes it: their "natural" masculinity is expressed together in the wilderness, and institutionalized heterosexuality is clearly an effeminized and unnatural space in which both men suffocate (and Jack dies). There are many notes of misogyny, here, that are also apparent in other instances of the gay pastoral.

6. Roosevelt haunts *Brokeback Mountain*: he went to nearly the same region that Ennis is from to remake himself in light of accusations that he was effeminate.

7. Although there are clear differences between Wyoming and Arcadia, both physically and economically.

8. Donna Haraway's work (e.g., 1991) is an important place from which to consider the potential of feminist science and technology studies to "queer" nature. Literatures on non-Western sexualities and their relations to non-Western creations of nature clearly reveal other kinds of queer ecologies in addition to resistances to the Anglo-American ones on which we generally rely here; see Pflugfelder (1999).

9. Ellis distinguished congenital homosexuality from "pseudohomosexuality," which he considered to be socially produced in such places as schools (and thus preventable, as he details in the conclusion to the work).

10. There have, of course, been many critical challenges to evolutionary theory, sexual selection, and the obvious abuses some sociobiologists and evolutionary psychologists have perpetrated on Darwin's work. For a selection of such challenges, see Gowaty (1997).

11. TransAdvocate.org (<http://www.antijen.org/transadvocate/index.html>) claims to be a website "dedicated to exploring the relationship between our environment and gender." It notes, for example, that "although little research is available directly linking transsexualism to exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals, a wide array of evidence indicates a relationship, including sexual developmental effects found in

wildlife, corroborating animal laboratory studies, and to a more limited extent, human studies.” Nancy Langston (2003) considers this research carefully and thoroughly, but manages still to assert essential dimorphism as necessary to sexual and gender health. Although the effect of endocrine disruption on human (and other animal) health is a serious issue, the line of research is profoundly flawed in several ways, not least its reduction of transgender identities to biological questions and its equation of sexual health with sexual difference.

12. These different processes occurred unevenly and under specific geographical, political, and cultural conditions. Recent historical studies are rich with detail about the particular ways in which gay and lesbian communities shaped and were shaped by particular cities; see, for example, Chauncey (1994) and Kennedy and Davis (1994).

13. Although it is clear that women had a variety of sexual relations with one another in other historical periods (not to mention other places), one view is that (white, upper-class) women’s “romantic friendships” were not much of a threat to patriarchal family forms until the late nineteenth century, were generally invisible, and were, when considered at all, understood as natural relationships for women because they were not read as sexual. They were thus also, as Sandilands (2004b) has documented, relationships through which *women* could experience nature homosocially (and sometimes even homoerotically).

14. The performance art of the Lesbian National Parks and Services (a.k.a. the “Lesbian Rangers,” Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan) takes aim at exactly these lesbophobic discourses, and especially at the complete invisibility of lesbians in dominant wilderness discourses. Dempsey and Millan not only perform a caricatured and hyper-visible lesbian sexuality “in” and “as” nature, but also, as rangers, take on the authority of the park itself to *enforce* lesbian visibility. See Dempsey and Millan (2002), and also Sandilands (2004c).

15. Although the examples used in this introduction are primarily North American, Little and Panelli (2007) explicitly raise the question of nature and sexuality in the Australian Outback and explore the ways heterosexist expectations and practices directly shape perceptions of nature. There is a growing literature on nature and sexuality in Australia that also includes Waitt and Gorman-Murray (2008).

16. Shuttleton also offers a strong critical reading of *Maurice*, which, he argues, rewrites elements of the pastoral toward a “homoeroticised backwoods” (2000, 138).

17. As Shuttleton demonstrates, pastoralism is—even in its queer deployments—often highly problematic: it “may be a homoerotic genre, but is nevertheless constructs identities within existing, often exploitive, hierarchies of social class, gender and ethnicity” (2000, 129). Along similar lines, Bobby Noble (2004) is critical of Hall’s particular invocation of class and nation in her naturalization of inversion.

18. Clare has also written an interesting essay (2004) in which he explores both the physicality and the metaphoricity of the “stone” in stone butch.

19. See Ingram’s conversation with Pat Califia on the culture of public sex in the South of Market Area in San Francisco in Ingram, Bouthillette, and Retter (1997, 177–96).

20. See Carpenter (1908). Sheila Rowbotham’s (2008) biography of Carpenter is a must-read, as it documents not only Carpenter’s extraordinary social influence (he met and wrote about Forster, and also Whitman and John Addington Symonds), but also his social context. He appears, through her, as an iconoclast, but a very intelligent one.

21. Many lesbian separatists held environmental concerns central to their politics. For example, Sally Miller Gearhart’s 1979 novel *The Wanderground* envisions a world in which women, freed from oppressive male influence, are able to live

together in polygynous sexual relationships in a rural world that is carefully separate from destructive, male-dominated cities. In that woman-centered world, women are better able to find both rich erotic and social relations to one another, and rich social and erotic relations to their natural environments, which are actively prevented in heterosexual, patriarchal societies. Thus, the novel argues—in a sort of radical feminist pastoral—that heterosexuality is not natural, and that it is destructive both to women and to nature; here, we have a narrative that reverses the idea that homosexuality is an urban illness, and instead argues that *heterosexism* is the urban, anti-nature ill to which lesbians must respond.

22. We have to point out a delicious irony. The state of Oregon contains a particularly high concentration of separatist wimmin's lands. As indicated earlier, that state, in the nineteenth century, was particularly heterosexually organized because of the DLA's privileging of heterosexual families in its allotment practices. Because this land allotment strategy had, among other things, the long-term effect of discouraging town development, in the late twentieth century we see, even on the interstate corridor, very sparse settlement and comparatively low land prices. Both of these factors helped to create an ideal environment for lesbian intentional communities.

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