



## CHAPTER SIX

### Damn Right We're Here to Destroy Marriage!

*Ryan Conrad*

I sometimes think the gay movement would be much better off if it said,  
'Yes, we do harm society and it's a good thing.'

—Dennis Altman (1978) in conversation with Gore Vidal

#### Whose Agenda?

The “gay agenda” is generally understood to be a pejorative phrase popularized by religious conservatives in the 1990s who were negatively describing the advancement of legal rights and broader cultural acceptance of gay and lesbian people (Herman, 1997). Many gay and lesbian activists in the United States and around the globe are still working tirelessly to deflect and dismantle this kind of hostile rhetoric coming from the religious right, most often through sleek public relations campaigns and costly legislative lobbying that relies on rather dubious and often times unconvincing “we are just like you” rhetorical strategies. For example, there are a number of nonprofit organizations in the United States that carry out this kind of work, two of the largest and best-funded being Freedom to Marry and Marriage Equality USA. Freedom to Marry consists of two distinct, well-funded, suborganizations: the nonpartisan Freedom to Marry Incorporated, and the explicitly partisan Political Action Committee (PAC) Freedom to Marry Action. Freedom to Marry Incorporated claims that its resources are used to “develop and pursue educational, organizing, and advocacy strategies” and includes five staff members whose work is specific to public relations and social media. According to its website, Freedom to Marry Action Incorporated is entirely committed to legislative lobbying by the remaining four staff members at Freedom to Marry who are not administrators. Marriage

Equality USA boasts a media team staffed by five people on its website while also referring to the importance of media work by declaring it "the mouthpiece of modern culture."

Freedom to Marry and Marriage Equality USA are amongst the largest single-issue gay marriage advocacy organizations in the United States, but multi-issue organizations like the Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, American Civil Liberties Union, and many other smaller statewide organizations all devote varying degrees of their resources to lobbying and social media in support of gay marriage. Multimedia public relations campaigns and legislative advocacy work are detailed at length on their respective websites complete with normative rhetoric touting the worth of gays and lesbians in long-term monogamous relationships alongside images of smiling, middle-class-appearing couples (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.; Human Rights Campaign, n.d.; Lambda Legal, n.d.).

In contrast, activist groups like Against Equality, a transnational radical queer activist collective of which I am a founding member, embrace the religious right's branding of gays and lesbians as terrorist extremists who are out to destroy traditional marriage, the family, and the nation (Floyd, 2004). This sensational anti-gay rhetoric was canonized well before AE's existence in the formative 1993 propaganda video *Gay Rights/Special Rights: Inside the Homosexual Agenda*, produced by Reverend Lou Sheldon, founder of the Traditional Values Coalition. This film served as a response to the growing visibility of gays and lesbians as a result of activism around nondiscrimination policies and HIV/AIDS. It was a time when gays and lesbians were fighting very public referendum battles over city and state nondiscrimination ordinances like Colorado's Initiative 2 and Oregon's Ballot Measure 9 in 1992, organizing a national march on Washington, D.C. for gay rights in 1993, and participating in confrontational media-savvy AIDS activism with groups like the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) in the late '80s and early '90s.

The anti-gay rhetorical device can still be found today amongst many propaganda materials produced by the religious right, notably: Americans for Truth About Homosexuality, Defend the Family International, Family Research Council, the American Family Associ-

ation, and the organization Truth in Action, which produced a similar short film as the Traditional Values Coalition titled *The Radical Homosexual Agenda* in April 2012 as part of its online Truth That Transforms webcast. Instead of engaging and working to reject the "gay agenda" claims of those positioned within the religious right, AE shamelessly says: "Yes! We are your worst nightmare!"

This strategy of embracing the religious right's worst nightmare is a humorous, yet serious component of AE's critique of both what we refer to as "hetero-supremacy" and the place of inclusionary politics in a radically equitable queer future. Against Equality is certainly not the first to take such a radical position on marriage and the family as, for more than a century, many feminist scholars and activists have laid the foundations for this work (Heywood, 1985; de Cleyre, 1995; Goldman, 1969; de Beauvoir, 1953; Rich, 1986; Etlebrick, 1993; Duggan, 2003). AE situates itself in this radical feminist lineage, and the labor of these scholars and activists is essential to AE's work in the contemporary gay and lesbian political moment.

As a collective of queer cultural workers, academics, and activists, AE ironically embraces the contemptuous slander manufactured about us by the religious right. Instead of expending our energy clamoring for respectability and inclusion, we work toward a world where marriage is no longer a prerequisite for basic human rights like healthcare, where narrow legal definitions based on the ideological supremacy of nuclear family structures—gay or straight—no longer limit the viability of other possible kinship networks, and where the administrative apparatus of nation-states can no longer restrict the movement of bodies across their confining regulatory borders.

In the context of U.S. neoliberalism, the family is the nucleus through which the state disburses essential benefits—like healthcare—and basic privileges—like being able to determine who has the right to visitation in hospitals. These are based on narrow conceptions of "caregivers" and "family." Only recently, for instance, has the privilege of hospital visitation been granted to nonromantic partners in the United States, allowing people to give these to close friends, without the necessity of a romantic or familial relationship.<sup>1</sup> In addition, significant benefits that impinge upon or expand the rights of people to move across national borders are based upon

marital status and outdated conceptions of families constructed around spousal breadwinners.

Given this context, the remainder of this chapter will explore the benefits, as well as potential drawbacks, of embracing the conservative notion that queers are pushing a threatening and destabilizing "gay agenda." I will consider the liberatory effects of actually pursuing this feared gay agenda to its end point. This chapter is based on the premise that the "gay agenda," set up as the supposed nemesis of the right, in fact resembles, in its parroting of heteronormativity, the same values of normalcy and adherence to standards of decency and morality as the campaigns for gay marriage in the United States. From this perspective, I will tease out a more radical queer agenda as a platform from which to destabilize the neoliberal state's focus on the family.

### The Problem With Equality

The rhetoric of equality, much like the rhetorical strategies used by gay and lesbian political organizations to contend with the religious right's "gay agenda" claims, is firmly grounded in politics of respectability.<sup>2</sup> Gay journalist LZ Granderson makes this link unmistakably clear in his May 10, 2012 TEDx Grand Rapids talk, "The Myth of the Gay Agenda." In this presentation, which is also available online, Granderson argues against the existence of a so-called gay agenda while also making a case for the legalization of gay marriage. Through a veneer of liberal sarcasm, Granderson explicitly links these two themes while making affective claims about his status as an upstanding citizen, hardworking journalist, and capable father of a "respectful young man." Unfortunately the politics of respectability engaged here by Granderson—and more broadly by contemporary mainstream gay and lesbian political organizations—has considerable consequences, as the rest of this chapter will show.

Equality rhetoric demands that sexual minorities limit their vision for the most fantastically equitable queer futures, where material and affective needs are met through egalitarian collective self-determination, to the hetero status quo. Instead of demanding legal protections that reflect the varied kinship networks and queer family structures that fall outside the compulsory ideology of conjugal

monogamy,<sup>3</sup> queers are being corralled into making their families fit the narrow definitions of current family law. As noted by family law scholar Nancy D. Polikoff (2008), "the civil rights victory of marriage for those gay and lesbian couples who seek it may come at the expense of law reforms benefiting a wider range of families" (p. 98). She emphasizes the flaws of this narrow vision of LGBT equality by suggesting that more equitable futures for LGBT people start with asking what LGBT folks actually need, and not by asking what straight married people already have that gays and lesbians do not.

To exist in family structures that defy marriage laws and public/private-sector policies that naturalize and incentivize nuclear family structures is to risk financial losses, limit one's access to even the most basic forms of healthcare, and restrict one's ability to perform citizenship and cross nation-state borders, and more (Ingraham, 1999). With so many material benefits at stake, it is no wonder that access to healthcare and immigration rights for bi-national couples have figured so prominently in the publication materials of groups like the Human Rights Campaign (2009), Freedom to Marry (Wolfson 2004), and Lambda Legal (2008). But as Chrys Ingraham (1999) asks in her materialist study on the wedding industrial complex, why is the distribution of social and economic benefits based on marital status and not other qualities like the "ability to breathe, for example?" (p. 17).

The potential risks that come with defying the current legal framework of marriage and forfeiting its attendant benefits as described earlier include poverty, illness, premature death due to lack of access to adequate care, imprisonment, indefinite detention, and deportation.<sup>4</sup> Calling this desperate situation a choice and not acknowledging the state coercion that many marriages are, creates a false sense of autonomy in our neoliberal society (Cott, 2000, p. 8). When a person is in a position of having to be married to someone or go without healthcare and possibly die, or get married to someone with citizenship or be deported to a place where you might be killed or imprisoned, we can hardly call this a choice. Polikoff (2008) sharply asserts, "While the movement for marriage equality has insisted it is fighting for same-sex couples to have the choice to marry, marriage is not a choice if it is the *only* way to achieve economic well-being and peace of mind" (p. 133, emphasis hers).

The queer political imagination, once rooted in the visionary and confrontational politics of the 1960s and '70s and exemplified by the quote from Dennis Altman with which this chapter opens, has withered away, leaving queers with little imagination and few political options other than assimilation. Jaye Cee Whitehead (2012) points out this historic disjuncture in her sociological analysis of gay marriage and neoliberalism, stating,

The structural possibility and apparent advantages of building "families of choice" with multiple sources of dependency and financial support are not an immediate reality for the proponents of same-sex marriage.... The fact that these alternative models exist should make us wonder why proponents of same-sex marriage are working for inclusion in the marriage model rather than capitalizing on momentum from the sixties and seventies that was working toward deinstitutionalizing marriage privilege within the law. (p. 18)

Instead, marriage has become the defacto self-explanatory rationale for distributing material benefits and life chances. It's now conform or die.

This particular critique, that queer and trans folks are given the choice to conform or die, could be construed as hyperbolic. Yet, when we consider that for many gays and lesbians as well as straights, in the only industrialized nation without some form of basic universal healthcare, the only way to access medical benefits is to marry. This is the cold hard truth of conformity. As AE collective members who are also activists working on issues like HIV/AIDS, healthcare, and immigration rights, especially for queer populations, we know all too well that the state often effectively coerces people into marriage partnerships. These are often fictitious ones, like the ones between queers and straight people for the sake of immigration and naturalization. In many cases, these coerced partnerships are often only one of very few options to stay alive, for instance someone being forced to return to a country of origin where their sexuality could earn them a death sentence or the lack of healthcare for deadly medical conditions.<sup>5</sup>

The rhetoric of equality articulated by mainstream gay and lesbian rights organizations shrinks the possible political strategies to what AE defines as a losing game of seeking mere inclusion within systems,

institutions, and cultural traditions that largely reproduce social and economic inequalities (Ingraham, 1999, pp. 163–164). Frantic calls for "Full equality now!" typified by events like the Full Equality Now rally organized by San Diego, California-based Unite to Make It Right on December 4, 2010, ignore the fact that marriage privileges, culturally and economically, the formation of conjugal couples over all other familial forms. As Elizabeth Freeman (2002, p. viii) argues, these demands further solidify an unequal society where conjugal couples have greater access to public resources, while the uncoupled struggle to work around a legal, economic, and cultural logic that marks some more equal than others.

The state-by-state drive to secure gay marriage in the U.S. and the multimillion-dollar nonprofit sector, complete with six-figure salaried career activists, is producing costly public relations campaigns.<sup>6</sup> These media offensives primarily work to convince fence sitters and would-be voters that the gays are just like them, save the gendered difference amongst the neo-nuclear gay families. One needs to look no further than the 2009 or 2012 pro-gay-marriage campaign materials in my home state of Maine, where the smiling, White, gender-conforming, middle-class-appearing, able-bodied families in picturesque suburban backyards look no different than those who appear in the anti-gay marriage campaign materials save the occasional same-sex couple.

The visual narratives mimic one another, with the pro-gay marriage campaign materials loudly proclaiming, "See! We are just like you!" But for once it would be nice to see a media campaign about valuing all families that features queer and trans folks in all our freaky, and not-so-freaky glory. The list of possibilities might include two leather daddies and their cherished young leather boy, an inter-generational S&M dyke couple, the autosexual androgynous punk rocker, the fat trans femme and her girlfriend and her girlfriend's two boyfriends, the single immigrant lesbian with a sustaining circle of dear friends, the cooperative-farming collective of blended families, the single gay son living with and caring for his elderly mother, and the butch single mom. Perhaps we would be better off admitting that a lot of us queers are not that fantasy image of familial security à la *Leave It to Beaver*, that we never will be, and that these othered family structures are integral to our emotional and economic survival. This is

not merely a call for celebrating all families or more diverse media representations of queer families, but a life-and-death demand to fundamentally restructure the social and economic benefits of family law to support and reflect our actual familial realities.

Additionally, what kind of violence is done when the diverse family structures described earlier are actively disappeared by gay-marriage campaigns that are more concerned with proving how normal and deserving some gays are than they are with actively supporting and protecting the varied and vital familial structures on which many of our queer lives depend? Who is further marginalized and in what ways when reactive mainstream gay and lesbian organizations allow the religious right to define the discourse about our lives and worth? And what happens when campaigns like those for gay marriage soak up and then squander all the emotional energy and financial resources of various communities where essential services—such as elder care, housing, addiction treatment, mental health services, HIV-positive support services, and anti-violence advocacy—for queer and trans folks are quickly disappearing?

If queer lives and family structures are as varied as imagined earlier in this chapter, then why would we demand inclusion in a society and legal framework that explicitly reduces the ways in which we can articulate our partnerships and meet both our material and affective needs? Instead of demanding inclusion, queers should be demanding the transformation of hetero-supremacist society so that all families are valued under the law and marital status has no bearing on one's access to basic things like healthcare and immigration. This is AE's demand. Forget equality. Those of us on the periphery need something far better to both survive and thrive.

### Embracing the Irony

On the surface, *Against Equality*, in its name alone, conjures up some of the worst images of the disgustingly homophobic and transphobic religious right who make outrageous claims about gays and lesbians being largely responsible for terrorism (Amanpour, 2007), natural disasters (Gross, 2006), AIDS (Fischer, 2010), and the Holocaust (Lively & Abrams, 1996), amongst other things, and therefore are not to be regarded as fully human. What kind of group

would actually declare, in unabashed politically incorrect fashion, that they oppose equality? Once people find out that AE is actually an organization composed of queer activists, they either get the joke embedded in our group's confrontational name and ask more questions, or lump us in with other conservative gay and lesbian organizations like the Log Cabin Republicans—an organization composed of gay and lesbian Republican Party members founded in the U.S. in 1977—and GOProud—a nonpartisan, ultraconservative organization for gays and lesbians founded in the U.S. in 2009.

The confusion our name and battle cry often incite is an intentional component of our project. We believe that this productive confusion elicits deeper probing of the gay-marriage issue that is otherwise defined by the one-dimensional sloganeering as seen on daily liberal and conservative news programming in the United States. The confusion that arises when people realize queer folks on the political left, not merely the religious right, are articulating the anti-equality politics of AE, can lead to productive questions. For example, "How can *they* be against equality?" which then begs the question, "What is 'equality' and how do we define it?"

This confusion has made many interesting things happen that more direct and obvious sloganeering would not allow: a lengthy book review of *Against Equality: Queer Critiques of Gay Marriage* (Conrad, 2010) was published by Ben-Peter Terpstra on the Daily Caller under the title "Not all gay activists support gay marriage" (2011), and then re-blogged on the websites of the resolutely anti-gay-marriage group the National Organization for Marriage (2011) and the ultra-right-wing Christian legal group the Alliance Defense Fund (Alliance Alert, 2011); our spoofy satirical blue-and-yellow "greater than" stickers that make a mockery of the Human Rights Campaign's blue-and-yellow equal-sign logo have appeared on high-end sports cars next to Tea Party bumper stickers; livid math professors have shown up to university events ready to shout us down only to leave largely convinced of our broad-based social and economic justice platform; LGBT university alumni groups have tried to have our events cancelled at their alma mater; members from statewide equality organizations have refused to dialogue with AE at our events; and a few gay and lesbian activists have even sent death threats detailing

the ways in which they intended to cut up my “inbred, white trash, redneck” body into pieces and dispose of me in a dumpster.<sup>7</sup> Similar threats were sent to Yasmin Nair, another member of the AE collective, detailing in explicitly racist terms the ways in which she would be dismembered as well. We are causing trouble to say the least, but more important, these responses show just how little room there is to question the generic logic of equality and the rhetoric of assimilation.

### Setting Back “the Movement”

As Dennis Altman (1978) so eloquently put it nearly 40 years ago, if society is as heterosexist, racist, transphobic, sexist, classist, ableist, and xenophobic as many of us queers know it to be from our bodily experiences in the world, then society as it exists is detrimental to our well-being and we are better off dismantling it, not joining in to reinforce deeply inequitable legal and cultural traditions like marriage.

Against Equality, along with other more radical leftist queer and trans organizations, like Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention that opposes both militarism and marriage in the United States, or the New York City-based Queers for Economic Justice that fights for economic justice in the context of sexual and gender liberation, have become the bad queers who flaunt their sexual difference and complicate the single-issue gay and lesbian political campaigns that depend upon the veneer of societal respectability and the partitioning of political issues. Kenyon Farrow, the former director of Queers for Economic Justice, as quoted in Carlos Motta's *We Who Feel Differently* (2011), states,

economic justice issues and massive imprisonment are so clearly based on race and class and the ability or opportunity to access material resources as well as the likelihood of your body and physical presence to be criminalized by the state. The national mainstream equality movement in the LGBT population is not dealing with these issues because they think in order to win the policy agenda they set, they have to present the LGBT community as “normal” as middle America. Meaning the community and all of its promotion, advocacy, TV shows, sitcoms, all that has to present as white, straight America. The movement isn't interested in challenging larger structures of racism or economic deprivation because it sees value in assimilating the few gay and lesbians who can assimilate into white, middle-class, Christian, capitalist patriarchy....I don't think the LGBT movement has a vision for

where it is going. I think it has made politically expedient choices without actual vision for change or consideration of their policy choices and what these campaigns ultimately mean. (pp. 41–42)

By asking similar kinds of questions, like “What kind of equality are we talking about and for whom exactly?” or raising intersectional critiques as Farrow does here, we've been accused of derailing or setting back the movement for equality for gay and lesbian people.<sup>8</sup> If we, as queer and trans activists, are going to leverage massive amounts of capital, emotional energy, and other resources for political gain, we damn well best make sure we are fighting for social and economic outcomes that benefit the greatest number of people. To do this, the most marginalized, not simply the most convenient and respectable, must be at the center of our organizing strategies.<sup>9</sup>

On a practical and personal level, AE is not for or against gay marriage nor do we have an interest in purist political posturing that polices others' behavior. The point is that the dichotomy of the gay-marriage debate is a distraction from larger structural questions about how we, as a society, want to collectively organize ourselves. Unfortunately, the reactive rhetoric of the gay-marriage campaigns sound more and more like George W. Bush, “You are either with us or with the terrorists” (Stanley, 2010). This you-either-support-gay-marriage-or-you're-a-homophobic-bigot sentiment has been, and continues to be, articulated to us at our own events. This mode of thinking squanders the queer political imagination while restricting its vision of social and economic justice to the legal confines of the status quo here and now.<sup>10</sup>

If AE—and others like us who are committed to a more egalitarian reworking of the family and the nation—are indeed setting back the so-called movement, perhaps that is not such a bad thing after all? If we are marching in the direction of limited legal familial definitions and intensely privatized social safety nets, setting the movement back or stopping to think seriously about the direction we are headed cannot be a bad thing. After taking stock and thinking in broader terms, perhaps marriage is not the best strategy or even the best way to ensure everyone's material and affective needs are met, gay or straight. Difficult times require difficult strategies and we must relocate our energies in strategies that build diverse, broad-based

coalitions and fight for what really matters: collective self-determination that ensures no one's material and affective needs are left unmet.

In using the concept of self-determination, AE is not evoking the neoliberal principle of personal responsibility, but calling for a political framework that recognizes that varied communities have different needs that can no longer be met solely by the prescriptive models of monogamous romance and families headed by "bread-winners." In addition, we must begin to question the basic paradigms upon which most so-called reform has been based thus far and, instead, demand structural changes that aid in removing barriers to access and equity. For instance, in the realm of healthcare, AE finds it more productive to continue to demand universal healthcare rather than reinforce the classist assumption that gays and lesbians can and should access such basic healthcare needs through employment and marriage. In immigration law, it is reductive and retrograde to continue to push for "family-based" reform that simply includes same-sex couples when the objective should be to end the economic hardships that instigate the continued forced migration of people across borders while simultaneously working to open up immigration opportunities based on need, not simply romantic or marital status.

### The Cost of Respectability

As illustrated in this chapter, "the gay agenda," as a rhetorical device of the religious right to inspire resentment and fear of LGBT people, has made an undeniable impact on the conservative turn of contemporary gay and lesbian politics, most notably demonstrated in the recent gay-marriage campaigns in the United States where respectability figures centrally. Gay and lesbian organizations have been baited into working hard not only to deflect the contemptuous bile thrown in their direction by religious conservatives, but to prove how normal, similar, and deserving certain gays and lesbians are in order to access particular legal protections like marriage. This reactive rhetorical appeal to normalcy and respectability is surely a strategic measure to win public opinion in the short term, but at a cost that has not been, and never will be, fully addressed within the narrow logic of legal equality.

### Organizations Referenced

Against Equality (AE): [againstequality.org](http://againstequality.org)  
 AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP): [actup.org](http://actup.org)  
 Alliance Defense Fund (ADF): [alliancedefendingfreedom.org](http://alliancedefendingfreedom.org)  
 American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU): [aclu.org](http://aclu.org)  
 American Family Association (AFA): [afa.net](http://afa.net)  
 Americans for Truth About Homosexuality: [americansfortruth.com](http://americansfortruth.com)  
 Defend the Family International: [defendthefamily.com](http://defendthefamily.com)  
 Family Research Council (FRC): [frc.org](http://frc.org)  
 Freedom to Marry: [freedomtomarry.org](http://freedomtomarry.org)  
 GOProud: [goproud.org](http://goproud.org)  
 Human Rights Campaign (HRC): [hrc.org](http://hrc.org)  
 Lambda Legal: [lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org)  
 Lesbians and Gays Against Intervention (LA GAI): [lagai.org](http://lagai.org)  
 Log Cabin Republicans: [logcabin.org](http://logcabin.org)  
 Marriage Equality USA: [marriageequality.org](http://marriageequality.org)  
 National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF): [nglftf.org](http://nglftf.org)  
 National Organization for Marriage (NOM): [nationformarriage.org](http://nationformarriage.org)  
 Queers for Economic Justice (Q4EJ): [q4ej.org](http://q4ej.org)  
 Traditional Values Coalition: [traditionalvalues.org](http://traditionalvalues.org)  
 Truth in Action: [truthinaction.org](http://truthinaction.org)  
 Unite to Make It Right: [unitetomakeitright.com](http://unitetomakeitright.com)

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Details from the April 15, 2010, memo from the Obama administration to all hospitals that receive funding through Medicare or Medicaid regarding hospital visitation rights is available online at the Alternatives to Marriage project, <http://www.unmarried.org/hospital-rights.html#visitation>
- <sup>2</sup> For further discussion about the politics of respectability in the context of contemporary queer and trans politics, see Halperin & Traub (2009). Deborah Gould, David Halperin, and Valerie Traub are particularly relevant.
- <sup>3</sup> For a case study on the diversity of family configurations and kinship networks of gay men and lesbians, see Weston (1991).
- <sup>4</sup> These 1,138 federal benefits are defined in detail in the *GAO-04-353R Defense of Marriage Act: Update to Prior Report* (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2004). George Chauncey also argues that these benefits, and the likely deleterious outcomes of not having access to them, make marriage an important fight for gay and lesbian people. While he uses this as an example as to why marriage is so

important for gays and lesbians to fight for in his text *Why Marriage?* (2004), we argue the same point for deinstitutionalization of marriage so that marital status no longer has such a large impact on one's quality of life.

<sup>5</sup> For additional case examples, see Polikoff (2008) or Whitehead (2012).

<sup>6</sup> The organization GuideStar ([www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)) provides access to the financial statements of registered nonprofits in the United States in an easily searchable online database. It is here you can review 990 forms detailing six-figure executive director salaries and any program costs of gay marriage organizations. The Human Rights Campaign, for example, has 12 paid staff who received compensation of \$128,000 to \$283,000 for the 2010 fiscal year.

<sup>7</sup> The full contents of the message I received is quoted within a short article, "I called Lady Gaga evil and got death threats on Facebook," appearing on the Bilerico Project days after it was received. It is available at [http://www.bilerico.com/2010/12/i\\_called\\_lady\\_gaga\\_evil\\_and\\_got\\_death\\_threats\\_on\\_f.php](http://www.bilerico.com/2010/12/i_called_lady_gaga_evil_and_got_death_threats_on_f.php)

<sup>8</sup> One need only check the comment sections from a few posts about our collective's work that have appeared online. Comments on the Slog post "Gays Against Equality" (April 2011, <http://slog.thestranger.com/slog/archives/2011/04/01/gays-against-equality>) or comments from AMERICAblogGay post "Queers Against Equality" (April 2011, <http://gay.americablog.com/2011/04/queers-against-equality.html>) are particularly notable to illuminate my point.

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed account of creating movement strategies that center the most marginal, see Spade (2011).

<sup>10</sup> Here I am invoking the work of Jose Muñoz on queer futurity, whose insights into queer utopian longing and critical challenges to the antisocial turn in queer theory have played a major role in my thinking (Muñoz, 2009).

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