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**That Mess on Campus: The New Left, the New Right, and the Campus
Politics of Sexuality in Berkeley and Austin**

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**That Mess on Campus: The New Left, the New Right, and the Campus
Politics of Sexuality in Berkeley and Austin**

by

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That Mess on Campus: The New Left, the New Right, and the Campus Politics of Sexuality in Berkeley and Austin

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The University of California, Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin were two places where a language of sexual politics evolved within larger student activism, and where campus politics spilled over into larger local, state, and national formal politics from the 1960s to the 1970s. This dissertation reconstructs the dynamics and undercurrents of public contests between student activists and university administrations, state legislatures, and political candidates to show how discussions about sex became central to the articulation of politics on both the left and right in Berkeley and Austin. These two university campuses become key to understanding the new left and the New Right as interrelated and mutually constitutive.

This dissertation forges a new way of thinking about the concurrent rise of the new left and the New Right by focusing on how the issue of sexual behavior became a topic both groups used to structure their own political beliefs and fight for specific legislation, policy shifts, or other tangible goals. Furthermore, this project brings these two movements into focus together to offer a new perspective on the polarization of electoral politics in this period—a polarization that would continue to intensify

throughout the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and even into the present. Finally, it also offers new understandings of the sexual revolution in the 1960s and the meanings attached to sex.

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Introduction

In the spring of 1966, the California Legislature's anticommunism committee released an official report that described the rise of recent student movements at the University of California, Berkeley and concluded that the organizations involved in such movements were little more than "deluges of filth." Charged with the task of investigating possible communist influence at Berkeley, the committee expressed grave concern that these movements—such as the Free Speech Movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement--were communist-inspired and, more importantly, replete with sexual immorality and obscenity. The report found clear and outrageous evidence of abnormal [sexual] behavior within the campus's student political movements:

These instances: agitation by SLATE to show the French film on love between homosexuals in prison, the Filthy Speech Movement, some of the contributions to *Spider* [magazine], and the Mime Troupe performances on the Berkeley and Davis campuses, are illustrations of the abnormal conditions within the University...It was not until after the student rebellion (i.e. the Free Speech Movement) that these deluges of filth manifested themselves.¹

The topic of sex, in fact, was the main problem at Berkeley and the subject of major political agitation, outcry, and conflict for the next several years; it was key to Ronald Reagan's election as governor of California in 1966, marking the beginning of the rise of neoconservatism.²

¹ California Senate Fact-finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities [SUAC hereafter], *Supplement to the Thirteenth Report*, 135. The report's language connotes moral outrage and shock. The committee also used the report to chastise the UC administration and bring it to task for what the committee believed was the administration's permissiveness towards student rebellion.

² Neoconservatism was not a term used until later in the 1970s and 1980s—to describe a shift in the Republican Party from anticommunism and fiscal policy to include "law and order" and morality as key

Nearly two thousand miles away, the central office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington D.C. approved a plan by the San Antonio office to begin a letter-writing campaign regarding the student antiwar movement at the University of Texas at Austin. The campaign was part of *COINTELPRO*, the FBI's counterintelligence program. The San Antonio office intended to write fake anonymous letters to the governor of Texas, his brother in the senate, and the president of UT detailing the personal lives of antiwar activists to expose the "depravity of New Left leaders and members." The student antiwar movement at UT included the Students for a Democratic Society, or SDS, a national organization synonymous with the "new left." The FBI colluded with university administrators and local police to investigate, and effectively disrupt, antiwar activity on the UT campus. Their most powerful critique of the antiwar movement was its sexual impropriety, which ran counter to deeply held Southern mores regarding interracial relationships, cohabitation, and pre-marital sex. Consequently, this coalition of federal, local, and campus authorities used evidence and charges of sexual misbehavior in order to discredit activists and smear their characters. This was true for both men and women, but female activists were the more frequent targets of this kind of character assassination than were their male counterparts, who were more likely to be

platforms--but its roots belong in the 1960s. Ultimately many strands of neoconservatism would congeal into what scholars later called the New Right. Please see Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2000); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001). Ronald Reagan was certainly not the first ultraconservative, or neoconservative, in California. Lisa McGirr demonstrates how Barry Goldwater had been quite successful in southern California, in particular, during his campaign for president in 1960, though he ultimately lost. Nationally, however, the election of Ronald Reagan began a rightward trend that sent Reagan to the White House and changed the Republican Party.

accused of drug use or of being secret narcotics informants.³ The FBI's investigation and repression of antiwar activists was part of a larger conservative reaction to the development of student movements on the UT campus throughout the 1960s.

The two examples above reflect the heightened energy and anxiety focused on university campuses in the 1960s by both student activists on the left and neoconservatives on the right. Furthermore, these examples reflect how anxiety was heightened in states that were significant sites of both new leftist activism and a rising conservative movement historians later termed neoconservatism, or the New Right.

This dissertation demonstrates that even though most historians of the social and political movements of the 1960s concentrate on either the new left or the rise of neoconservatism, the two movements should be studied in relation to each other. Scholarship on the new left has largely focused on the Northeast or the Midwest, while scholarship on what historians and political activists would later call the New Right has focused attention on the development of conservative politics in the South and the West. Scholars have characterized the new left as a largely student phenomenon that focused on economic conditions, while neoconservatism is explained by an expanding suburbia as a result of the postwar boom.

Instead, it is the university campus where the interrelationship between neoconservatism and the new left is most clearly visible. The University of California, Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin were two places where a language of sexual politics evolved within larger student activism, and where campus politics spilled

³ I explore this in detail in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

over into larger local, state, and national formal politics. These two university campuses, then, become key to understanding the new left and the New Right as interrelated and mutually constitutive. Furthermore, bringing these two movements into focus together also offers new perspective on the polarization of electoral politics in this period—a polarization that would continue to intensify throughout the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and even into the present. Finally, it also offers new understandings of the sexual revolution in the 1960s and the meanings attached to sex.

While campuses in Austin and Berkeley are the primary locations studied in this dissertation and the language of sex and sexuality takes center stage, neither the campuses nor the language of sex that emerged there are studied in isolation from state, local, regional, or national trends. This project reconstructs the dynamics and undercurrents of public contests between activists and university administrations, state legislatures, and political candidates to show how discussions about sex became central to the articulation of politics on both the left and the right. By the politicization of sex, I refer to the various meanings and weight conservatives and new leftists attached to sexual activity in the postwar context—either between opposite-sex partners or same-sex partners—as well as constructions of sexuality, defined as a set of sexual behaviors or activities.⁴ Sexuality is not a stand-in for sexual orientation, the notion of two distinct and

⁴ I draw from Richard Godbeer's *Sexual Revolution in Early America* to define sexuality. I use the term to mean, quite literally, sexual practice, not simply as a synonym for sexual orientation although certainly constructions of ideas about heterosexuality presuppose notions of [fixed] sexual orientation. Many historians and theorists of sexuality have informed these definitions of terms and the conceptual framework of this project, including: Richard Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), George Chauncey, *Gay New York* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex," in *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012),

fixed categories of sexual drive that dictate one's object of sexual attraction. This does not mean, however, that values attached to sex did not [also seek to] construct certain ways to practice heterosexuality, particularly for radical activists. For example, radical activists in Austin articulated a kind of [male] heterosexuality that was "natural" as opposed to the artificial sexuality of mainstream society as, they argued, evidenced by *Playboy* magazine and the cosmetics industry. As my research shows, sex was a key axis around which both the new left and the new right defined themselves. Berkeley and Austin were centers of student activism located, significantly, in states that became neoconservative powerhouses.

This dissertation forges a new way of thinking about the concurrent rise of the new left and the New Right by focusing on how the issue of sexual behavior became a topic both groups used to structure their own political beliefs and fight for specific legislation, policy shifts, or other tangible goals on two university campuses, UC Berkeley and UT Austin, in the 1960s. By no means were these two movements equals in power. Students belonging to the new left may have wanted to refashion society from the inside out and, at least in California, to reform electoral politics, but they were never quite able to achieve those goals. For instance, the activist Robert Scheer, a graduate student from Berkeley and leader in the antiwar movement there, never succeeded to the

Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, *Intimate Matters* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide Open Town* (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2003), Elizabeth Kennedy and Madeline Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold* (New York: Routledge, 1993), Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

7th district congressional seat in 1966. In Texas, no matter how large and active the University of Texas' Students for a Democratic Society grew, it was unable to challenge its state's politicians or end the Vietnam War—goals it articulated and fought to achieve. These student activists have more in common than their failures. When these two movements are viewed together, they illustrate the various ways in which issues of sex on campus—obscenity, morality, desegregation, birth control and abortions, and the decriminalization of homosexuality—became a cornerstone of deeply conflicting definitions of “freedom” and the articulation of broader political values between the new left and the New Right throughout this period.

It also includes, however, issues politicized by both sides that they argued fell under a larger umbrella of “sex on campus,” including birth control and abortion rights, fears of miscegenation and desegregation, obscenity, and the [de]criminalization of homosexual sex. Issues of gender and sexual identity were also at play in discussions and public articulations of these ideas, certainly in such cases revolving around homosexual sex. When administrators or conservative legislators condemned this or that behavior on campus--say, the showing of a gay film--for promoting homosexuality, the politicization of sex in those moments encompassed obscenity and sexual identity as well as sexual behavior. For example, concern over desegregating women's dorms at the University of Texas was expressed either as a fear of miscegenation or a declaration of women's sexual freedom, from conservative and student activists, respectively. Certainly, women's dorm desegregation was construed as a particular women's issue—no such fears were evident about desegregating men's dorms. Yet, both sides of the debate argued in more general

terms of sex on campus—either articulated as a fear that white women and black men might date or socialize together in dorms or as an insistence that [white] women should have the freedom to engage in premarital sex and cohabit out of wedlock.

In both Austin and Berkeley, students engaged in political activism and protest before the articulation of student radicalism in American politics. Much of this student activism centered on participation in the civil rights movement. In the case of Berkeley, it also included nuclear proliferation protests, campaigns to end the death penalty in California, and efforts to abolish HUAC, the House Un-American Activities Committee.⁵ This early activism exhibited many of the same characteristics and tactics that would become synonymous with the new left; in addition, many students active prior to the articulation of a “new left” were later active in new left movements. Participants themselves often blurred the distinctions between various campaigns and strands of activism and spoke only of “the movement,” as if it began with civil rights and extended through to protests against the Vietnam War.⁶ In addition, in 1962, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) circulated a paper among activists at the SDS Northeast Regional Conference that formed the basis for what became known as *The Port Huron Statement*. *The Port Huron Statement* outlined what historians, and contemporaries, defined as the new left. It argued that mainstream political liberals, such as those in the

⁵ The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated individuals or groups considered communist or otherwise “subversive” in order to protect national security. Students at Berkeley protested a highly visible and charged investigation of San Francisco Bay Area teachers and a Berkeley graduate student in 1960. I explore this topic in detail in Chapter Two.

⁶ This is clearly evident in activists I interviewed for this dissertation, such as Robert Pardun, who later served as a leader in SDS. See also Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Democratic Party, were unable or unwilling to address the pressing social, economic, and legal problems of the country. Furthermore, SDS asserted that neither could the traditional left—mostly understood as the Communist Party but, more broadly speaking, an emphasis on labor rights, the mobilization of the working class, and formal party politics as the main vehicle for change.⁷ *The Port Huron Statement* emphasized change emerging from a new class of political actors--students--and the university as a new site of political activism.⁸ Universities, not factories, would become the basis for a new political movement that promoted “participatory democracy”—the belief that every individual had the ability and moral obligation to effect political change around them and become a beacon of humanism. The new left emphasized non-hierarchical leadership and a loose affiliation of individuals and organizations that promoted grassroots activism and rejected formal political party membership and rules.

The new left has come to mean the mostly white, college-age participants in the anti-Vietnam War movement. SDS was the largest new left organization in the country, and after 1966, most chapters turned away from civil rights and desegregation issues to focus myopically on the Vietnam War. But, as this dissertation demonstrates, that shift was not monolithic, and at the University of Texas, for example, SDS remained active in civil rights issues alongside antiwar activism. I am influenced, therefore, by Van Gosse’s definition of a much broader conception of the new left, one that understands it as a

⁷ Labor issues were also central to the civil rights movement. This is clearly evident in the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike, for example. See Laurie B. Green, *Battling the Plantation Mentality* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

⁸ As Doug Rossinow argues, the new left drew on a different social and intellectual basis than did the “old left” of the 1930s and 1940s. See Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

“movement of movements” that included white students and students of color, the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and the Free Speech movement.⁹ The use of the term “new left” in this dissertation reflects this broad definition. As such, I do not capitalize it, so as to reflect the inclusiveness of the term as I use it.¹⁰

Just as activists on the left were reconstructing their intellectual and social roots in the early 1960s, those on the right began to shift from previous conceptions of conservatism to move towards what historians later termed neoconservatism or the New Right. The rise, expansion, and success of the national Republican party--and the remaking of that party’s image along the way-- characterize this rightward shift. “Law and order” and “family values” became new platforms for a neoconservative movement that rejected the claims made by civil rights, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and, later, movements for women’s rights and gay liberation. By the 1980s, contemporaries derided these conflicts as “culture wars.” The New Right refashioned itself by cracking down on university activism, fighting the Equal Rights Amendment, denouncing *Roe v. Wade*, and protesting against pornography and the “oversexualization” of American culture. In the South, these goals were combined with a new evangelical religious imperative for Christians to participate in politics, welding religious and political identities together to

⁹ Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left* (New York: Macmillan, 2005).

¹⁰ Not every student activist involved in the student movements I examine in this dissertation identified as “new left.” A notable example is Bettina Aptheker, a leader in the Free Speech Movement at UC Berkeley. She was born to prominent Communist Party leaders and joined the Party herself during her college years. This did not preclude her involvement in the Free Speech Movement, although sometimes she felt the incongruence of the Communist Party’s political tactics and those of the emerging new left. But because the movements still adopted the ideology and tactics of the new left, I deem it appropriate to call them new left, despite the presence of some members who may or may not have self-identified that way. For more on Bettina Aptheker’s relationship to the Free Speech Movement and the Communist Party, see *Intimate Politics: How I Grew up Red, Fought for Free Speech, and Became a Feminist Rebel* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006).

create a new kind of conservative coalition exemplified by the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition.¹¹

The archives of both the radical student movements and neoconservatism's chief spokespeople are littered with references to fights about sex on campus. Since its inception, this project has been driven by a central historical question: what did sex have to do with radical politics? To answer this question, I first turned to scholarship on so-called "sexual revolutions" and sexual panics--periods of heightened concern over sexual behavior or sexual mores. Gayle Rubin, Rickie Solinger, Richard Godbeer, and George Chauncey analyze different meanings and values attached to sex or sexuality in different historical eras and have, collectively, shaped my thinking about my own approach to examining the significance of sex to the new left and New Right in the postwar context.

In "Thinking Sex," Rubin theorizes about how and why societies attach what she suggests is disproportional significance to sexual behavior or activity in times of crisis or stress. Beyond these broad analyses, she grounds her work in the specific context of the "culture wars" of the 1980s—precisely during the time when the New Right was coming of age, politically. Rickie Solinger, though writing about the immediate postwar period of the 1950s, explores the racialized meanings attached to terms like "population bomb" and "sexual revolution" in her book *Wake Up Little Susie: Single Pregnancy and Race Before Roe v. Wade*. When contemporaries spoke of unwed pregnancy or sexual promiscuity in the postwar context, they used vastly different terms when applied to white women or

¹¹ Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority in the late 1970s, and it lasted throughout the 1980s. Falwell founded the organization to combat the nation's moral decay, as he understood it, and sought to bridge a gap he saw between religion and politics. Pat Robertson created the Christian Coalition in 1988 after his failed presidential campaign in order to mobilize Christian voters.

black women, signifying underlying concerns about race and sex in the 1950s. Both Solinger and Rubin articulate definitions of “good sex,” or appropriate sexual activity or relationships, and “bad sex,” or sexuality that is not socially condoned. Furthermore, Rubin argues, “disputes over sexual behavior often become vehicles for displacing social anxieties...”¹² Both of these works are particularly useful for my project to illustrate how conflicts over sex in the postwar period between new leftists and neoconservatives were articulations of much larger political issues that sometimes had little to do with sex.

Solinger’s work is also useful for parsing out just what has been meant when both contemporaries of the period and historians alike used the term “sexual revolution.” If, for example, the 1950s saw the highest unwed pregnancy and youngest marriage rates to date in the U.S., why do we not call the fifties the decade of sexual revolution? Her work is particularly instructive for unpacking the term “sexual revolution” in order to extrapolate its various meanings. This dissertation builds on that approach to offer new understandings of the term, and of sex itself, in the 1960s.

This study also draws on historian Beth Bailey’s scholarship to expand on the notion of a “sexual revolution” and to explore changing expressions of sexuality in political movements that do not, on their face, have anything to do with sexual mores or cultures.¹³ In her study of a sexual revolution at the University of Kansas in Lawrence,

¹² Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex,” *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2012); for more on sexual panics see Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)

¹³ Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999); Jane Dailey, *Jumpin’ Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Kansas, Bailey argues that a kaleidoscope of changes--social, political, and economic--were responsible for significant shifts in how Americans, nationally, attributed meaning to sex and sexuality in the 1960s.¹⁴ Bailey's focus on a different set of historical actors—namely, students in Kansas, far from the radical enclaves of Greenwich Village in New York or the Beat communities of San Francisco—and her call to “sort out the various strands of the sexual revolution” have influenced my own approach to changing sexual attitudes in the 1960s. For example, Ronald Reagan hardly seems like any participant in a “sexual revolution” in 1966, and yet, his engagement with Berkeley students created public dialogues about meanings of sex on campus. In addition, law enforcement authorities in Austin used gender and sexual politics in order to curtail activism at the University of Texas campus, participating in larger discussions about cohabitation and racial miscegenation in a Southern state.

Yet, rather than foregrounding people's everyday lives to discover ways in which seemingly inconsequential changes—such as the decline of *in loco parentis* at many universities--disrupted a sexual status quo, this dissertation looks to claims for sexual freedom, and opposition to calls for such freedom, in the heart of campus-based student political movements.¹⁵ In other words, where Bailey looks to the unintended consequences of a sexual revolution, my own project focuses upon the explicit and public

¹⁴ She asserts that, collectively, the release of the Pill, the establishment of coed dormitories, the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision, and both gay and women's liberation constitute a “sexual revolution” even though they were not always about a revolution in sexual mores or a concerted effort to reshape ideas of sexuality.

¹⁵ The Latin term *in loco parentis* means “in place of parents” and refers to most universities' administrative approach to students. It meant that universities enforced rules on campus, such as curfews, in order to help control student behavior as a parent might set limits on a child's behavior at home. These rules were especially targeted, and applied, towards women students.

debates between students, university administrators, and politicians about sexuality on campus.

The literature on student movements and radical activism in the 1960s has long entertained two interrelated historiographic trends. The first of these is the declension narrative, which distinguishes between the “good” early 1960s, usually understood as ending by the middle of the decade, and the “bad” other 1960s from the mid-1960s to the 1970s. Focusing on sex as the Sexual Revolution (advocating sex outside of marriage) early in the sixties or as “free love” (having sex with whomever, whenever--central to the counterculture, as it was dubbed) in the latter half of the sixties completely misses the centrality of sex as modality through which these ideological struggles were being fought out.¹⁶ The rise of the counterculture certainly overlapped with the protest movements and cultures. However, historians disagree on the degree of this overlap, its significance, and precisely when it began.¹⁷ Rather than engage this debate, my dissertation instead reveals its inapplicability to the locales of Austin and Berkeley and the ways in which these distinctions mattered little to those outside, and critical of, new left student activism. As a

¹⁶ See Douglas Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Christopher Gair's *The American Counterculture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and 70s* (New York: Routledge, 2002), and Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1969). For discussions of the counterculture's influence on the women's movement, please see Alice Echols' *Daring to be Bad* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) and Ruth Rosen's *World Split Open* (New York: Viking, 2000).

¹⁷ The dates offered for the emergence of the counterculture vary as widely as beginning with the Beats in the mid-1950s to as late as 1966. Christopher Gair begins his study of the counterculture in the earlier period of the Beat generation with the emergence of rock n' roll and icons of rebellion like James Dean. Rossinow is at the opposite end of this timeline, offering 1966 as the beginning of a counterculture movement.

project that looks at the interaction between the right and the left at two university campuses, any debate about counterculture versus politics is rendered inappropriate.¹⁸

Moreover, new ideas of sex and sexuality in the counterculture and those in radical activist circles cannot be neatly polarized or dissected as if they did not overlap and influence one another. On the one hand, for example, as I show in Chapter Two, a key leader in the Free Speech Movement's attempt to screen a film on the Berkeley campus about gay men in prison during the most intense period of the Free Speech Movement in 1964 speaks to both the complexity of this period as well as to the ways in which the counterculture helped redefine what was "politics" in student movements.¹⁹ On the other hand, however, as I show in Chapter Five, male students at the University of Texas experienced harassment and surveillance by local and federal authorities simply because they wore long hair or beards—telltale markers of "the counterculture." How one *looked* mattered to authorities. Long hair became a political marker, and the act of having long hair became politicized. The experiences of those students provide an important

¹⁸ The counterculture, as a movement in its various forms around the country, contributed greatly to new ideas and experimentation with sex, sexuality, identity, relationships, and notions of family and community. This is widely documented in historical analyses, including those mentioned above as well as by primary documents, underground newspapers, and even mainstream magazines, such as *Time*. It should be mentioned that this is also contentious ground for historians of the period, as they differ widely in their conclusions about the supposed "success" or "excess" of the counterculture. Christopher Gair, for example, indicts the counterculture for being overtly sexist and homophobic, which he believes helps explain the rise of the women's and gay liberation movements.

¹⁹ Art Goldberg was a key player in the Free Speech Movement and later in the antiwar organization at Berkeley, the Vietnam Day Committee. In October of 1964 he challenged the University of California administration to screen a French film about gay men in prison on campus. The administration denied his request, citing the film as obscene and therefore inappropriate for a campus viewing. This issue of obscenity would emerge again months later in the Filthy Speech Movement. I explore this further in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

example of how the suppression of left-leaning activism on campus erases distinctions, both in history and in the historiography, between politicians and counterculturalists.

To further complicate the chronological distinctions I describe above, this project also disrupts easy distinctions between the development of new left activism of the mid-1960s and the emergence of a New Right in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Histories of the new left and of the New Right often focus on vastly different geographic areas and kinds of places, keeping them in separate compartments. By making these distinctions of temporality and space, histories of the period cast neoconservatism as a sequential response to the radical student movement.²⁰ By contrast, this dissertation brings the two into conversation together in both Berkeley and Austin, unique places to study both new left activism and the ascendancy of neoconservatism.

The rise of neoconservatism, at least in California and Texas, out of larger state anticommunism campaigns signals a longer trajectory of a neoconservative movement that may have seen its ascendancy more clearly by the late 1960s but was nevertheless in the process of forming years earlier. The scholarship of David Johnson, Nan Alamilla Boyd, and Elaine Tyler May is particularly instructive in tracing this narrative, and this dissertation builds on those efforts.²¹ The California Legislature claimed in 1966 that

²⁰ Footnote every single new left and new right title.

²¹ David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War* (New York: Basic Books, 1988). Ironically, Cold War fears created some space for the expansion of civil rights for African-Americans and Mexican-Americans but also the contraction of freedoms for gays and lesbians. See also Mary Dudziack, *Cold War, Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

sexual degeneracy on the Berkeley campus was evident in the antiwar movement's fundraising efforts—such as the Vietnam Day Committee dances or the San Francisco Mime Troupe performances—and, more importantly, proved that communism was its source. Such claims echoed the confluences of political beliefs and sexual behavior in the immediate post-World War II period.

This dissertation builds on the contributions of David Johnson and Elaine Tyler May to situate changing sexual cultures and mores in the 1960s within a much broader context of Cold War politics and domestic campaigns to combat the spread of communism. In *The Lavender Scare*, Johnson examines the State Department's investigation and dismissal of hundreds of employees for homosexuality, rooted in fears that sexual behavior signaled either communist sympathies or, at least, susceptibility. A State Department employee's sexuality became synonymous with his or her politics and perhaps vice versa. May describes an intense national anxiety about sexuality—particularly women's sexuality—and communism in *Homeward Bound*. In her exploration of the postwar trend of marriage and parenthood, she suggests that diplomatic policy and politics directly affected, and were tied to, changing familial values. In other words, she places a history of the family within a larger political history of the era to reveal ways in which Americans sought “containment” in their own personal and sexual lives. May situates seemingly “private” decisions about marriage, sexuality, and parenthood within a broader historical and political framework in order to make sense of the postwar “baby boom.” Finally, Nan Alamilla Boyd explores connections between anticommunism and oppression of gays and lesbians in San Francisco from World War II

to the mid-1960s. Boyd suggests that the increase of military personnel during World War II reshaped San Francisco's sexual landscape and created more spaces, literally, for gay and lesbian bars. Like May, Boyd argues that with the advent of the Cold War, there was a similar containment of homosexuality in San Francisco and that many gays and lesbians experienced an energized and more intense oppression in the city. As revealed in Chapters Two and Five, the elision of sex and anticommunism politics took shape in both old and new ways in Berkeley within the Vietnam War and anti-Vietnam War movement.

In the Southern context of Texas, however, behavior considered outside the boundaries of white, middle-class sexual norms was also labeled communist, such as the example cited above regarding men with long hair. More often, however, criticism from authorities regarding an activist's sexual conduct drew on particularly Southern historical fears of racial miscegenation.²² While in Berkeley, state legislators used a label of "communist" to discredit an individual or organization for its seeming excessive or deviant sexual behavior, in Austin, FBI agents wrote letters criticizing white female student antiwar activists for dating black male student activists.²³ The operations of COINTELPRO at the University of Texas relied on character smearing and character assassinations targeting men and women for transgressing racial (and sexual) norms. Thus, while scholarship on the links between politics and culture in the Cold War era nationally, or in Washington D.C., or northern California, remain crucial for my own

²² Jane Dailey, "Sex, Segregation, and the Sacred after *Brown*," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, no. 1, 2006.

²³ These letters were part of a larger program of character smearing and character assassinations by COINTELPRO at the University of Texas at Austin. FBI agents wrote "anonymous" letters, pretending to be fellow students, to parents about their adult children's conduct on and off campus. I discuss this in detail in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

work on Berkeley, they do not speak to the links forged between anticommunism, race, and sexuality in Austin. This project intervenes in that literature by exploring various ways anticommunism, race, and sex intersected in Austin as part of the beginnings of the rise of neoconservatism. Furthermore, in both Berkeley and Austin, this dissertation examines how politicians participating in anticommunism campaigns politicized sexuality or sexual behavior in ways that later informed neoconservative approaches to sexual expressions within the new left.

Finally, this dissertation, in many ways, incorporates the approaches to scholarship on the rise of neoconservatism, or the New Right, over the last decade and a half but pushes the boundaries of the field.²⁴ That is to say that it reflects historians' attempts to reconsider conservative activists of the 1960s and 1970s as grassroots organizers who, much like young activists of the new left, responded to the rapid domestic transformations wrought in the wake of World War II by embracing an emergent, radicalized form of politics, frequently in the suburbs.²⁵ Historians of this movement have revitalized the field through successful demonstration that neoconservatives were not merely maladapted, anxious, marginalized figures who were

²⁴ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001); Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 1999); Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); Donald Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); Donald Critchlow and Nancy MacLean, *Debating the American Conservative Movement* (Lanham, M.D.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009); John Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

²⁵ Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*; Michelle Nickerson, *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Place, Space, and Region* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

largely outside of mainstream political life, but rather individuals who began a powerful movement that began in the early sixties and landed Reagan in the White House in the 1980s.

However, this study adds to scholars' reconsideration of the growth and development of the New Right in several ways. First, it challenges tendencies in the historiography to separate new leftism and neoconservatism, both geographically and temporally, to reveal ways in which the two movements were not only in conversation with one another, but were mutually constitutive. The New Right, therefore, was not simply a reactionary response to the youthful student movements on campus in California or Texas. Instead, this study illustrates ways in which the New Right and new left grew up together, shaped one another, and ultimately refashioned political life in the protest era.

As such, Robert Self's *American Babylon* is instructive for looking at the development of both liberal politics and neoconservative politics in California's East Bay communities, such as Oakland and its neighboring communities.²⁶ Self argues that the East Bay incubated two of California's most important postwar political traditions—a broad liberal one and a populist-conservative one. Like Self, this project explores the local political context of Berkeley to state and national politics to argue that the two were intertwined. Yet, rather than an urban/suburban history, this dissertation focuses on the significance of student activist and campus politics to the transformation of state and

²⁶ Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

national politics and the profound influences of the university campus to larger political contexts in both Austin and Berkeley.

Moreover, this project argues that conflicts about sex were at the center of these processes. Matthew Dallek argues that the development of the New Right began with Ronald Reagan's election as governor of California in 1966 and marked a turning point in twentieth-century American politics.²⁷ As this project shows, if Reagan's 1966 gubernatorial campaign is central to understanding the beginnings of the national rightward political shift we term the New Right, then sex at Berkeley was an integral part of that moment and is critical for understanding that turning point in California postwar politics. By extension, these debates about sex in California and Texas are critical for understanding the rightward shift in national politics as well.

Both Austin and Berkeley were university towns that emerged as liberal oases within states that had recently enjoyed enormous economic growth and increased political power during World War II and in the immediate postwar period. California became a major defense-industry and manufacturing center during the war and continued to enjoy the economic and political benefits in the aftermath.²⁸ Similarly, Texas oil and its corollary industries literally fueled much of the war effort in addition to its own military-industrial complex, which grew rapidly at the start of the war, much like California's, and remained a significant economic resource and source of political clout

²⁷ Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

²⁸ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

in the postwar era.²⁹ These two states, then, exploded financially and politically at similar times and for similar reasons. As a result, they both became hubs for big business, manufacturing, and the defense industry.

Along with the economic boom that accompanied the growth of the defense industry in California and Texas during the postwar period, their universities became significant sites for nuclear research and weapons development. The securing of government contracts at universities like Berkeley gave them not only a new preeminence in the state as they drew funding and top-ranked faculty but also a new importance to state politicians, administrators, and the Board of Regents. Many times these were one and the same. Administrators and leaders imbued the university with new meanings within the state—these were the sites where future economic and political leaders would emerge. Universities were essential to the future of the state and their key role was in educating a new generation capable of competing in the workforce and perpetuating democracy.³⁰ By the same token, as student activism became more prevalent at places like Berkeley and UT, administrators and politicians expressed concern about the possibility of communist-front organizations. Berkeley’s campus erupted with controversy over new regulations in the 1950s to require faculty loyalty oaths that ensured that faculty members did not support the Communist Party.³¹ The University of

²⁹ Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006).

³⁰ Doug Rossinow argues that universities were “increasingly important components in the nation’s political economy” in *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 2.

³¹ I mention this briefly in Chapter Two of this dissertation. See also W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Texas also experienced purging of professors considered too radical.³² Fear that student activism was actually the influence of the Communist Party was expressed repeatedly in Berkeley from the late 1950s throughout the 1960s. As I discuss in Chapter Four, the FBI was also involved in the surveillance of political activity considered threatening or subversive at the University of Texas.³³ Universities were centers of nuclear research and defense contracts. They were also housing the Americans who, in the future, could and would compete in an economic and political battle with the USSR. Thus, public universities took on a special role in the Cold War fight against communism and, therefore, in anticommunism efforts.

Simultaneously, public universities experienced the largest student enrollment numbers in history to date. The GI Bill allowed veterans to attend college. The baby boom during and immediately after the end of World War II sent thousands of young people to college in the 1960s as those baby boomers turned eighteen. Similar to the GI Bill, John F. Kennedy's newly created federal student loan programs also made university attendance possible for many, further contributing to rising enrollment numbers.

Although students on college campuses during the 1950s had participated in the civil rights movement and had protested nuclear weapons testing and the proliferation of nuclear bombs as well as other issues, including the use of the death penalty, the decade

³² Please see Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

³³ See Chapter Four of this dissertation.

of the 1960s witnessed a new kind of student political voice on campus.³⁴ The increased presence of college students as leaders in various campaigns gave the movement a new, youthful kind of energy that students all over the country responded to.³⁵ Significantly, for college students, as opposed to faculty still under the thumb of McCarthyism, activism seemed less risky, as they did not have to support families on their own or worry about termination.

Furthermore, with more students at universities and great commitments to social justice movements it is also significant that these factors coalesced at places of higher learning. Universities were, after all, centers of higher education; new students who arrived on campuses began reading texts by C. Wright Mills and Herbert Marcuse and participating in the exchange of ideas that constitutes the nature of the place of the university.³⁶ Thus, the coalescence of a burgeoning new generation of students, reading and discussing radical critiques of contemporary society, coupled with the efforts of administrators and legislators to combat anticommunism, lent new significance to the state university. The university became a distinctive political place.

Although thousands of miles apart, both Berkeley and Austin became primary, and similar, sites of new left activism, drawing students and activists who became

³⁴ As I show in Chapter Two of this dissertation, a significant student political group, SLATE, began in the late 1950s as an organization fighting both issues of nuclear proliferation and the death penalty in California.

³⁵ Examples include lunch counter sit-ins, voter registration, Freedom Rides, Freedom Summer, economic and poverty programs in the Northeast, and so on. These were largely student-run, student-initiated campaigns that drew participants and supporters from young people all over the country.

³⁶ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2000). Originally published in 1956. Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964). Letters and lecture notes from the SDS archives at the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, Wisconsin, refer to students at Harvard reading Marcuse and circulating ideas about it. For a discussion of C. Wright Mills' importance to UT, see Doug Rossnow, *Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

politicized and worked out complex sexual politics. The University of Texas drew rural and Southern students from its hinterlands yet became a center for political activism from the civil rights movement to student movements to antiwar movements. It, too, became legendary in the area for the flowering of its counterculture and music scene. If Berkeley was the vanguard of student movements, UT established its preeminence as an SDS stronghold and a site of very vocal opposition to the Vietnam War.

The combination of these historical factors meant that the university suddenly held a variety of new meanings and possibilities for multiple historical actors in the 1960s. Politicians, regents, administrators, and students politicized the college campus in conflicting ways. Students, on the one side, used campuses as something of a launching pad for their activism or incubuses for social thought and activism that challenged the status quo. They also turned that lens to the university itself, as the very success of the large public university became a target for critique by students growing up in the postwar context. For example, students expressed frustration at class sizes of up to 800 and an increasing feeling of disconnection between coursework and life outside the university. This critique was often articulated in terms of nuclear disarmament or the civil rights movement, both of which were difficult subjects for universities that relied on nuclear research for funding, like Berkeley, and segregated their students' housing, like UT. These types of conflicts spurred students to reconsider the university as a specific site to take political action.

Politicians, regents, and administrators, on the other side, viewed the college campus as a key force in anticommunism efforts and often understood student activism as

threatening those efforts. And yet, students, administrators, politicians, and the public articulated these divergent interests in the state public university in debates and arguments about sex on campus. Battles over obscenity, desegregation, homosexuality, free speech, and the antiwar movement reflected larger conflicts about anticommunism, freedom, democracy, and the role universities played in safeguarding these in society.

That the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin shared numerous similarities makes them particularly useful for this study of sexuality and politics in this time period. In fact, both administrators and student activists at the University of Texas repeatedly described their university as a miniature Berkeley or a sister university to Berkeley. In other words, they clearly believed UT modeled Berkeley's development, in ways both good and bad. It was also true that both universities, as their states' flagship campuses, were rising stars in the postwar era. Berkeley became the top-ranked public university in the U.S. and UT took notice and wanted to emulate that success for the state of Texas.

While both Berkeley and Austin were home to sizeable student movements—in fact, UT's Students for a Democratic Society chapter was the second-largest in the country—politics, and the politics of sexuality, played out quite differently in each place. Student activists on the left in both places articulated new ideas about “sexual freedom” in the context of civil rights campaigns, free speech movements, and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. But concerns about sexual misbehavior or anarchy at Berkeley were articulated within larger concerns about communism on campus. As a result, a conservative groundswell began responding to leftist activism with claims that issues of

sexuality were central to anticommunism efforts. In addition, activists on both campuses waged campaigns around campus dormitories. But as I show in a chapter on student housing, at UT Austin, activism first targeted racially segregated campus housing and later transitioned into calls for women's "sexual freedom" just as resistance to the Vietnam War also swelled. Furthermore, the FBI and state legislatures targeted Berkeley and Austin for surveillance, but conservatives in Austin were able to use claims of miscegenation and improper racial and sexual behavior in character assassinations to inhibit activism. These conservative responses to activism were not articulated in the state legislature but by university administrators and FBI surveillance teams. By contrast, in Berkeley, claims in legislative reports on the university hinged on accusations of homosexuality and "obscene" behavior.

As key sites of leftist activism, UT and UC crystallized powerful emergent neoconservative interests within the state and captured the attention of politicians like Ronald Reagan. This emergent neoconservative movement eventually landed Reagan in the White House emphasizing law-and-order politics and a new fiscal policy, while in Texas, this movement took its greatest form in social conservatism that rejected the 1960s cultural upheavals, emphasizing evangelical religion and "family values."

By looking at the politics of sex and the relationship between individuals' private lives and the state at two major public universities in the specific historical context of the 1960s, it is possible to see how these two oppositional movements in fact emerged together, in tandem.

The comparative framework and methodology of this dissertation make it possible to intervene in multiple fields that have not always been in dialogue with one another. While I initially expected this study to depend upon the examination of diaries and interviews, I soon found that activists' interior lives were not at the center of the story. What surprised me, in fact, was the plethora of material I found about very *public* demonstrations and debates about sex on campus.

I began with the New Left and New Right collections at the Hoover Institute Library and Archives, including the papers of California Assemblyman Don Mulford and newspaper clippings from Ronald Reagan's 1966 campaign for California governor. These large collections provided an important framework to construct the relationships between students at the University of California, Berkeley, politicians in the state capital of Sacramento, and the administrators occasionally caught in between. In other words, these collections offered a significant portion of primary source material about activists' behavior on, and off, campus and about why it was so disturbing to neoconservative politicians in the California Legislature. To examine how student activists on the left articulated new ideas about "sexual freedom" in the context of civil rights campaigns, free speech movements, and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, I relied heavily on a handful of new left activist collections at the Bancroft Library and Archives at the University of California, Berkeley, such as the Free Speech Collection, the extensive Social Protest Collection, and the Sexual Freedom League Collection. At the University of Texas, I analyzed the underground newspaper, *The Rag*, and the official campus

newspaper, *The Daily Texan*, to get a sense of the political campaigns students waged on campus and how they articulated changing ideas about sex within these movements.

Concerns about sexual misbehavior or anarchy at Berkeley were articulated within larger concerns about communism on campus. As a result, I use state legislative and anticommunism records, and electoral campaign records from the Boalt Law Library at UC Berkeley and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, to reveal ways in which a conservative groundswell began responding to leftist activism with claims that issues of sexuality were central to anticommunism efforts. University archives, such as the President and Chancellor's Office records at the Bancroft Library and Archives, were valuable for exploring how administrators understood, and contextualized, student activism.

The politics in Texas differed significantly in terms of *how* authorities approached student activists, whether from the legislature or the university administration, and sometimes those authorities were one and the same. Therefore, at UT, I turned to the university's own archives, such as the Records of the Office of the President and the Records of the Office of the Chancellor at the Center for American History. Yet, the differences between the two locations made it evident throughout the research that those methodological approaches possible for Berkeley in California could not simply be mapped onto UT in Texas. The Texas Legislature, for example, made comments about withdrawing funding from the university if administrators did not curb student activism there. These statements echoed some of the rhetoric I found in California. However, these comments were less likely and less frequent in Texas; moreover, the Legislature never

launched a full-scale investigation of the University of Texas, and no politicians ran on an anticommunist, anti-UT ticket in the 1960s. What *did* happen in Texas was intense and coercive surveillance by multiple, cooperative levels of authority meant to covertly disrupt activism and to do so out of the public eye. In other words, if Berkeley became an intensely public symbol of sexuality on campus—for both the left and the right—the fights about it at the University of Texas were quieter and less obvious. As a result, the university's police records, the Allen Hamilton Papers at the Center for American History and the FBI's *COINTELPRO* records were key. The FBI's targeting of the University of Texas provided rich resources in the records for how local and federal authorities relied upon gender and sexual politics to combat student activism on campus.

Chapter One explores desegregation on the UT campus and how the issue of women's housing became a particularly salient, and explosive, issue from 1962 to 1964. Interracial campus organizations protested women's segregated housing as a civil rights issue, but opponents of segregation raised old Southern fears of miscegenation and claimed that segregated women's dorms would mean greater social intimacy between black men and white women—and the possibility of interracial relationships and sex. By 1964, however, when some of these students formed an SDS chapter on campus, they took up the housing issue but transformed it from a social justice cause to a campaign for women's sexual freedom. SDS wed housing issues and campaigns for desegregation with new claims about sexual rights and sexual freedom on campus.

Chapter Two examines the Free Speech and Filthy Speech Movements at UC Berkeley and how these movements challenged university *in loco parentis* regulations in

part by arguing that obscenity and “pornographic” films constituted freedom of speech on campus. Students, they argued, enjoyed the same constitutional protections, such as the protection of free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment, on campus just as much as they did off campus. Students claimed that obscenity, homosexual films, and lectures on birth control or abortion constituted free speech rights on campus, pushing the boundaries of what constituted a “political” movement.

Chapter Three focuses on the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum in Berkeley and the Texas Students for Responsible Sexual Freedom. Both organizations, as campus chapters of the national Sexual Freedom League, articulated a nebulous set of values and political beliefs they argued created true “sexual freedom” on campus and beyond. Birth control information and access to contraception from the university health center, as well as the decriminalization of homosexuality, constituted a cohesive political platform for new left activists. Robert Scheer drew on these infra-politics of the organization during his congressional campaign, and what had been amorphous definitions of sexual freedom on the left transformed into a clear electoral platform alongside ending the war in Vietnam. At UT, administrative actions to squelch the publication and distribution of material by the Texas Students for Responsible Sexual Freedom that advocated overturning the state’s sex laws helped pave the way for an all-out University Freedom Movement—a movement that demanded freedom to distribute any material student organizations wanted without the permission of the university. Furthermore, UT’s *The Rag* operated as a primary producer in the new left’s sexual politics. In Austin, new left sexual politics and the radical underground press grew up together.

In Chapter Four, I analyze two electoral campaigns in California—Robert Scheer’s bid for congress and Ronald Reagan’s run for governor in 1966—and the fracturing of liberalism in the Texas Democratic Party in Austin through the work of SDS on campus and the emergence of liberation movements out of new left activism off campus in the late 1960s. Campus political organizations shaped the Scheer campaign, which focused off campus but echoed the rhetoric of student demands on campus—greater access to birth control, rights to on-demand abortions, and the decriminalization of homosexual sex between consenting adults. On the right, Ronald Reagan’s gubernatorial campaign politicized sex on campus in new ways; his claim that he would “clean up that mess at Berkeley” illustrated the right’s shifting focus on sexual morality in electoral politics, a trend that would develop in a longer trajectory throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

Finally, Chapter Five analyzes conservative response to campus activism in the mid- to late 1960s in the form of highly coordinated surveillance of student activists by local, state, and federal authorities. On both campuses, these authorities—university, local, state, and federal—responded to antiwar activism with surveillance that was gendered and relied on a particular politics of sexuality. In their efforts to watch, investigate, and undermine domestic student antiwar activism at Berkeley and the University of Texas, a nexus of authorities used charges of sexual misconduct and impropriety to smear new leftists’ reputations and disrupt campus activism. Furthermore, this surveillance created a chilling effect that, along with other historical factors, contributed to a reorientation of activism off the campus and into the wider city.

Chapter One

Women, Race, and Desegregation: The Black Freedom Movement and the Emergence of SDS at the University of Texas

In June of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson returned to his home state to deliver the spring commencement address at the University of Texas. Among the graduates in the audience was his own daughter, Lynda Johnson, who, like all women students residing in UT housing, had lived in segregated dorms throughout all four of her undergraduate years, from 1960 to 1964. By the time of Johnson's arrival on the campus, he had already signed the Civil Rights Act, which was poised to take effect approximately one month later, in July of 1964. The irony of these circumstances—that the signer of the Civil Rights Act had a daughter who lived in segregated campus housing in his home state--was not lost on UT's Students for a Democratic Society chapter. In preparation for the president's arrival, they distributed flyers at women's campus residences calling for a protest to bring attention to the university's continued practice of racial segregation and discrimination in campus housing. It was one of the first protests organized by the emergent campus SDS, a national multi-issue umbrella organization that began in the Northeast in 1962 and had been spreading across university campuses. One year later, in 1965, the campus SDS chapter ran one of its own members, Gary Thiher, as a candidate for student body president on an SDS platform. In addition to his call for a minimum wage for UT cafeteria workers and opposition to the war in Vietnam, Thiher and SDS demanded birth control on campus and the abolition of housing restrictions for

all university women. Unlike its 1964 LBJ protest, however, SDS couched these demands in terms of women's sexual freedom, not racial equality.

At UT, when students established an SDS chapter in 1964, they drew on a legacy of civil rights activism from the 1950s and 1960s to prioritize housing and desegregation as the central issues of the organization. But by 1965, the rhetoric surrounding those efforts had shifted, and students framed housing and desegregation in terms of women's rights and sexual freedom. This shift portended later imbrications of sexuality and leftist politics at UT in the University Freedom Movement and anti-Vietnam War activism.

Nationally, by the mid- to late 1960s, SDS had become almost synonymous with the anti-Vietnam War movement, since after 1965 it shifted its focus away from the civil rights movement and rather dramatically towards the escalating conflict in Vietnam. This national trend also played out in many local campus chapters, and UT's was no exception. By the late 1960s, in fact, UT boasted one of the largest SDS chapters in the country, and the university had a reputation for being a significant site of antiwar activism. Furthermore, as the key organization of the antiwar movement, Students for a Democratic Society has also become synonymous with the new left, both in the history and the historiography of this period.

But at UT, SDS began in the Black Freedom Movement, drawing its members, political tactics, and ideas directly from civil rights groups active on the campus from 1960 to 1964. Students like Alice Embree, for example, helped form SDS in 1964 along with other students active in the Campus Interracial Committee who were working on desegregation of campus dorms and sports teams. It was, in fact, the members from CIC

that suggested the new SDS chapter take on the housing situation at UT as its first major campus political campaign. The history of UT's SDS, then, and the emergence of one of the largest new left antiwar sites in the country is tied directly to student activism to desegregate campus housing and other facets of student life. For UT's SDS, it is therefore a history rooted in a deeply Southern context with women, race, and fears of racial miscegenation at the center.

Furthermore, on-campus political campaigns for desegregation occurred alongside protests and sit-ins to work for desegregation off campus. Civil rights and emerging radical activism at UT transformed the university campus into a particular site of politics. Inspired and politicized by their experiences in the Black Freedom Movement, UT student activists argued that the campus itself was both a launch pad for activism and simultaneously ought to be transformed by it. Thus, the campus became a newly differentiated—and significant—space for political activism.

Housing, Desegregation, and Women Students in the Postwar Period

In the 1940s, civil rights activism and desegregation efforts at UT had begun in earnest, but while black students had gained the right to admission to the law school and graduate programs, they were not admitted for undergraduate degrees until 1956.³⁷ Heman Sweatt was a mailman from Houston who applied for admission into UT's School of Law in 1946 and was denied because he was African-American. The law stated that no citizens of African descent were admitted into the University of Texas. Historically, African-Americans were forced to choose among other public universities or colleges in Texas or to opt for private,

³⁷ Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 116-117. The Board of Regents decided in 1955 to fully integrate enrollment, effective the following year, in the fall of 1956. See Almetris Duren, *Overcoming: A History of Black Integration at the University of Texas at Austin* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 1979).

historically black colleges. Schools like Texas Southern University or Prairie View A&M were not as well-funded as UT, nor were they its equal in reputation; the *Sweatt v. Painter* case effectively argued that these were the “intangibles” of any particular school. Heman Sweatt won his lawsuit and was admitted into the School of Law in 1950. His case became one of several to lay the foundation for the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

The first African-American undergraduates matriculated six years later, in 1956, but their numbers were miniscule, and campus life was still mostly segregated. Black students attended desegregated classes but beyond the classroom, extracurricular activities were largely segregated, as were local restaurants and movie theaters. Black students could not participate in varsity athletics or join the Longhorn Band, for example, and when a black student was cast as the female lead in a campus performance of “Dido and Aeneas” opposite a white man, the administration forbade her performance, citing public outcry and disapproval.³⁸ Barbara Smith was the young music student who auditioned and won the starring role. When it became known that she would star opposite a white male student, she began to receive threatening anonymous phone calls; the situation escalated until state legislators began to weigh in publicly, with threats to withhold university appropriations and author new bills to strengthen state segregation laws. Smith recalled, “Between October and Christmas I received three anonymous phone calls complaining about my being in the opera. Between Christmas and midterm nothing out of the ordinary happened. After that I received other anonymous calls, sometimes as many as three a week.” Two state representatives, Jerry Sadler and Joe Chapman, made public comments about the fiasco. Chapman asked the university to remove Smith from the production for the “betterment of the University of Texas,” and Sadler threatened to remove state appropriations to the University because “they have Negro undergraduates.”³⁹ Two weeks before her scheduled performance, the university president informed Barbara Smith that she could not appear in the production both for her own safety and because of the possibility of negative public reaction. The faculty Committee of Counsel and Academic Freedom and Responsibility released a statement in

³⁸ Almetris Marsh Duren, *Overcoming: A History of Black Integration at the University of Texas at Austin* (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin, 1979).

³⁹ Almetris Duren, *Overcoming*, 5.

defense of the decision, saying, “We believe that his [the university president’s] decision to withdraw Barbara Smith from the cast of ‘Dido and Aeneas’ was as just to the student and as wise as the social climate would permit at this time.”⁴⁰

Of course, at the heart of the conflict were fears about miscegenation, so deeply rooted in Southern culture, that were used to both justify and perpetuate legal segregation. The Barbara Smith case reveals early administrative responses and public reactions to the arrival of black students on the UT campus. Perhaps nowhere were fears about black and white students on campus together more pronounced than with regard to student housing. Student activists would ultimately target all of these aspects of segregated campus life with direct action campaigns as part of the Black Freedom Movement. Yet arguably the most pressing and enduring issue for black students at UT was student housing, both on and off the campus.

In the late 1950s, various UT administrators discussed the growing university population and the lack of adequate housing to meet students’ needs. As the children from the front end of the “baby boom” in the post-World War Two period began matriculating into the university as freshmen, administrators grew increasingly alarmed about the inability to fully accommodate them. In the President’s Annual Report, dated October 14, 1959, the dean of students Henry Y. McCown singled out several items warranting special attention from Harry Ransom, UT’s vice president and provost. The first was “Student Life,” which included campus housing. McCown wrote, “One of the most important functions of the Student Life Office in the year ahead will be to find adequate housing for our expanding student body.”⁴¹ Of particular significance, however, was women students’ housing. In the aftermath of the opening of Kinsolving Dormitory,

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ “President’s Annual Report,” October 14, 1959. Folder: President’s Annual Report. UT Dean of Students Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History [hereafter CAH], University of Texas at Austin.

a brand-new dormitory constructed for female students, women student enrollment at UT increased dramatically: 28.9% the year it opened, and again by 8.1% in 1960.⁴² McCown concluded that the two were correlated: “The addition of Kinsolving Dormitory was undoubtedly responsible for an increase in enrollment of women students.”⁴³ McCown warned, however, that “in order to keep a proper balance between men and women students, we must provide more housing for freshman girls.”⁴⁴ The main issue, as McCown saw it, was that parents of freshmen women would be reluctant to send their daughters to the university unless assured they would be housed in a campus dormitory.⁴⁵ McCown refers to the protections guaranteed by the practice of *in loco parentis* on the campus that, in theory, applied to all students but had special significance for women in particular.

From the opening of the first women students’ buildings in 1901 and 1927, the supervision of female coeds was a key function of administrators. The Board of Regents Handbook outlined one of the primary functions of campus housing staff: to “supervise social life” and “in conjunction with the Dean of Women, recommend rules governing student conduct and social privileges of students.”⁴⁶ Visiting hours and regulations, curfews, and dress codes all fell under the rubric of “social privileges,” and while some

⁴² Letter from Henry Y. McCown, Dean of Students, to Harry Ransom, Vice President and Provost, dated January 26, 1960. Folder: Dormitories for Women, UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

⁴³ “President’s Annual Report,” October 14, 1959. Folder: President’s Annual Report. UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ “Brief History of University Residence Halls for Women,” in the “Report on Personnel Program in University Residence Halls for Women.” Folder: Report on Personnel Program, UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

of these changed over time from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1960s, such as the age at which a woman student could live off-campus, they were certainly still in effect in 1965 and continued to shape women's lives on the campus. During the 1959-1960 academic year, 47% of incoming freshmen women lived in on-campus dormitories and 49% lived in private housing such as co-operatives.⁴⁷ All women students lived in approved housing, whether it was in an on-campus dormitory, an approved cooperative, or with an "adult" or relative by special permission of the university. Married women, women over 21 (after 1960), divorced women, and graduate student women were "allowed" to live in apartments, but again, the university regulated those choices.⁴⁸

In 1960, the university faced severe housing shortages for women students, shortages exacerbated by racial segregation on campus, and the discussions about how to address both issues—desegregation and housing—became inextricably linked. In the summer of 1960, before the start of the fall semester, the dean of women wrote a memo to the dean of students explaining that all available housing for women students in the 1960-1961 academic year had been exhausted and that hundreds of women had been turned away from the university as a result. Valedictorians, promising scholars, and women with the highest grade point averages were forced to choose other schools over UT because of this housing problem, the dean of women complained.

The housing shortage was particularly a "woman student" problem because of the traditions and regulations of *in loco parentis* but also because of the specifics of racial

⁴⁷ "1959-1960 Freshman Housing," Folder: Dormitories for Women, UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

⁴⁸ Letter from Henry Y. McCown, Dean of Students, to Harry Ransom, Vice President and Provost, dated January 26, 1960. Folder: Dormitories for Women, UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

segregation on the UT campus. In 1957, the San Jacinto dormitory became available to black male students, becoming the first desegregated dormitory on the campus. Women's dorms at the time were still not integrated. In 1960, the year this housing crisis became of particular concern to the university, student housing for black men was expanding while both black and white women students faced just the opposite situation. Not all male dormitories were desegregated, however; in fact, the term "desegregated" might be qualified to simply suggest not off-limits to black men. In 1959, for example, twenty-three students were newly assigned to one section of San Jacinto, seventeen of whom were black and six of whom were not. Among the six who were not black, three were white, one was Chinese, one was Latin American, and the other was simply listed as a foreign exchange student.⁴⁹ By the following semester, in the spring of 1960, five of these students had transferred out of San Jacinto, with only the Latin American student remaining.⁵⁰ In other words, black men could live in a wing of San Jacinto, which administrators claimed made it "desegregated," but non-black students assigned to the dorm in the fall of 1959 quickly moved to another dorm, leaving an entire section of San Jacinto almost exclusively black. Black women could live in Whitis dormitory, Eliza Dee Dorm (which was located many blocks from the campus), or in other approved housing, but the student Human Relations Committee's survey in 1957 revealed that many nearby landlords and cooperatives were against leasing to, or accepting, black women student

⁴⁹ Latin American most likely meant Mexican-American in this context.

⁵⁰ Folder: Negro Housing, UT Dean of Student Records, CAH.

residents.⁵¹ Equal access to education did not mean integrated housing or equal access to housing, as reported by the Committee's survey about public attitudes towards integrated housing.

Furthermore, construction of the Kinsolving Dormitory, meant to alleviate housing problems for women, was explicitly for white women students and white women students only. In 1959, the dean of students was informed that "Kinsolving Dormitory was reserved by University regulation for white students only."⁵² Segregated housing for black women students was added in 1960, both with air conditioning and without, but these buildings were often riddled with structural and maintenance problems; certainly none was built brand-new as Kinsolving had been. By 1960, roughly 200 African-American students attended UT, a tiny fraction of the overall student population, but those several hundred students were only allowed access to the very limited campus housing options available in the form of segregated housing both on and off the campus. In fact, after the opening of Kinsolving, the administration made preliminary plans to build a new dorm for black women, but after some complaints by whites that the university was being "too solicitous" of black students, the administration decided against the new building so as not to offend public opinion.

⁵¹ "Report of the Human Relation Commission," June 28, 1957. Folder: Negro Housing, UT Dean of Students Records, CAH. The student Human Relations Committee performed an informal survey of restaurants, businesses, private apartments, and cooperative houses to ascertain general attitudes towards desegregation at the University of Texas in 1957. Restaurant owners seemed mixed in their opinions about serving black patrons, but the landlords of apartments and cooperatives were almost uniformly resistant to integrated housing. The Eliza Dee Dorm was actually run by the Women's Society of Christian Service of the Methodist Church as a "Christian home for young Negro women attending Samuel Huston College" but also accepted UT black women who could not find other housing. Eliza Dee became the Almetris Co-Op. Duren, *Overcoming*, 6.

⁵² Letter from L.D. Haskew, Vice President for Developmental Services, to H.Y. McCown, Dean of Students, August 14, 1959. Folder: Negro Housing. UT Dean of Students Records, CAH.

Housing became a key target of student activists in the spring of 1960, alongside protests and sit-ins at local retail shops and restaurants that refused to serve African-American students. For those becoming involved in the Black Freedom Movement at UT, the issue of campus housing always existed alongside other efforts to erode local segregation laws. In other words, there was never a clear line between “on-campus” issues and “off-campus” issues, since, when it came to university student housing, the two could not be separated. Furthermore, at the heart of segregated housing were concerns about sexuality and the underlying fear that integrated campus housing would lead to interracial relationships and interracial sex.

Early Protests Against Campus Discrimination and Segregated Housing

In January of 1960, at the start of the spring semester, a new column called “Steer Here” appeared in the *Daily Texan*, the campus-based student newspaper, and signaled a shift in concerns about integration. “Steer Here” was a local restaurant guide for students. The writers frequented different establishments near and around the campus, specifically those located on “the Drag,” a stretch of Guadalupe Street that delineates the western edge of the campus, and evaluated the quality of the food, its affordability, and so on. The title of the column was a pun, with “steer” referring to the University’s Longhorn mascot. Every restaurant or café that scored at least eighty points according to the column’s criteria would receive the “Steer Here” endorsement. It was useful for students and it offered free advertising for restaurants, along with incentive to cater to the growing student body. One of the most significant aspects of the “Steer Here” guide, however, was that whether or not a business served black students made up almost thirty percent of

the evaluative criteria. In other words, even if a restaurant received all possible points in the other categories, if it did not serve black students, it could not receive more than a total score of seventy, not enough to earn a “Steer Here” stamp of approval. The “Steer Here” column predated the student sit-ins to pressure restaurants to desegregate by several months but marked increasing activist frustration with local and campus segregation laws. In March 1960, however, several months after the start of “Steer Here,” the student newspaper reported that the column had “provoked no great change. Most Drag eating places are still segregated, and it will probably take more than Steer Here to change Jim Crow Policy.”⁵³

On March 13, 1960, UT activists--thirty students both black and white--held their first protest against racial discrimination on campus. They assembled quietly with large cardboard signs that read “First Class School. Second Class Students. Negroes are excluded from Drama, Athletics, Choice of Housing,” and “When will UT dorms integrate?” and finally, “Why can’t Negroes participate in intercollegiate sports?”⁵⁴ The article in the *Daily Texan* explained that students in the 75th Year Student Committee on Integration (the name referring to the university’s 75th anniversary) were frustrated that the Board of Regents continued to ignore their recommendations. The Committee report requested that “all University owned and operated dormitories be integrated within the next few years” and asked that the “University of Texas utilize its prestigious position in the Southwest Conference to bring an end to any ‘gentlemen’s agreements’ forbidding

⁵³ “UT’s Protesting Pickets,” *Daily Texan*, March 13, 1960.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Negro athletes to participate in Conference athletics.”⁵⁵ The “gentlemen’s agreement” among schools in the Southwest Conference was that no school would accept or recruit African-American students to play on any varsity team so long as none of the other schools did. This agreement enabled schools to perpetuate segregation in university athletics de facto. The 75th Year Committee made these recommendations in 1958, and two years later, in 1960, the Regents had still not met their demands. Protesters hoped their picket line would draw attention to the persistence of campus racial discrimination and the fact that progress toward integration had “bogged down.”⁵⁶

In addition to the *Daily Texan*’s “Steer Here” column and coverage of the protest against campus segregation, a new student government party made housing a campus-wide political issue. The FACT party emerged as an independent student political party and characterized itself as an “issue” party. FACT argued that the university did not exist as an isolated entity but rather was directly influenced by the Texas Legislature. The party pledged to “effectively and forthrightly represent the student’s best interest off as well as on campus, and in the Texas Legislature as well as in the Student Assembly.”⁵⁷ The party’s platform consisted of several campus issues: proposed tuition increases, National Student Association affiliation, and, in the aftermath of student sit-ins across the South in the spring of 1960, integrated housing. At a debate at the University Y, Charlie Hayden, FACT candidate for student body president, called himself an integrationist and, unlike his opponents, promised to use his position as student body president to pressure

⁵⁵ 75th Year Student Committee on Integration report as quoted in “UT’s Protesting Pickets,” *Daily Texan*, March 13, 1960.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ “FACT Party Platform Analyzes Campus Issues,” *Daily Texan*, January ??, 1960.

the administration regarding integration issues. His principal tactic would be “publicizing the Negro housing situation.”⁵⁸ Charlie Hayden was the only candidate running for study body president at UT in 1960 that favored integration, particularly for housing.⁵⁹ The other candidates either supported the gradualism adopted by the Board of Regents or supported integrated athletics but not housing.

By April of 1960, roughly five weeks after the student body president debates and increased coverage of civil rights activism on the front pages of the *Daily Texan*, a student Grievance Committee met at the University Y and again charged the University with failure to adopt their housing recommendations. At this meeting, the Grievance Committee announced it had prepared a list of complaints for Dr. Logan Wilson, UT president. The committee criticized the administration, saying, “Kinsolving with its Hilton-ish splendor not 200 feet away from the substandard conditions of Whitis Hall, exemplifies the Administration’s attitude toward separate but equal housing.”⁶⁰ The Committee also criticized the conversion of International House, a building for visiting foreign students, into an integrated living unit because they feared the conditions would not be sufficient to attract white residents. The effect would be simply the construction of another segregated living space on the campus, instead of progress towards greater desegregation.⁶¹ It is important to note here that International House did in fact become another segregated housing unit for black women.

⁵⁸ “Integration, Tuition Emerge as Issues,” *Daily Texan*, March 15, 1960.

⁵⁹ “The Platforms,” *Daily Texan*, March 16, 1960.

⁶⁰ “Grievors Charge Housing Failure,” *Daily Texan*, April 22, 1960.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Conversations about the remodeling of International House into an integrated dorm spurred another set of campus debates about the “foreign student problem,” revealing further complications in the racial hierarchies on campus. The “foreign student problem” was supposedly discovered in a series of discussions among students and faculty. Visiting international students, the *Daily Texan* reported, were not being successfully and fully integrated into the fabric of university life. True friendships, proficiency in the English language, and familiarization with American customs were listed as some of the things international students were missing in their campus experiences. At the root of this problem was foreign student housing, since most foreign students did not live in university dorms. The Campus Survey Council asked foreign students to fill out a questionnaire that asked, “Would you object to be requested to live in a University dorm?” The actual responses of international students themselves were lost in the larger exchanges about the implications of foreign students living in university dorms. The most obvious question was which segregated dorm could they live in? With white students or black students?

Foreign students on the UT campus already occupied a liminal or third space in regard to Jim Crow laws. They could, for example, frequent the segregated restaurants and movie theaters along the Drag from which African-American students were prohibited.⁶² Yet, when it came to housing, the situation did not appear to be so clear-cut. White American students, after all, might not want to room with international students; as

⁶² Erica Whittington explores segregation laws as experienced by UT foreign students in her dissertation, “From the Campus to the Globe: Race, Internationalism, and Student Activism in the Postwar South” (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2011).

the *Daily Texan* article explained, “If he [foreign student] and his roommate do not have a common interest, it is worse to live together.”⁶³ In other words, relationships between international students and American students on campus could *worsen* by living together. Furthermore, “many foreign students prefer to live in a suitable dormitory, not a Cliff Court. Every semester all good dorms are full except San Jacinto dormitories, small, poorly furnished dormitories.”⁶⁴ Cliff Court was a segregated dorm for black men students, while San Jacinto was partially desegregated but poorly maintained.

The Grievance Committee, the same committee demanding desegregated housing for African-American and white students on campus, issued a report on foreign student housing problems in April of 1960. The Committee’s plan for foreign students was the same for African-American students: immediate integration. The Committee called for “immediate, mandatory, integration of unmarried foreign students, both male and female, into University living quarters.”⁶⁵ The Committee reported that foreign students complained about being “rejected by American coeds” and being forced to take separate government and history classes.⁶⁶ These were both tangents of a common argument regarding foreign students: that they were kept too separate from white UT students and therefore unable to fully grasp American customs, build friendships, and learn English. The issue of foreign student housing revealed growing concern, and tension, over race and housing on the university campus. Furthermore, these debates revealed the

⁶³ “Required Dorms Create Problems,” *Daily Texan*, March 11, 1960.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ “Gripes Group Favors Housing Integration,” *Daily Texan*, April 29, 1960.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

unsustainability of segregated campus housing and illustrate why housing became a key campus-wide political issue.

“Not Another Marshall”: Austin Sit-Ins

Throughout the spring of 1960, the debates about segregation and campus housing that were roiling the University of Texas campus occurred within a larger context of civil rights activism that erupted in February at a Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Four young African-American college students sat in to protest racial segregation and ignited direct-action protests across the country like the strike of a match. The “sit-in” signaled a shift in the civil rights movement and became the primary tool to demand immediate change.

On April 19, 1960, forty-eight students from UT, Huston-Tillotson, Presbyterian Seminary, and Episcopal Seminary met at the University Y to discuss “racial problems” and organize a sit-in movement at all-white lunch counters throughout Austin.⁶⁷ The following night, on Wednesday, April 20, 1960, student organizers held another meeting at the Y--this time standing-room only, with over 150 attendees--and issued a resolution to local restaurant owners that they would initiate sit-ins at every business that did not voluntarily integrate within the next seven days. The students released a statement:

For several years attempts have been made in Austin to bring the problem of segregated lunch counters to the attention of persons in a position to resolve these problems. They have failed. Today another attempt was made. It failed. If some satisfactory means are not found within a week to solve these problems, an interracial coalition of students will be forced to use the methods at their disposal to present the problem effectively and to find a solution.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ “Texas Students Talk ‘Sit-In’ Here,” *Daily Texan*, April 20, 1960.

⁶⁸ “Local Café Integration Demanded in 7 Days,” *Daily Texan*, April 21, 1960.

Students and business owners met throughout the afternoon of April 20th to negotiate voluntary agreements to integrate but ultimately could not reach a compromise acceptable to the student coalition of activists.

Plans for the Austin sit-ins came on the heels of, and certainly in reaction to, the state's first sit-ins in Marshall, Texas. Although coverage of student sit-ins was non-existent in UT's *Daily Texan* until March 1960, and even then the coverage was sparse, by April of 1960, after events in Marshall, coverage had increased. After Marshall, UT students began to plan their own sit-ins at Austin's segregated lunch counters. Two days after their ultimatum to local businessmen, the Austin mayor declared that he would not have "another Marshall."

In Marshall, Texas, located in the northeastern part of the state near the Louisiana border, students from Wiley College had organized the first sit-ins in Texas. Wiley was a private, historically black college that had earned a reputation for its extremely successful debate team and was the alma mater of James Farmer Jr., a key civil rights leader. The Marshall sit-ins erupted in violence when police officers and firefighters turned fire hoses on seventy-seven demonstrators.⁶⁹ Fifty-seven students were arrested and charged with unlawful assembly and illegal picketing.⁷⁰ When Austin students released their statement threatening to sit-in, the Austin mayor responded with his own threat to intervene, stating, "As long as I am able, I am not going to have any Marshall, Texas." Arguing that "you

⁶⁹ "Not Another Marshall Here," *Daily Texan*, April 22, 1960.

⁷⁰ "Marshall Student Fined \$400 for Part in 'Sit-In'," *Daily Texan*, April 21, 1960.

have to be fair to both sides in something like this,” the mayor promised to negotiate with restaurant operators to avoid the planned sit-ins.

Ultimately, while some businesses did choose to voluntarily integrate during the seven days allotted by the interracial student activist coalition, most did not. With support and blessings from both the National Student Association and the local Austin Human Relations Committee, student activists began protests and sit-ins along downtown Congress Avenue.⁷¹ Protestors in groups of thirty, with equal numbers of black students and white students from four different colleges and universities, carried signs that read: “I don’t want it ‘to go’ I want to sit down”; “We want more than a cup of coffee. We want dignity”; and “Why pay for racism?”⁷² The protests were peaceful but coffee shop, restaurant, and hotel owners stated that they planned to close their businesses for the remainder of the week to avoid sit-ins and would refuse to integrate. When owners claimed that white patrons would avoid integrated lunch counters and shops, UT students responded by passing out pledge cards to passersby that promised continued patronage and support of integration. The cards were to be filled out by individual supporters and read: “To: (Name of Business) I believe people of all races should be served in eating establishments. I will support those businesses which adopt such a policy by eating there and by using my influence to encourage my family, friends, and groups to which I belong to eat there, too.”⁷³ The sit-ins lasted through the first few weeks of May 1960, and

⁷¹ “NSA Delegates Ok Sit-Ins,” *Daily Texan*, April 24, 1960.

⁷² “Bi-Racial Student Group Picketing for Integration,” *Daily Texan*, April 28, 1960.

⁷³ “Integration Support,” *Daily Texan*, May 4, 1960.

twenty-two lunch counters, cafes, and restaurants integrated their establishments.⁷⁴ UT students did not stage mass demonstrations until seven months later, with the initiation of “stand-ins” along Guadalupe Street to integrate movie theaters in December of 1960.

Direct Challenges to Campus Housing Segregation and the Kinsolving Sit-In

After the experiences and successes of the Congress Avenue sit-ins, UT students returned their attention to the campus to once again target campus housing discrimination. Black students had grown increasingly tired of the “unwritten rules” of campus housing, and in 1961 they staged a protest inside Kinsolving Dormitory. The unwritten rules established that black men were forbidden in white women’s dorms and black women were only allowed to visit white women’s dorms if they went directly to their host’s room and shut the door.⁷⁵ Black women were not allowed to use the restrooms or drinking fountains in white dorms they visited.⁷⁶ Most importantly, black and white students were not to mingle together in any public spaces of the dormitories.

“Unwritten rules” limited the social interactions of all black and white students, they were especially intended to regulate contact between black men and white women. University students met at the University Y to debate the merits of desegregation on campus. During the debate, conservative students expressed support for the continued practice of “separate but equal” with regard to university facilities, arguing that “integration would result in moral depravity and eventual inter-marriage.”⁷⁷ Thus, opponents to campus integration linked increased social interaction among racially

⁷⁴ “The ‘Sit-Ins’ Fate,” *Daily Texan*, May 18, 1960.

⁷⁵ Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 141.

⁷⁶ Rules against using restrooms and drinking fountains changed in 1962, but others remained in place.

⁷⁷ “Moral, Social Effects of Integration Aired,” *Daily Texan*, April 8, 1960.

diverse students at UT with “moral depravity,” meaning interracial dating and sex, which would ultimately lead to interracial marriage. These issues were particularly salient in discussions of campus housing since having black men visiting the same dormitories or housing areas as white women signaled greater social intimacy and opportunities, conservatives argued, for interracial dating.

The year before, in 1960, amid the activism surrounding campus housing and sit-ins at local restaurants, African-American students began directly challenging segregated dorms and dining halls. There were a handful of incidents that, while reported in the *Daily Texan*, were mostly quiet and received little attention. The first challenge came from two black women students who, along with four white students, entered the Kinsolving Dormitory cafeteria as a group and stood in line to be served. The manager of the dormitory asked them to leave with the explanation that the Board of Regents’ policy regarding segregation “would not allow serving of Negroes in University women’s dormitories.”⁷⁸ All six students left quietly and later reported that their reception by other white women in the cafeteria was “reserved, almost hostile.”⁷⁹

The next attempt occurred the following month, in May of 1960, at the Methodist-owned Kirby Hall dorm, a privately owned, segregated dorm. Two black students, Jennie Franklin and Carolyn Lawson, ate in the dorm’s dining hall as the invited guests of two dorm residents, Sue Parsons and Sandra Talley.⁸⁰ Although black ministers had eaten in the dining hall, no students had ever attempted it. The women encountered little reaction

⁷⁸ “2 Negroes Ousted from Kinsolving Cafeteria Line,” *Daily Texan*, April 29, 1960.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ “Two Negro Girls Eat in Kirby Hall,” *Daily Texan*, May 6, 1960.

from the other hundred students in the dining hall, and the managers of the hall simply expressed disapproval that the residents had not received permission for their guests prior to inviting them. But the disapproval, it would seem, had nothing to do with the race of the guests.⁸¹

In the days leading up to the “Kinsolving sit-in,” small groups of white and black women students gathered together in the public living space on the first floor of the dormitory. Apparently no one asked them to leave or informed them of any “regulations concerning racial mixing in the public rooms of the dormitories.”⁸² The following week, three white students were called into the Dean’s office and informed that they faced disciplinary action if they “disobeyed orders or University authority.”⁸³ The report states that in no case were these students shown written regulations regarding dormitory guests and racial segregation. That same day, on the evening of October 19, 1961, a group of fifty black women students entered Kinsolving Dormitory and gathered in the open living space, talking, reading, and hanging out. When staff members asked the women to leave the dorm, since their presence violated the “rules” of campus housing, the women simply refused. When staff members demanded their names, most either refused to answer or gave obviously fictitious names. In response, the dean of women, Margaret Peck, issued a statement to the residents of Whitis Dormitory and the Almetris Co-Op, two on-campus residences for black women students, that every single one of them must report to the Dean’s office. At least two black women were placed on academic probation, and while

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Report by Robert L. Montgomery to the Dean of Students, November 9, 1961. Folder: Integration 1961-62. UT Dean of Student Records, CAH.

⁸³ Ibid.

the records are unclear regarding the three white women previously warned about racial mingling, it seems that only black women were punished for the sit-in. In response, a student, George T. Timmons, wrote to the director of student activities requesting permission for eighty students to form a picket line on campus to protest segregated housing. The letter requested permission for the students to march on campus and carry signs that read, "Dorm Regulations Unfair to Negro Students," to protest "what we consider to be regulations implanting a policy of racial discrimination."⁸⁴

The administration released a university residence halls bulletin, explaining that the rules in effect regarding housing stipulated several things. First, that among the dorms for women, only Whitis was open to African-American students. Furthermore, "the social and dining areas of Whitis Dormitory, and overnight privileges for women guests in the dormitory, are available only to Negroes."⁸⁵ The reverse was also true: "The social and dining areas of other women's residence halls and overnight privileges...are not available to Negroes." Black men were only allowed overnight privileges in the desegregated sections of the San Jacinto and Brackenridge dormitories. Both men and women were allowed to invite guests into their residences so long as they "respect the rights of fellow residents at all times."⁸⁶ In light of the complaints by those at the sit-in, one can reasonably assume that respecting the rights of fellow residents meant going directly to a room with a guest of a different race and not "mingling" in common public areas. The

⁸⁴ Letter from George T. Timmons to E.B. Price, Director of Student Activities, November 16, 1961. Folder: Integration, 1961-1962. UT Dean of Student Records, CAH.

⁸⁵ "Residence Halls Bulletin," n.d. Folder: Integration, 1961-62. The author and exact date of this bulletin are unknown but it most likely originated from some part of the Student Life Office, since that office oversaw campus housing issues.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

bulletin was posted in every residence hall on campus on November 6, 1961, in reaction to the sit-in and picket lines.⁸⁷ The students who sat-in and protested complained that housing regulations were not explicit and not in writing. While some dormitories on campus might have been desegregated, the reality of the early 1960s was that most campus housing was not and that racial discrimination continued in campus residences both in practice and in name.

Student activists pressured the university through these protests and through a lawsuit [can you say more about the lawsuit?] against the regents to force full integration of all university facilities and student life. With the support of the UT faculty, who voted for a resolution calling for full integration by a vote of 308 to 34, black students on campus achieved significant support for civil rights on campus.⁸⁸ But the administration and regents did not respond in kind. As noted above, by 1964, most extracurricular activities and housing remained segregated.⁸⁹

To comply with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the UT Board of Regents adopted a policy against discrimination at the university:

With respect to the admission and education of students, with respect to the employment and promotion of teaching and non-teaching personnel, with respect to student and faculty activities conducted on premises owned or occupied by the University, and with respect to student and faculty housing situated on premises owned or occupied by the University, neither the University of Texas nor any of

⁸⁷ Almetris Duren, *Overcoming*, 11.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁸⁹ In comparison, Rossinow notes that by 1964 “the edifice of segregation in higher education in Texas had crumbled.” In 1961, Texas Tech began admitting black students for the first time. That same year, Rice University integrated all of its facilities. In 1962, Baylor University began admitting black students, and in 1964 Texas Christian University followed suit. Student body presidents from all seven schools in the Southwest Athletic Conference called for the integration of all conference events. Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 143.

its component institutions shall discriminate either in favor of or against any person on account of his or her race, creed, or color.⁹⁰

When the UT administration finally desegregated on-campus dorms and housing on the occasion of Johnson's visit (not to mention legal pressure from the lawsuit mentioned above), the housing issue was not put to rest. It seems that some students, particularly women, responded by moving into off-campus housing, favoring that option over the possibility of rooming with an African-American student.⁹¹ Approved housing could be located off-campus, usually in the form of cooperatives or leased apartments in the West Campus neighborhood, located just west of the campus, but the landlords or directors had to maintain contracts with the university. Tensions over desegregation exacerbated the housing shortage, since there appeared to be notable resistance to integration. As women tried to move off campus, the logistics of *in loco parentis* made the situation increasingly untenable. Many owners, landlords, and co-op directors refused to implement the new housing policies, blatantly stating that they would not lease to, or accept, African-American tenants. Student activists were incensed and pressured the UT administration to oversee the proper implementation of university housing regulations in all housing, not just in the dorms on campus but in all approved off-campus housing as well. As more and more landlords were trying to capitalize on the growing off-campus student housing market, the university was finding it ever more difficult to control the conditions of that housing and the adherence to official policies.

⁹⁰ Memo from Dr. Norman Hackerman, Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs to Deans, Chairmen, and Administrative Officials, June 1, 1964. Folder: Integration. UT Dean of Students, CAH.

⁹¹ Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 47.

In 1965, several deans informed the vice-chancellor for academic affairs that African-American students were having trouble locating residences in off-campus approved housing: desegregating on-campus dorms had not alleviated housing problems for black students. The deans complained that “it will be extremely difficult for prospective Negro students to find housing near the University campus this fall. The staff has agreed that we should do what we can to encourage and promote housing for the young Negro men and women desiring to come to our campus.” That meant encouraging approved off-campus landlords to accept black tenants and comply with UT’s anti-discrimination policies. While some of the landlords had promised to integrate their housing units, and thereby maintain their approved housing status, many of them later resisted: “some of the representatives of the off-campus housing units who had indicated that they would integrate their facilities...have now said that they want more time to think through the situation before they publicly commit themselves on this question.”⁹² This question of non-compliance, and the discordance between desegregated on-campus housing and segregated off-campus housing, became a key issue for UT’s SDS chapter.

The Emergence of SDS at the University of Texas

The University of Texas campus chapter of Students for a Democratic Society grew out of an overlapping network of student activist groups that had worked to desegregate campus life throughout the early 1960s. Activist groups such as Students for Direct Action, the Grievance Committee, the campus Christian Faith and Life

⁹² Letter to Dr. Norman Hackerman, Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs, June 4, 1965. Folder: Integration, 1961-1962. UT Dean of Student Records, CAH.

Community (CFLC), the University Y, and students involved in the National Student Association staged protests and sit-ins as part of desegregation and civil rights activism on and around the UT campus throughout the early 1960s.⁹³ Together, these organizations fostered a community of activists that later arrivals to the campus were able to join and draw upon. When Alice Embree, co-founder of UT's SDS chapter and *The Rag*, a premiere underground new left newspaper, arrived at UT as a freshman in the fall of 1963, she explained, "There was a small [activist] community I stepped into," one made up of students involved with civil rights issues.⁹⁴ Embree first joined a small civil rights group called the Campus Interracial Committee, focused on desegregating UT dorms and sports teams. She said: "It amazes people, but UT had segregated sports and dorms at the time, and there was a student interracial committee working to integrate dorms and conference sports. And so I got involved with the civil rights stuff and through that meant other stuff." Embree refers to the overlapping networks students were creating on campus, such as students involved with the Campus Interracial Committee who helped start SDS: "In the spring, some of those people [in the Campus Interracial Committee] formed SDS; there was some overlap in the spring of 1964."⁹⁵ Embree, like fellow SDS co-founder Robert Pardun, began her foray into campus politics through civil rights work and desegregation efforts.

⁹³ Please see Erica Whittington, "From the Campus to the Globe: Race, Internationalism, and Student Activism in the Postwar South" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 2011) and Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

⁹⁴ Embree, Alice. Interview by author. Austin, Texas, 16 December 2009.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

When Robert Pardun first arrived at the University of Texas at Austin in 1963 to begin a graduate program in mathematics, it seemed to him that the campus was steeped in a culture of football, fraternities, and sororities, and devoid of political life. He explained:

When I first got there [UT], I didn't feel like there was a subculture. It was much different from the University of Colorado, where I'd gone the year before. At the University of Colorado, people dressed differently...there was a group of people who kind of looked like beatniks...that was missing when I got to Austin. The women all had teased hairstyles and their faces painted on. No one rode a bicycle.⁹⁶

What also startled Pardun was Southern racial segregation, a practice he had little experience with growing up in Pueblo, Colorado. When he befriended a fellow UT student and civil rights activist, Charlie Smith, Pardun was made aware of both civil rights activism at UT and the realities of segregation. Racism and segregation were contradictory to the values he had grown up with, like “all men are created equal,” but he said, “I'd never been to the South before... when you went a few blocks from the [Austin] capitol building, there were clapboard buildings with dirt front yards and black people living in them. The east side of Austin was all black. I'd never been around that before.”⁹⁷ In contrast, Pardun described his own childhood neighborhood of Pueblo as integrated: “Next-door neighbors on one side were black, and across the vacant lot there was another black family...there were deaf people, people from Slovenia, people from

⁹⁶ Pardun, Robert. Interview by author. Los Gatos, California, 24 August 2010. I also want to note here that these comments echo Dorothy Burlage's depictions of campus life in 1959 as “football, beer-drinking culture” in Doug Rossinow's, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). Dorothy Burlage was a central figure in civil rights activism and desegregation efforts at UT.

⁹⁷ Pardun, Robert. Interview by author. Los Gatos, California, 24 August 2010.

Germany, people from Russia, all working in the steel mill.”⁹⁸ After befriending an African-American student and activist at UT, David McDonald, Pardun learned of the racial segregation not just in Austin but on the campus itself: women’s dormitories, extracurricular activities like sports and the arts, student employment, and women’s annual beauty queen contests.⁹⁹ In his memoir, *Prairie Radical*, he writes, “When I look back, I’m amazed at how little I saw of what Austin was really like...I began to see segregation everywhere...this confrontation with reality was another step in a string of events that were changing the direction of my life.”¹⁰⁰ Pardun’s individual experience echoes the experiences of many other students who, similarly, arrived at UT and became politically active in civil rights, desegregation, and eventually, in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Pardun, along with other UT students, created the university’s chapter of Students for a Democratic Society in 1964. Soon afterwards, he participated in Mississippi Freedom Summer, then went on to become a regional SDS organizer. Later, Pardun would be elected to the SDS national office, serving from 1967 to 1968, at the height of the antiwar movement.

At the end of the fall semester of 1963, Charlie Smith, who had traveled to the national meeting of SDS the summer before, invited his friend and fellow activist Pardun to help him establish an SDS chapter on campus. Pardun, who believed SDS to be a multi-issue organization that could address various campus problems, agreed. When

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ As discussed later in this section, men’s dorms were desegregated, officially, but women’s dormitories and other types of housing were not. Also, regarding sports teams and the arts, see Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 144.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical: A Journey Through the Sixties* (Los Gatos, CA: Shire Press, 2001), 26-27.

Pardun and Smith held their first informational meeting on campus in January of 1964, they expected only a handful of people to attend. To their surprise, thirty-five people showed up, including students active in the Campus Interracial Committee, and many already had ideas about SDS's first actions. The first campaign was to picket the Picadilly Restaurant in downtown Austin to pressure the owners to accept black patrons.¹⁰¹

UT's SDS--whose first members included Jeff Shero, Gary Thiher, George Vizard, and Alice Embree¹⁰²--continued to focus on challenging desegregation and working for civil rights on campus throughout its first two years as an organization. In 1964, they protested the annual minstrel-show fundraiser held by UT fraternities, which was immensely popular on campus and included fraternity men dressing in blackface.¹⁰³ Robert Pardun wrote an article in the *Daily Texan* explaining the SDS position on the minstrel show. In "A First Class Insult," Pardun states SDS's resolution condemning the show:

We the Students for a Demoratic Society feel that minstrel shows create a degrading and historically inaccurate stereotype of the Negro. They make the Negro an object of ridicule by purposefully coupling "black face" with crude humor. This creates the illusion that Negroes as a racial group are mentally inferior. We as "students of the first class" can see no excuse why such racist antics should be approved by the University and held on the university campus.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ The decision to picket a downtown Austin restaurant was directly in line with what UT student activists had done earlier in the decade and illustrates the overlap of UT's SDS chapter with other organizations and influences, such as the Campus Interracial Committee. "SDS Members Picket Capitol," *Daily Texan*, February 16, 1964.

¹⁰² Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 37.

¹⁰³ "Full House Expected for Cowboy Minstrel," *Daily Texan*, February 6, 1964.

¹⁰⁴ "A First Class Insult," *Daily Texan*, February 7, 1964.

Off campus, SDS ran a voter registration project in East Austin in the spring of 1965, during which SDSers walked two-by-two through predominately Latino and African-American neighborhoods registering residents to vote.¹⁰⁵ In addition, SDS staged a protest on the steps of the capitol building in order to pressure Austin's city council to pass anti-discrimination employment bills. They handed out flyers to passersby that called for "Decent Negro jobs in city hall, integration of Brackenridge Hospital, Negro meter maids, equal employment opportunities in all public utilities, and immediate passage of an Austin anti-discrimination ordinance."¹⁰⁶

As SDS grew in visibility and membership, Pardun writes that he realized the extent of the activist community at UT: "When I arrived in Austin my impression had been that there was no 'alternative' community. However, once I became active in SDS, I found that there was a large and diverse community of non-conformists gathered into a wide range of overlapping groups."¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, Pardun stresses the significance of the community formation surrounding SDS: "SDS was a small community within the larger one and we spent many hours discussing politics, philosophy, and our personal lives with each other. I had joined a community of people working for social change and felt that I had found a direction for my life that reflected who I was."¹⁰⁸ The cohesion that Robert Pardun refers to and the overlap of "culture" and "politics" he found in UT's SDS were what Pardun and others in the national SDS office would later characterize as "prairie power." Prairie power was what distinguished UT's community from other SDS

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 39.

¹⁰⁶ "SDS Members Picket Capitol," *Daily Texan*, February 16, 1964.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 46.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

chapters and contributed to its size and popularity, as it became the second-largest chapter in the country.¹⁰⁹ [not sure if this should go in this chapter or move to *Rag* chapter or even CH 4 about surveillance because of culture+politics+community, etc. and harassment] [I obviously haven't read those other chapters yet, but it fits nicely here]

As SDS grew, activists decided the next big campaign should be to fight to integrate UT dormitories. UT activists began challenging the *in loco parentis* rules that governed campus life and regulated housing options, particularly for women. But the context of this struggle at UT was distinctly Southern, rooted in a history of racial segregation. While the initial emphasis was on desegregation, the rhetoric soon shifted to focus on women's freedom and student sexual freedom. In 1965, SDS put up one of their own as a candidate for student body president on an SDS platform. Gary Thiher campaigned as an antiwar candidate who also fought for sexual freedom and birth control on campus.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson's daughter, Lynda, lived in a segregated dorm on campus and he was scheduled to give the commencement address in June. SDS took advantage of the opportunity to draw attention to what they perceived as hypocrisy in order to embarrass the president. They hoped that in the process they could finally convince the administration to integrate campus living. They timed the protest to come on the heels of Johnson's visit to Austin for the holidays over the 1963/1964 winter break. Johnson had lunch at the "staunchly segregated" 40 Acres Club, where two of his African-American staff members were served. After Johnson returned to Washington, the

¹⁰⁹ The largest chapter was in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan.

40 Acres Club announced that it would serve black patrons if they were the “invited guests” of a white patron.¹¹⁰ Believing that Austin possessed “a special glitter” because of LBJ’s presidency, activists hoped to use that influence to leverage support for integration.¹¹¹ They passed out flyers in the women’s dorms, and just prior to Johnson’s commencement speech, the administration decided to integrate. Housing desegregation had been an issue for several years and, by 1964, was a thorn in UT’s side. SDS, however, articulated the housing problem as limiting women’s rights and freedoms, an archaic leftover of *in loco parentis*, and a naïve assumption about students’ private lives.

SDS demanded that UT abolish the requirement that freshman and sophomore women live in approved housing, articulating their position as twofold: one, the requirement arbitrarily and unfairly limited women’s freedom over their own lives and subjected them to rules and regulations to which their male counterparts were not held; and two, it rendered the administration complicit in racist housing practices by granting properties and individuals rights to lease to UT students even if they obviously excluded African-American students.¹¹² Furthermore, approved housing was often much more expensive than other apartments on the open market, since forcing students to live in approved housing enabled landlords to charge higher rates and still reach full occupancy.¹¹³ Yet, rather than framing the debate in terms of civil rights and racial

¹¹⁰ “Austin Council Releases City Integration Progress,” *Daily Texan*, February 7, 1964.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² University housing applications routinely inquired about an applicant’s race and religion. Document, “What is to be done?: Thiher’s Platform,” Box 129, University of Texas Chancellor Office Records [hereafter UT Chancellor Records], Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 97; Document, “What is to be done?: Thiher’s Platform,” Box 129, UT Chancellor Records, Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

justice, SDS rhetoric and flyers focused on women's freedom and the end of *in loco parentis* rules, particularly for female students.

In 1965, SDS ran Gary Thiher as an SDS candidate for student government. Thiher's platform reflected SDS's broad political platform, which included opposing the Vietnam War and demanding a minimum wage for cafeteria workers and was pro-desegregation and pro-civil rights. But the language Thiher and SDS's leaflets used to rally support for the abolishment of housing restrictions for women shifted the debate from strictly desegregation to women's rights and sexual freedom.

Thiher's campaign flyer claimed "the concept of the university as a parent impedes students' maturation, for maturity comes from the responsibility for decision making. A system whereby the University censors student publications, restricts speech and the right to ideas, restricts living choice, and dictates student ethics produces graduates ill-equipped to deal with the responsibilities of adulthood."¹¹⁴ In specific reference to women's rights on campus, the flyer goes on:

For women, the situation is worse. If an 18 year-old girl had left home to work, she would be her own master. However, when she chooses to seek an education at the University, her going and coming, her dress and actions, are scrutinized and regulated more strictly and arbitrarily than, in all probability, they were at home. This maze of infantile restrictions can only have a detrimental effect on her becoming a responsible adult.¹¹⁵

Although women remained at the center of his campaign rhetoric, race and civil rights activism did not. Rather than focusing on women and race, this campaign flyer is

¹¹⁴ Document, "What is to be done?: Thiher's Platform," Box 129, UT Chancellor Records, Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

about women and sexuality. The campaign seized on women's housing because the university's policies perpetuated segregated housing off-campus, and that segregation had been the focus of SDS's early activist efforts on campus. But nothing in Thiher's campaign flyer addresses that issue. In addition, while fears regarding miscegenation and black male sexuality undergirded resistance to integrated campus housing, it is only the SDS housing campaign that brought issues of sexuality to center stage and did so explicitly.

Eventually the administration relented and loosened its restrictions on women, allowing any woman to live wherever she wanted after her freshman year. Freshmen women could enjoy the same rights too, so long as they had written consent from their parents, acknowledging that their daughter would not be under the supervision of the university. The decision was seen as a victory for SDS and civil rights on campus, but years later SDS members recalled various responses to what the change in housing regulations meant to them.

On the one hand, Robert Pardun explained that he did not recall people in SDS choosing to live together with any conscious intention of uniting their personal or sexual lives with their SDS politics.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, he did note that a number of SDSers did in fact choose to live together, as couples or groups of couples, a choice that had significant impact on their community and politics. Men and women living together eased some of the complications involved with holding meetings on campus or off campus and adhering to women's curfews and visiting rules. After the changed housing

¹¹⁶ Pardun, Robert. Interview by author. Los Gatos, California, 24 August 2010.

policies, women were much freer to come and go as they pleased, to have mixed-group meetings and gatherings in their apartments, without fear of consequences. Pardun described a scene in which several couples rented close to one another, facilitating a feeling of an SDS community and establishing a base from which to operate politically.

Along the same lines, Pardun described the SDS meetings as being rather different in Austin than he noticed they were elsewhere. Meetings were actually long, drawn-out social gatherings that included political discussion and strategizing but more often also included a meal, a barbeque, or just hours together in someone's apartment "hanging out." Men and women living together enabled this kind of socializing, and for Pardun, it was this mix of community and activism that defined Austin's new left and marked it as very distinct from other SDS strongholds, particularly in the Northeast.¹¹⁷

Alice Embree remembers things rather differently than Pardun, claiming that seeing men and women living together out of wedlock was shocking and stuck with her.¹¹⁸ In fact, she even mentions Robert Pardun living together with his girlfriend (later his wife), SDS activist Judy Schiffer, as seeming "way out there." For her, it was more than a victory for civil rights: it seemed like a significant challenge to cultural, gender, and sexual norms.¹¹⁹

Like Embree, Mariann Wizard, another UT/Austin activist, described College House, a university cooperative, as being a center of new left activity due to the ability of

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Embree, Alice. Interview by author. Austin, Texas, 16 December 2009.

¹¹⁹ Embree, Alice. Interview by author. Austin, Texas, 16 December 2009.

both men and women to live there. In fact, people chose to live together at College House in something she described as an intentional community.¹²⁰

SDS's efforts to integrate housing drew on previous activism as well as the overlapping networks of students that linked people like Alice Embree from the Campus Interracial Committee to others like Robert Pardun and Charlie Smith. Certainly SDS sought to push earlier gains regarding integration and to extend civil rights on the campus. In the process, however, SDS activists changed the approach, the rhetoric, and some of the meaning of that activism. They characterized it as a women's rights issue and, combined with Thiher's campaign song and demands for birth control on campus, linked it to issues of premarital sex and sexual freedom on campus. Through its restrictions on women's living choices, the university was acting "naïvely" about students' personal lives, in addition to simply overstepping boundaries SDS argued it shouldn't despite the traditions of *in loco parentis*. Furthermore, while activists like Pardun, Embree, and Wizard understood housing integration as a civil rights victory, clearly it also held other meanings for Embree and Wizard. To them, it also challenged gender and sexual norms.

Housing *had* been a distinctly female student issue since 1960, but it was also primarily a black female student issue. Race was certainly the impetus behind SDS's campaign to picket segregated dorms during President Johnson's visit to the campus, and it was the focus of that protest. But by the time of Gary Thiher's student president campaign in 1965, as an SDS candidate representing SDS political goals and values,

¹²⁰ Mariann Wizard discussed these issues with me in several email exchanges during the fall of 2010.

issues of racial justice and discrimination were not explicit. Instead, women's housing issues were articulated as having significant meaning for women's freedom on campus, constructed in new ways. Freedom was understood and framed as women's license to live wherever they wanted, including with a boyfriend before marriage, and the right to have sexual relationships and use contraception outside of the surveillance of parents or the University of Texas.

Chapter Two

The Four-Letter Crisis: Free Speech and Obscenity at Berkeley

In the spring of 1965, just months after the Free Speech Movement had rocked the University of California Berkeley campus during the fall semester of 1964, the California Senate Fact-finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities Committee (SUAC) began investigating what they suspected were the communist influences on the student movement.¹²¹ At the same time, however, students and activists began fomenting another, smaller version of the Free Speech Movement, which had addressed students' rights to political expression on campus. The new Filthy Speech Movement pushed the boundaries of free speech further to include the right to use and publish "obscene" or "indecent" language on campus. When SUAC released the 1965 report, it teemed with accusations that communists had infiltrated the campus, and it criticized the apparent leniency of the University administration and the California Legislature in addressing the threat.¹²² One year later, however, in 1966, SUAC released a Supplement to its 1965 issue but with a significant change. No longer concerned with communists, the Supplemental Report

¹²¹ California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities Committee, "Thirteenth Report," March 1965, Records of the Office of the Chancellor [hereafter UC Chancellor Records], University of California Berkeley, CU-149, University Archives, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley. I should note that it is also sometimes referred to as the "Burns Report" after Hugh Burns, a chairman of SUAC; W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, ed., *The Free Speech Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

¹²² *Ibid.*

charged that “sexual deviancy” and “sexual filth” ran rampant on campus.¹²³ The following night, on May 13th, 1966, Ronald Reagan gave his first major gubernatorial campaign speech in nearby San Francisco and, quoting the Report, he vowed to “clean up that mess at Berkeley.”¹²⁴ In the space of a year, students, activists, the University administration, the California Legislature, SUAC, governor-hopeful Ronald Reagan, and the larger public found themselves tied together in a public political exchange over sex and sexuality on campus.

The Filthy Speech Movement effectively wed sexual politics to the New Left at UC Berkeley. It shifted a debate about sex on campus from a challenge to *in loco parentis* to one more clearly tied to ideas about freedom and participatory democracy. Furthermore, it demonstrated a kind of “personal politics” of sex at play at the same moment that the Women’s Liberation Movement would take off but had not quite articulated that the “personal is political.” Finally, the Filthy Speech Movement would be the last straw for the California Legislature and others interested in anticommunism and the UC campus, earning the University far more attention than it had previously received. For what would become the New Right, it shifted debates about politics, anticommunism, student movements, and of course, sex. Together with challenges presented by the antiwar movement, it helped to remap the politics of California, upping the ante and bolstering the gubernatorial career of Ronald Reagan.¹²⁵

¹²³ California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities, “Supplemental Report,” May 1966, UC Chancellor Records.

¹²⁴ David Hope, “U.C. Probe Demanded by Regan,” *Oakland Tribune*, May 14, 1966.

¹²⁵ I cover Reagan’s gubernatorial campaign in-depth in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

Furthermore, both the Free Speech Movement and the Filthy Speech Movements exemplify new ways student activists politicized the university campus in the 1960s. Influenced by their experiences in the civil rights movement in the San Francisco Bay Area and in the Deep South during Freedom Summer, student activists challenged administrative authority to bring their politics onto the campus and, in the process, refashion the campus itself. The California legislature's heightened interest in these activities further illustrates the significance that the university campus assumed as a uniquely political space beginning in the mid-1960s and continuing until the end of the decade.

The Free Speech Movement

When seasoned activists like Mario Savio returned to UC Berkeley in the fall after participating in Mississippi Freedom Summer, they engaged in the "Sather Gate Tradition" of setting up tables at the gate's entrance to attract new student members and fundraise for civil rights organizations, like the Bay Area Friends of SNCC. Sather Gate is the large ornate and iconic symbol of the Berkeley campus that sits at its main entrance at the intersection of Telegraph Ave and Bancroft Way. By 1964, this tradition of tabling for political causes was commonplace even though it was not encouraged by the administration. That fall, however, the University changed its position on tabling, claiming that the area just in front of the gate was actually University property and not city property, as had been previously assumed. That meant that the small strip of sidewalk was under the auspices of the Kerr directives, prohibiting any official political affiliation by the University, and the administration told the students they had to cease all

their activities there. Outright defiance of these orders by students prompted the first infamous, impromptu sit-in of what would become the Free Speech Movement. Students and administrators engaged in a back-and-forth whereby students set up tables despite the prohibitions against them and the administration responded by issuing citations to appear before the deans, presumably to face disciplinary action. In retaliation, on October 1, 1964, students moved the tables into Sproul Plaza, at the heart of the campus just inside Sather Gate and very much on uncontested campus property. Bettina Aptheker, a student and activist in both the Communist Party and campus Du Bois Club, writes that, “We prepared a leaflet, explaining our intention to set up our tables in Sproul Plaza and declaring that constitutional authority guaranteeing freedom of speech trumped university regulations.”¹²⁶ When police drove into the plaza, they arrested Jack Weinberg, who was manning a campus CORE table. Weinberg was a graduate student in mathematics but was on leave that fall semester to work full-time in the civil rights movement in the South. Jack Weinberg and Mario Savio had both participated in Mississippi Freedom Summer. When police officers placed Weinberg in the back of the car, Berkeley students began yelling, “sit down!” and surrounded the car for thirty-two hours.¹²⁷ This demonstration marked the beginning of the Free Speech Movement and was the occasion for several student leaders to emerge, including Mario Savio, who gave his first speech addressing the crowd while standing on top of the trapped police car. Others included Art

¹²⁶ Bettina Aptheker, *Intimate Politics*, 130.

¹²⁷ W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 21.

Goldberg, Jackie Goldberg, Sydney Stapleton, Sandor Fuchs, Bettina Aptheker, and David Goines.¹²⁸

On the surface, the Free Speech Movement (FSM) was strictly about students' right to set up tables to support various political activities and causes. But as the movement developed over the course of a semester, and arguably a year, it became about much more than that. What coalesced in the Free Speech Movement were the issues and grievances that had been gaining momentum throughout the early 1960s via SLATE, a student political organization to overhaul university student government, and the Civil Rights Movement.¹²⁹ Throughout the thirty-two-hour capture of the police car, students took turns climbing onto the car's roof and speaking out about campus issues from the Directives' ban on political activity to the way the University was governed, with students at the bottom of the pile and largely disempowered. "Students," Mario Savio said, "were oppressed by the sadism of the power structure."¹³⁰ Students wanted free speech on campus, which meant the rights to participate in any political activity they chose, including fundraising for civil rights organizations, even if those organizations broke laws through acts of non-violent civil disobedience. Furthermore, students wanted the kind of "participatory democracy" they discovered in other movements, like civil rights, to extend to the University so that they could have a say in curriculum and faculty

¹²⁸ Of course others emerged later, including women like Jo Freeman, who were part of the FSM's inner circle. Bettina Aptheker was not initially suspended but was part of the meeting to create an executive committee to address the suspensions. In fact, it was her idea, modeled after organizational methods often used by the Communist Party. See Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 23-24.

¹²⁹ SLATE was not an acronym but literally meant a new "slate" of candidates for the University's student government. Students formed the organization in the late 1950s and it gained in popularity in the early 1960s.

¹³⁰ W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 22.

decisions. Such participation in decision-making would alleviate the “massification” students claimed they felt as a public state university as large as UC Berkeley.

Altogether, the rights students demanded, how they framed them, and tactics they used to secure them throughout the movement pointed to the emergence of a New Left at UC Berkeley. It also, however, did just opposite and expanded exactly what New Left would mean, pushing the boundaries to include student movements and new conceptions of student rights. Michael Rossman explains in *The Wedding Within the War*, “the FSM marked a turning point, rather than a beginning.”¹³¹

An example of this expansion of both the meanings of FSM and the New Left is evident in Art Goldberg’s attempts to show a film about homosexuality on campus in 1964. At the height of tense negotiations between the University administration and the FSM Steering Committee, Art Goldberg, an early FSM leader and later Filthy Speech Movement leader, argued on behalf of SLATE for the right to show a film, *Un Chant d’Amour* on campus. SUAC described it as “a French film on homosexuality,” and made a special note in its *Thirteenth Report*, published in 1965, of Goldberg’s attempt to screen on it. According to the *Report*, “On November 25th [1964] SLATE requested permission to exhibit a French film on homosexuality,” and when the request was denied, “Art Goldberg suggested that it nevertheless be shown against the wall at Sproul Hall, and another protest rally was staged on the steps of that popular building at noon.”¹³² “That popular building” was a thinly veiled reference to use of the Sproul Hall steps for FSM

¹³¹ Michael Rossman, *The Wedding Within the War*, 75.

¹³² SUAC, *Thirteenth Report* (California Legislature: Sacramento, California, 1965), 91.

speeches throughout the fall semester of 1964. SLATE pushed for the right to show the film, with Goldberg arguing for complete full speech rights on the campus. The University took issue with the film's overt homosexuality. Set in a French prison, it is a love story between two male prisoners who are separated by a wall. Although there is no actual depiction of sex on screen, the two characters simulate various sex acts, such as masturbation and oral sex, and there is full-frontal nudity. This issue of *Un Chant d'Amour* was significant for SLATE but never for the FSM Steering Committee as a group. It not only piqued the interest of SUAC but it seemed to portend Goldberg and others using sexually explicit language or images in their attempts to expand what "free speech" meant on the UC campus. New constructions of student rights and politics on campus made it possible to call for "sexual freedom" on campus and articulate "sexual rights" as one of many students argued they held.

Finally, the language and demands of the Free Speech Movement piqued anti-communist interests in the California State Legislature in ways previously unseen. While the Legislature claimed that University of California had "long been a target" of Communism, it had certainly long been a target of anticommunism since the 1940s. But state anti-communist interest shifted, almost abruptly, to concern about communist infiltration or a communist front at work on the campus to increased anxiety about sex on campus. What historians would later call the New Right in California, like the emerging New Left, began politicizing sex on campus, although in divergent ways. The first indications of this revolved around the Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-

American Activities (SUAC) and its interest in Goldberg's campaign to show *Un Chant d'Amour* on campus and heightened with the Filthy Speech Movement.

The Filthy Speech Movement

The Filthy Speech Movement began in the first days of March 1965, just a few months after the end of the Free Speech Movement in December of 1964.¹³³ After months of protesting, the students and the administration had agreed to a set of terms that officially marked the end of the Free Speech Movement. The Free Speech Movement had been characterized by dramatic campus sit-ins and culminated in a final showdown in the Greek Theater, where sixteen to eighteen thousand students and faculty watched as campus police dragged Mario Savio from the stage, in what some faculty observers described as "Gestapo tactics."¹³⁴ The occupation of Sproul Hall immediately afterwards was the largest student sit-in to date nationally and resulted in the largest single mass arrest in California history to date.¹³⁵ These final incidents reignited students, enraged sympathetic faculty, and won over some of the faculty holdouts to the cause. On December 8, 1964, the administration adopted the new regulations that would govern political speech and speakers on campus. The "December 8 Resolutions" established a Hyde Park area of free speech on the steps of Sproul Plaza, the academic and social center of the UC campus, and for the students in the Free Speech Movement, marked a

¹³³ The acronym FSM is always used to specifically reference the Free Speech Movement, a specific student movement on the UC Berkeley campus during the fall semester of 1964. Although the Filthy Speech Movement would adopt the FSM moniker, to represent itself politically and ideologically as an extension of the original FSM movement, it is important to note that FSM always refers to Free Speech, not Filthy Speech.

¹³⁴ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 36.

¹³⁵ Approximately 800 people were arrested, all but four or five of which were UC students.

significant victory for free speech on campus, civil rights activism in the Bay Area, and the death knell for the McCarthy Era campus speaker ban.

The December 8 Resolutions granted students the right to hold rallies in Sproul Plaza without having to receive prior administrative approval either for the speakers themselves or for the content of their speech. They also, importantly, conceded to students the right to use the contested space at the South entrance of the campus at Bancroft Way and Telegraph Ave, or Sather Gate, to politick and fundraise freely on campus. Political life at UC spun on an axis between these two physical places and constituted the center of student activism on campus. But a few months later, a handful of students would test the new boundaries of free speech and political rights on campus in the Filthy Speech Movement, reigniting unsettled controversies and signaling an important shift in sex and politics on campus.

It began on March 3, 1965 when a non-student named John Thompson sat down near the student tables at Bancroft and Telegraph wearing a sign taped to his shirt that simply read, “FUCK (Verb).”¹³⁶ A recent transplant from New York City, Thompson claimed to have been attracted to Berkeley, and the University of California, because of the press coverage of the Free Speech Movement, believing Berkeley to be a place where important politics were happening. The sign was meant to be a protest against the Vietnam War, an issue still largely off the radar for most Americans and not yet an

¹³⁶ According to the *FBI Subversives* book, Mario Savio stopped and looked at Thompson’s sign, remarking that there were many different ways to interpret the word “fuck” on his sign. To clarify his point, Thompson wrote “(verb)” underneath it, to make sure it was obvious that he meant the slang word for sexual intercourse.

important campus political issue.¹³⁷ Although the reports are varied, it is clear that someone saw Thompson on campus, called the campus police, and he was swiftly arrested for obscenity.¹³⁸

When he learned of Thompson's arrest, Arthur Goldberg, a former major player in the Free Speech Movement, was outraged by what he perceived to be the University's hypocrisy. Just days before, campus fraternities held their annual "Ugly Man" contest for charity, crowning the winner "Miss Pussy Galore," named after the James Bond character. "I Like Pussy" buttons littered the campus afterwards and Miss Pussy Galore's campaign slogan had been "Put your money where your mouth is."¹³⁹ Neither the candidate nor any participating fraternities suffered any charges from the police or the administration. In protest, on March 4, 1965, the day after Thompson's arrest, Goldberg held a noon rally in Sproul Plaza during which he used the word "fuck" repeatedly over a loudspeaker along with various other obscenities. Afterwards, he set up a table with the help of David Arbor Bills, a UC freshman, with a large poster behind it that read "FUCK" and a collection jar for Thompson's bail that read, "Fuck Fund: Support the Fuck Defense Fund. Raise money for the bail and legal defense of John Thompson.

¹³⁷ The first Vietnam teach-in was held at the University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor, in late March of 1965, roughly three weeks after Thompson's arrest. The first teach-in at UC Berkeley sit-in wouldn't be until May 21-22, 1965.

¹³⁸ Some sources claim that a parent visiting the campus saw him and called campus police. Others claim it was actually a fraternity member who used the opportunity to challenge the new left/Beat community on campus and alerted the campus police.

¹³⁹ Jo Freeman, *At Berkeley in the '60s: The Education of an Activist, 1961-1965* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2004), 231; "To Kill a Fuckingword," *SPIDER*, Folder 66:26, Box 66, UC Chancellor Records.

Combat hypocrisy. Sponsored by the Student Committee for a Good Fuck.”¹⁴⁰ Goldberg and Bills, like Thompson, were immediately arrested and spent the night in an Oakland jail. Another student present at Goldberg’s table claimed that Goldberg set up the table and sign because, although he would not have done what Thompson did, he felt it was wrong that Thompson was arrested for it.¹⁴¹

Once released the next day, on March 5, 1965, Goldberg returned to the campus for another noon rally, where he was joined by Nicholas Zvegintzov, another fellow undergraduate, who led a campus cheer of “F-U-C-K” and Michael Klein, a graduate student, who read aloud passages from D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in which the word “fuck” was used to describe sexual intercourse.¹⁴² A student present at the rally, and later interviewed as a witness in the disciplinary hearings, claimed that Klein explained his actions to the audience as an effort “to show police that the word [fuck] had been used in the day’s activity (by the protesters) in the same way in which it was used by Lawrence,” and that its usage had the approval of the courts.¹⁴³ Although

¹⁴⁰ Document, “In the District Court of Appeal, State of California, First Appellate District, Division Two. Arthur L. Goldberg, Michael L. Klein, David A. Bills and Nicholas Zvegintzov, *Petitioners and Appellants*, vs. The Regents of the University of California, *Respondent*. Respondent’s Brief,” Box 62, Folder 893:97, UC Chancellor Records.

¹⁴¹ “Findings of Fact,” Ad Hoc Committee on Student Conduct, [hereafter Whinnery Committee], Box 62, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records.

¹⁴² Document, “In the District Court of Appeal, State of California, First Appellate District, Division Two. Arthur L. Goldberg, Michael L. Klein, David A. Bills and Nicholas Zvegintzov, *Petitioners and Appellants*, vs. The Regents of the University of California, *Respondent*. Respondent’s Brief,” Box 62, Folder 893:97, UC Chancellor Records; D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* was first published in 1928 but was censored and banned in both the US and UK. It wasn’t until 1960 that the complete uncensored manuscript was published in the US.

¹⁴³ “Findings of Fact,” Whinnery Committee, Box 62, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records.

Lawrence's novel had been recently declared not to be obscene by the courts, Klein was nonetheless charged with public indecency and obscenity.¹⁴⁴

A total of nine people were arrested in the two rallies occurring between March 4th and March 5th, five of which were non-students, and Art Goldberg, David Bills, Nicholas Zvegintzov, and Michael Klein, who were also immediately disciplined by the University for their participation. The state of California won charges against Goldberg and Klein, the former paying a heavy fine and serving weeks in Santa Rita prison over the summer, and the latter serving five days and paying a two hundred dollar fine.¹⁴⁵

The Filthy Speech Movement's second front turned out to be the attempted sale of an underground student magazine on campus. On March 15th, several students involved in both SLATE and the Free Speech Movement, including Art's sister Jackie Goldberg and his roommate Sandor Fuchs, published the second issue of their new magazine whose title, *SPIDER*, stood for "Sex, Politics, International Communism, Drugs, Extremism, and Rock and Roll." Issue No. 2 included a sexually explicit cover of a nude woman and recent coverage of the Filthy Speech Movement's events in an article entitled "To Kill a Fuckingword," in which the participants offered interviews with varied perspectives and reasons for their actions. Michael Klein insisted that setting up the "FDF" [Fuck Defense Fund] table "was not a conscious act of civil disobedience, but was just intended to raise

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., "Findings of Fact," Box 62, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records; W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 39.

¹⁴⁵ Document, Folder 893:58, Box 65, UC Chancellor Records

money to bail John [Thompson] out and help him pay the legal costs... The intent clearly was to solicit money, not to excite people.”¹⁴⁶

Goldberg, on the other hand, linked his decision to act directly to what he believed was middle-class hypocrisy and the growing problem of US involvement in Vietnam. He stated, “I got involved in the obscenity case because I heard that a kid had been busted because he carried a sign with the word ‘FUCK’ on it. I was completely pissed off to hear that this kid was being arrested while at the same time the cops were taking no action against the ‘I like Pussy’ button people.” He argued that declaring words to be “obscene” was arbitrary and subjective, thus making it hypocritical and representative of the oppression of middle-class sensibilities. He went on to connect his protest to Vietnam, “I also consider President Johnson’s ordering the bombing of innocent women and children in Vietnam to be one of the greatest obscenities in American history, yet I do not see him being arrested for his obscene acts.”¹⁴⁷ Along with the statements by each of the participants, and all of which of course included the word “fuck”, the magazine also included a poem by Thompson which used the word “motherfucker.”¹⁴⁸

When students attempted to sell the second issue of *SPIDER* at Sather Gate, the same area that they had sold the first without any administrative interference, they found that Acting Chancellor Meyerson had banned its sale on campus along with a satirical play about the March 4th and 5th incidences, penned by a political science major, entitled

¹⁴⁶ “To Kill a Fuckingword,” *SPIDER*, Folder 66:26, Box 66, UC Chancellor Records.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

“For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge” for being obscene and constituting “conduct unbecoming a student.” The ban popularized *SPIDER* magazine on an unprecedented scale, selling over 10,000 copies.¹⁴⁹ But immediate cries of censorship from both students and the administration seemed to convince Meyerson to reverse the ban, leading Mario Savio to poke fun at the Acting Chancellor for his indecision and claiming “it is the end of our honeymoon with Marty.”¹⁵⁰ It also, subsequently, exacerbated a series of rifts among the administration, the faculty, and the new left.

Filthy Speech as a Free Speech Issue

If at first the seeming arbitrariness of the administration’s response to the entire Filthy Speech debacle amused the leftist student activists and the Free Speech Movement Steering Committee, they soon grew very serious about the situation. The university’s disciplinary hearings for Goldberg, Bills, Zvegintzov, and Klein rekindled leftover Free Speech Movement tensions about students’ constitutional and political rights on campus and once again pitched the students and administration into a battle over...

In apparent response to the obscenity crisis, Acting Chancellor Martin Meyerson and Clark Kerr held a joint press conference on March 10th to announce their intentions to resign at the next Board of Regents Meeting on March 25th. While Meyerson gave no explicit reason for the resignations, he “traced it to the four-letter word signs and utterances.”¹⁵¹ The following day the student newspaper, the *Daily Californian* (also known as the *Daily Cal*) ran a statement by University of California President Clark Kerr

¹⁴⁹ Jo Freeman, *At Berkeley in the ‘60s*, 235.

¹⁵⁰ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 41.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 232.

in which he claimed, “the ‘filthy speech movement’ had started an avalanche.”¹⁵² At the behest of the Board of Regents, both administrators were convinced to stay and withdrew their resignations. Soon afterwards, Meyerson assembled a disciplinary and investigative committee to redress the entire four-letter word crisis. The Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Obscenity, also known as the Whinnery Committee, gathered police reports, arrest records, and eyewitness reports from the protest rallies and filed official disciplinary action against Goldberg, Bills, Zvegintzov, Bills, and Klein, in their report dated April 19, 1965. Goldberg received the harshest penalty of suspension for a year and had to reapply for admission, most likely due to previous run-ins with the administration during the Free Speech Movement. Although Bills and Klein had been arrested during the last FSM sit-in in Sproul Hall, they were only temporarily suspended, along with Zvegintzov.

Goldberg, Klein, and Bills challenged the University’s disciplinary action, charging that they were being subject to a kind of double jeopardy, since they had already been charged and convicted for obscenity by the state of California. The University administration and students involved in the Filthy Speech Movement became embattled over free speech rights on campus as students sought to push the gains of the Free Speech Movement to endow students with complete First Amendment rights on campus without being subject to separate student conduct codes. Filthy Speech advocates argued that as citizens in a democracy, they ought to be subject only to the laws of the country, not to the whims or special conduct codes of a university. Since the Supreme Court had been steadily restricting the definition of “obscenity” throughout the 1950s through various

¹⁵² Jo Freeman, *At Berkeley in the ‘60s*, 232.

decisions, advocates of Filthy Speech argued that they, too, should only be held to the same standards as the Supreme Court rulings, regardless of how distasteful University administration or police might find their speech, publications, or art to be.

These claims, of course, echoed the rhetoric from the Free Speech Movement months before. FSM advocates argued that as citizens of the state, not of the university, students retained their individual and constitutional rights to free speech even after they stepped foot on campus. The University's attempts to maintain a depoliticized space of pure intellectual or academic inquiry, the status quo and party line of the administration since the 1930s, was crumbling under the increasing weight of student campaigns for increased ties between education and direct political change.¹⁵³ The new style of student activism ushered in by the Freedom Movement in the 1960s was reshaping what four years at a university meant for students in the new left.¹⁵⁴

That the defendants in the Filthy Speech Movement were using the language and tactics right out of the Free Speech Movement playbook is perhaps rather unsurprising since all of the students involved had experience, and in Goldberg's case a leadership position, in the Free Speech Movement itself. But the official FSM Steering Committee, the enduring organization of the student leaders of the movement, was both privately and

¹⁵³ Some historians and student activists credited Clark Kerr with trying to implement a new style of leadership on campus, one much more democratic in policy with the regards to students, and which moved away from the intense red-baiting of the McCarthy Era. For those involved in Free Speech, however, Kerr's moderate political approach was not enough and although Kerr might have been a vast improvement, many student activists still felt constricted politically and as if the university was lagging behind the tenor, desires, and direction of its students. This was, of course, particularly true for those involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

¹⁵⁴ Student's for a Democratic Society's *The Port Huron Statement* perhaps best exemplifies the association of students and the new left. Also, Stephan Weissman, from the Free Speech Movement, explains the significance of the university in an article he co-authored with Doug Tuthill, "Freedom and the University," Box 63, Folder 893:107, UC Chancellor Records.

publicly divided in their positions on Filthy Speech.¹⁵⁵ Jo Freeman, an inner-circle FSM participant, later described Art Goldberg's actions as not being particularly politically astute. In her memoir, *At Berkeley in the '60s*, she writes, "We [the Steering Committee] were angry at Art and the others for making us look like irresponsible juveniles, but it was hard to condemn anyone for public speech, so we voted to stay out of this one."¹⁵⁶ Her criticism reflects the position of those believing that the Filthy Speech participants acted impetuously and did not consider the long-term consequences of the impact the four-letter word crisis could have on the December 8 Resolutions specifically, and free speech and student political rights more broadly. Indeed, it is clear from her comments and those from Mario Savio and Steve Weissman, that at least initially, Filthy Speech was not understood as a free speech issue, clearly by the administration or those in the Steering Committee.¹⁵⁷ Mario Savio initially believed filthy speech had detracted from the dignity and significance of the Free Speech Movement to protect political speech and rights on campus.¹⁵⁸ For Savio and many others, FSM had been as much about constitutional guarantees of free speech as it had been about the Civil Rights Movement. As a result, Savio and others in the inner circle of the FSM attempted to distance

¹⁵⁵ The Steering Committee was formed in October of 1964 as the leadership of the growing Free Speech Movement. Mario Savio, Bettina Aptheker, Art Goldberg, Stephan Weissman, and others were at the center of this committee. After the December 8 Resolutions, the Committee remained intact briefly throughout the following semester, before evolving into a few other organizations, most notably perhaps was the Free Speech Union.

¹⁵⁶ Jo Freeman, *At Berkeley in the '60s: The Education of an Activist, 1961-1965*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 231.

¹⁵⁷ Steve Weissman wrote a memo in which he promised to condemn Filthy Speech and discourage its support by the Graduate Student Assembly, an organization of graduate students formed in support of, and response to, the Free Speech Movement.

¹⁵⁸ Rorabaugh, *Berkely at War*, 40.

themselves from the entire thing, except, as Freeman notes, to generally support freedom of speech.

This precarious position of supporting free speech on campus, while not supporting filthy speech per se, would shift dramatically in the wake of university administration responses. Savio was quick to condemn the suspension and discipline of the Filthy Speech students, issuing a statement to the *Berkeley Gazette* that the administration should immediately repeal the suspensions and condemning the procedures of the Whinnery Committee on April 22, 1965, just four days after the release of the Whinnery Report on April 19, 1965.¹⁵⁹ In the article, Savio wears a sign that reads, “When the courts have no conscience, the people must do justice.”¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, if Freeman was correct in her estimation that the student body had little interest in the “fuck rallies”, support would blossom as the campaign shifted from the four-letter utterances of a handful of students to a full-fledged Free Speech and new left campus issue.

The University Response and the District Court of Appeals case

In order to understand a few of the reasons Mario Savio and the FSM Steering Committee eventually backed the Filthy Speech Movement, it is necessary to return to the details of the December 8 Resolutions. The Resolutions provided that “the content of speech or advocacy should not be restricted by the University,” that “off-campus student political activities shall not be subject to University regulation,” and “on-campus advocacy or organization of such activities shall be subject only to such limitations as

¹⁵⁹ “UC Obscenity Students get new word: ‘Out’”, *Berkeley Gazette*, April 22, 1965.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

may be imposed under section 2,” which were time, place, and manner rules.¹⁶¹ Although the Resolutions conceded the right to picket on campus, the use of the Sproul Hall steps and amplification equipment for rallies and protests, and a lift on the Communist Speakers ban, they did not establish new student conduct codes. New student conduct codes were to be determined by an administrative committee that would govern “future disciplinary measures in the area of political activity.”¹⁶² In other words, although the Resolutions were a compromise and something of a cease-fire between the two sides of the Free Speech Movement, they did not offer any real expectations or solutions for what free speech rights, and political rights, would look like on campus. In fact, it is this uncertainty and ambiguity that Goldberg and the others were testing. How far did free speech rights on campus go? Did the administration really mean that students did not need prior approval for a speech or speaker on campus? What if that speech included language deemed offensive or obscene? Finally, what would happen if the administration objected to student behavior or conduct in the pursuit of, or name of, political activism? The Resolutions had brought the dramatic showdowns and sit-ins to a halt and had restored order and peace to the campus but they had not answered important questions about how to move forward with students who now had new freedoms and rights on campus.

For the Steering Committee, the most troubling aspect of the administration’s response to the Filthy Speech advocates was the disciplinary action brought against them.

¹⁶¹ Byrne Report, p. 14, Folder 6, Box 56, UC Chancellor Records.

¹⁶² Ibid.

If the Resolutions had left issues of disciplinary action as yet-to-be-determined in the future, the Filthy Speech Movement offered an important moment for students to see what those changes and regulations might be. Heightening the tension was the fact that the trial for the nearly eight hundred students arrested during the Sproul Hall sit-in of the Free Speech Movement began on April 1, 1965, roughly one month after the arrest of Goldberg and the others. Meanwhile, president Clark Kerr hired an attorney, Jerome C. Byrne from Los Angeles, to investigate the causes of the Free Speech Movement from an outsider's perspective with the hopes that, together with an in-house investigation, the University administration might have a better understanding of how to proceed in this new era of student activism on campus and draft new student conduct codes.¹⁶³ Against this backdrop, the Filthy Speech advocates had challenged some of the basic tenets of the December 8 Resolutions, positioned themselves as the legacy or inheritors of the Free Speech Movement, claiming the F-S-M moniker, and sued the regents for their suspensions and expulsions.

In the Respondent's Brief of District Court of Appeals case, *Arthur L. Goldberg, Michael L. Klein, David A. Bills and Nicholas Zvegintzov vs. The Regents of the University of California*, the University of California articulated its position on what constituted "politics" on campus and what was, therefore, protected student behavior.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ This report was officially called the Byrne Report, after Jerome C. Byrnes, and was filed in May of 1965, costing the University \$75,000 to complete. The in-house administrative report was the Meyer Report, also called the Meyer-Heyman Report, after the chairman(s) of the committee.

¹⁶⁴ Document, "In the District Court of Appeal, State of California, First Appellate District, Division Two. Arthur L. Goldberg, Michael L. Klein, David A. Bills and Nicholas Zvegintzov, *Petitioners and Appellants*, vs. The Regents of the University of California, *Respondent*. Respondent's Brief," Box 62, Folder 893:97, UC Chancellor Records. The Respondent in this case are the Regents and the Filthy Speech advocates were

Furthermore, it argued that the University had a right to regulate student behavior, particularly on campus, in the name of *in loco parentis*.

In its “Statement of Facts,” the brief declares that the university policy on student conduct and discipline provides that, “It is taken for granted that each student...will adhere to acceptable standards of personal conduct; and that all students...will set and observe among themselves proper standards of conduct and good taste...”¹⁶⁵ Moreover, if a student does not adhere to “proper standards” then “unbecoming behavior...will result in curtailment or withdrawal of privileges or other action...”¹⁶⁶ These statements, of course, beg the question of why Goldberg’s, Bills’, Klein’s, and Zvegintzov’s words and actions were unbecoming conduct and not protected political speech?

One answer is that the University claimed authority to maintain campus order and, importantly, to discipline students even without applicable regulations, or, in other words, as the situation arose. Section II of the “Statements of Facts” claims, “It is well established that University officials have the authority and responsibility to maintain order and decorum on the campus and that student misconduct is subject to University discipline even in the absence of specific regulations.”¹⁶⁷ The University offers several cases to support its position that it no way can the university have a regulation and agreed upon procedural action for every possible student infraction. As a result, it simply has the discretion to discipline and regulate student behavior as it sees fit in order to maintain

the Petitioners and Appellants, since they were suing to appeal the University’s discipline. The Respondent’s Brief, then, is the University’s legal case defending their decisions and rights to discipline the Filthy Speech students.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 16

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 16

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 17

campus order and ensure students behave in a manner consistent with accepted social mores. This concept of the University enforcing proper behavior and conduct was generally referred to as *in loco parentis*, or literally, in the place of a parent. *In loco parentis* was responsible for student housing regulations, such as requirements for women students to live in on-campus housing and adhere to curfew and visitation rules. *In loco parentis* controlled students' activities and interactions on campus, the housing regulations for example, but at UC Berkeley it also followed them long after they set foot *off* campus. UC Berkeley students were not allowed to participate in any political activism as *students*. This meant that any student caught sitting-in at the HUAC hearings in 1960, the Sheraton Palace or Auto Row in 1963, or at the Lucky Store "shop-ins" in 1964, could be disciplined by the University in addition to whatever legal charges they incurred and many were. The reasons for *in loco parentis* maintaining effect even off the physical grounds of the University were based in notions of literally acting as a parent and having a vested interest in what students did in their off time.

The other explanation was about protecting the University's name and reputation from unflattering press and associations with what many would simply characterize as delinquents. As the premier university in the state, and also one of the best public universities in the nation in the 1960s, the University of California Berkeley represented a kaleidoscope of interests. It was what many students, like Jo Freeman and Betinna Aptheker, described as an idyllic place of learning with its eucalyptus groves, open

glades, hundred-year-old redwoods, and mild weather.¹⁶⁸ At the same time, however, it was Clark Kerr's "multiversity," an enormous center for nuclear research and economic prosperity for the state of California. In addition, as the state's flagship university, UC Berkeley served as an unlimited source of future employers for companies like IBM and Dow Chemical, both of which recruited rigorously on campus, and both of which were tied to a nexus of federal funding and scientific research in the postwar era. These reasons informed the University's continual use, and defense of, *in loco parentis*. The use of *in loco parentis*, however, was standard at every major university throughout the country during this period and the University of California Berkeley was hardly alone in the ways in which it implemented policies that governed student life on and off campus.

Another answer lies in the administration's efforts to define just exactly what constituted "politics" and political speech in the wake of the Free Speech Movement. Throughout the spring semester of 1965, as the Filthy Speech Movement was erupting and gaining support, the administration was busy simultaneously resisting these renewed efforts for free speech at the same time it was trying to understand the underlying causes of the original Free Speech Movement the previous fall. Two investigative reports informed definitions of politics, the Byrne Report, and the Meyer Report, both of which were being carried out at the same time that the Filthy Speech Movement was erupting. Filthy Speech affected the administration's position on what would constitute campus politics and was simultaneously circumscribed by these definitions. By June of 1965, the

¹⁶⁸ Freeman, *At Berkeley in the '60s*. Bettina Aptheker, *Intimate Politics: how I grew up Red, fought for free speech, and became a feminist rebel* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006). Aptheker, Bettina. Interview by author. Santa Cruz, California, 17 August 2010.

newly drafted student conduct codes would explicitly state that “indecent speech” violated the general standard of University student conduct codes.¹⁶⁹

The Filthy Speech advocates lost their appeals case against the University and had to endure the ruling of their disciplinary committee hearings. The Steering Committee was outraged that the students had to comply with University disciplinary sanctions against them and by the manner in which the University had put together a disciplinary committee hearing and used the evidence in those hearings against the students in the appeals case.

The FSM response to Filthy Speech

For the students involved, however, what the administration and the state of California had labeled “obscene” was absolutely and unequivocally political. They used the same rhetoric as used in Free Speech, calling upon protection of their First Amendment rights, and challenging the university to hold them to the same standards as the laws and courts of the United States held every other American adult. If the University administration saw only obscenity and sex, and not politics, at work in the Filthy Speech Movement, they would certainly change their minds after the SUAC Report and Ronald Reagan’s speech.

Members from the Steering Committee and other former FSM participants, including Mario Savio and Suzanne Goldberg, as well as Michael Klein, sent a telegram to the Board of Regents with a list of demands in response to the disciplinary proceedings

¹⁶⁹ Clark Kerr, *University Bulletin: A Weekly Bulletin for the Staff of the University of California*, Vol. 13, Number 38, June 1, 1965.

against Filthy Speech Movement participants. They called themselves the Provisional Committee to Protect Student Rights and their telegram framed Filthy Speech as another example of students' utter lack of legitimate access to political power on the University campus. They wrote, "The latest example of this gross misadministration is the denial of even rudimentary guarantees of due process to those students recently charged with alleged obscenity." Furthermore, they provided a list of demands: that the four students suspended be immediately reinstated, that a new committee from the Berkeley Academic Senate be appointed to hear the cases, that no former members from the Whinnery Committee serve on the new Academic Senate committee, and that the committee delay its meeting until after the resolution of the appeals case so that the students would not have to testify against themselves, since their statements in the disciplinary committee could be used against them in court.¹⁷⁰

In support of their demands, the Provisional Committee to Protect Student Rights drew upon the December 8th Resolutions *and* the Constitution of the United States. While they did not expect the University to adhere to full legal procedures in student disciplinary hearings, they did expect the University to uphold the free speech guarantees of the Resolutions. If the defense argued the University's charges against them violated the Resolutions approved by the students and faculty in the Academic Senate, the Provisional Committee to Protect Student Rights concluded that the University would have to drop their charges and reinstate the students. "Similarly," they argued,

¹⁷⁰ "Statement to the Board of Regents by the Provisional Committee to Protect Student Rights," Box 65, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records. Signed by Frank Darknell, Suzanne Goldberg, Sylvia Kalitinsky, Michael Klein, Larry Knop, Albert Litewka, Mario Savio, and Dana Shapiro.

“arguments must be allowed that the students’ action is protected by the Constitution of the United States, especially the First Amendment. Constitutional Standards of clarity and specificity of rules must be insisted upon.”¹⁷¹ In response to the administration’s use of an ad hoc disciplinary committee, the students responded, “We are in general opposed to the ad hoc disciplinary committees: freeman should be tried in courts existing prior to their alleged crimes.”¹⁷²

To elicit support from the larger student body, the FSM Steering Committee distributed fliers on campus using lofty language about legal and constitutional rights. Without guarantees of free speech and due process on campus, students, they claimed, would not be safe from the University. Quoting the First, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments, the flier methodically lists the various ways in which the University violated students’ rights and, furthermore, invokes the Fourteenth Amendment in order to demand that the University cease such violations. Finally, they liken the students’ struggles against these acts of the University to those of the barons against King John in 1215 and the American colonists against King George in 1776.¹⁷³

“Before the Conscience of the Academic Community” outlined in detail the events of Filthy Speech and the meanings of the charges of obscenity, in efforts to raise money for the Filthy Speech defendants’ appeals case and, if they lost, their California

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ “Three Students Suspended, One Dismissed, by Star-Chamber Committee,” Box 65, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records.

Supreme Court case.¹⁷⁴ The pamphlet defined obscenity as “material that deals with sex in a manner appealing to the prurient interest...” and, like the other flier, listed how the University had then violated students’ constitutional rights and the December 8th Resolutions. “Before the Conscience of the Academic Community” also included the activists’ own words about their actions. While in some ways it was merely a repeat of what was reported in *SPIDER*, Michael Klein’s statements were different, reflecting perhaps a more clarified position or a position revised in the wake of the appeals case proceedings. Klein commented that the reason he chose to read D.H. Lawrence to the crowd was because “D.H. Lawrence’s vision in the antithesis of that of the multiversity, his language the direct opposite of the jargon of the prophets of the multiversity.” Klein went on to connect his reading of Lawrence to his support of women’s equality, “His [Lawrence] defense of the equality of women calls on society to abolish the patriarchal system which denies women dignity and jobs. There are few women on the Faculty [sic] and there were none on our [disciplinary] Committee.” The police officers’ testimony against Klein had referenced his use of the “f-word” in the “mixed company” of men and women. The interviews and reports surrounding Filthy Speech make several references to Klein’s use of foul language in front of women and, in fact several women testified about whether or not they were particularly offended, as women, by Klein’s reading. They testified that they were accustomed to hearing that kind of language in public and were neither shocked nor offended. Whether championing women’s equality had always been

¹⁷⁴ Pamphlet, “Before the Conscience of the Academic Community,” Box 65, Folder 893:58, UC Chancellor Records.

a significant factor in Klein's decisions is unclear. It is plausible that because he was singled out and criticized for using obscene language in the presence of women that he took this position of arguing in defense of women's rights. Either way, like Goldberg and Thompson, he drew an explicit connection between his participation in Filthy Speech and broader New Left politics.¹⁷⁵ His use of the term "multiversity" and claiming that D.H. Lawrence represents the very opposite of a multiversity also ties Klein's position to Free Speech.

That both Filthy Speech participants and Free Speech activists, such as those on the Steering Committee and the Provisional Committee to Protect Student Rights, were able to engender student and faculty support seems clear from their pamphlets and fliers. Furthermore, the telegram to the Regents and the FSM fliers reflect the legal and constitutional rights that the New Left on campus had won during the Free Speech Movement and expected to continue to enjoy. Citing the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment in support of student politics, or as reflective of conceptions of students' rights, simply would not have been possible before the Free Speech Movement. Furthermore, the Steering Committee's evocation of them in support of Filthy Speech illustrates their presumption that students had political rights and that the Filthy Speech Movement was both "political" and an extension of the Free Speech Movement.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ The Women's Liberation movement was on the brink of erupting at the same time that the Filthy Speech Movement was happening. Mary King and Casey Hayden wrote "A Kind of Memo," a paper circulated within the civil rights organization the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, in 1965 and is credited with beginning the Women's Liberation Movement.

¹⁷⁶ This is bitterly contested by Jo Freeman who denied that the Filthy Speech Movement was ever even a movement, much less a legitimate one, in her memoir, *At Berkeley in the '60s*. In email exchanges with the

Free Speech and Filthy Speech as a New Left Movement

The Free Speech Movement fits in squarely with the collective body of activism, ideals, and political goals historians now label the New Left.¹⁷⁷ But the Free Speech Movement also expanded what “New Left” means. It broadened the politics and scope, recasting students and the place of the university to the center of the struggle. Although it echoed the humanism and fraternity idealized in the *Port Huron Statement*, the FSM was not about economic programs or desegregation campaigns.¹⁷⁸ It did, however, posit that free speech and unrestricted political advocacy on campus stemmed directly from the Civil Rights Movement and was directly related to it. Moreover, it mobilized similar tactics and beliefs about the meanings of politics, an intellectual legacy later embraced by the antiwar, Women’s Liberation, and Gay Liberation movements.

The Free Speech Movement was about action. Like the sit-ins and freedom rides of the Freedom Movement, the Free Speech Movement was about physically setting up tables to drum up political and financial support and, when thwarted by authorities, to sit-in in response. Both former FSM participants and historians have demonstrated the significant impact that the Civil Rights Movement had on Berkeley’s Free Speech Movement.¹⁷⁹ It is not coincidental that many of those at the helm of Free Speech already

author she has again emphasized that Filthy Speech had nothing to do with Free Speech and that Free Speech was never about sex or sexual politics.

¹⁷⁷ “The FSM and the Vision of a New Left,” in *The Free Speech Movement: reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s*, ed. Robert Cohen and Reginald Zelnick (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 215-227.

¹⁷⁸ Students for a Democratic Society, *The Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society*, 1962.

¹⁷⁹ Jo Freeman, “From Freedom Now! To Free speech: The FSM’s roots in the Bay Area Civil Rights Movement,” in *The Free Speech Movement: reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 73-83.

had activism experience in Civil Rights campaigns in the Bay Area and also in Mississippi during Freedom Summer and it is possible to hear the language and beliefs of the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left in their rhetoric.¹⁸⁰ Savio's concluding statements of his most famous speech at the Sproul Hall sit-in, "Now, no more talking," reflects a privileging of direct action that defined the Free Speech Movement and the New Left. Direct action is part of what made the New Left *new*. It was not the strategy of liberals or social scientists but instead a "performance of right," a decision "to reach deep into one's innermost convictions and then act on them publicly."¹⁸¹

Tied to this notion of direct action is the idea of participatory democracy which charged every individual with the potential and responsibility to effect social and democratic change. It enabled ordinary citizens to see themselves as key to potential and actual social change and to achieve this change based upon deeply held moral convictions. This concept of politics defined the New Left, transforming it into a beacon of humanism and recast ethics as central to political beliefs. Moreover, it transformed notions about individual rights in the postwar era. Rather than view an individual's civil rights as predicated upon protection from the community, the New Left model "recognized community as providing support for individuality, and, indeed, providing the

¹⁸⁰ Mario Savio is an example of someone who was arrested at the Sheraton Palace sit-in in San Francisco in 1963 and then went to Freedom Summer in Mississippi in the summer of 1964. The following fall of 1964, he would lead the Free Speech Movement.

¹⁸¹ Jeff Lustig, "The FSM and the Vision of a New Left," in *The Free Speech Movement*, 219. Doug Rossinow argues, however, in his book, *The Politics of Authenticity* that although direct action was key to the new left, thinkers like sociologist C. Wright Mills nevertheless shaped new left's thinking around this. This is evident at the University of Texas at Austin. Rossinow suggests that it isn't that new leftists ignored social scientists but were instead influenced by them and that makes the new left distinct from the old left in American politics.

context for developing real, effective individuality.”¹⁸² The Free Speech Movement positioned the rights of free speech, and of the individual student by extension, as central to a mass community movement on campus that challenged what they perceived as an outdated political, social, and economic power structure, i.e. the University. And, they argued that a mass student movement was key (maybe the only way, in fact) to achieving the greatest individual rights on campus, rights that went so far as to guarantee virtually any kind of speech and action so long as it took place in the name of political change.

The third and final reason the FSM can be understood as a unique New Left movement was in its emphasis on the university as a privileged and politically significant space. The idea of education, and public education, was certainly a key part of the importance of universities, since FSMers believed education was necessary to maintain democracy. Jeff Lustig writes, a participant-observer in the Free Speech Movement writes, “We urged that the *public* in ‘public education’ referred to more than a funding source, and we identified the purpose of the whole enterprise: to prepare people to be members of democratic publics.”¹⁸³ Such democratic publics would revitalize American political life. For the FSM, universities like UC Berkeley were not just the physical location for the burgeoning New Left because it was a movement comprised of the children of the World War II generation “housed now in universities and looking uncomfortably at the world,” as the *Port Huron Statement* claims but instead because

¹⁸² Jeff Lustig, “The FSM and the Vision of a New Left,” *The Free Speech Movement*, 220.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 218.

universities were sites where students could practice the free speech rights and advocacy they would need as future citizens.¹⁸⁴

This significance for public education is evident in the Free Speech Movement's attacks against the idea of the "multiversity." FSM activists chaffed against the analogies Clark Kerr made between corporations and universities in his *Uses of the University*.¹⁸⁵ Within the nexus of the federal government, the defense industry, and state legislature, UC was a laboratory and training ground for future scientists, engineers, and business moguls alike. The university produced goods like a corporation except those goods were students, not things. But Mario Savio likened the two: "...if this is a firm, and if the Board of Regents are the board of directors, and if President Kerr is in fact the manager, then...we're the raw material! But we're a bunch of raw material that don't mean to...be made into any product, don't mean to end up being bought by some clients of the university."¹⁸⁶ Savio used the image of the IBM card students used on the campus, suggesting that to the administration, there was no distinction between the impersonalized card and its cardholder. Students were "cogs in the wheel," of the process of providing future workers for growing industries. This type of education, the Free Speech Movement participants claimed, would not guarantee the future of democracy and create a freethinking citizenry. The university was a particular, and necessary, type of public where political participation was learned and enacted. Of course, it was learned and enacted, FSM claimed, through the advocacy they were fighting to retain on campus.

¹⁸⁴ Students for a Democratic Society, *The Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society*, 1962.

¹⁸⁵ Clark Kerr, *Uses of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963)

¹⁸⁶ Jeff Lustig, "The FSM and the Vision of a New Left," *The Free Speech Movement*, 217.

If the Free Speech Movement can be understood as distinctly New Left movement, then so too can Filthy Speech. The Filthy Speech Movement wed sexual politics and the New Left on campus. It shifted previous debates over sexual freedom and sexual politics from challenging *in loco parentis*, in fights on campus over women's housing restrictions for example, to a political paradigm that was rooted in constitutional rights and New Leftists articulations of freedom. Moreover, it did so within the context of the University, as a unique public and political space. Finally, the Filthy Speech Movement illustrated a kind of "personal politics," or a politics of the body, that also significantly shifted ideas about sex and New Left politics on campus.

If participatory democracy created an expansive concept of politics that allowed for the greatest individual contribution to social and political change, its proponents framed this participation through a politics of the body. From the Freedom Movement's mantra to "put your body on the line," meaning to sit-in or join Freedom Rides, to Mario Savio's most famous speech of the Free Speech Movement in which he declared, "there is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't part; you can't even passively take part and you've got to put your bodies upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop," I argue that the New Left declared the body to be the most important reflection of one's politics and the most important site of those politics.¹⁸⁷ Participatory democracy moved the expression and participation of American political life into ordinary actions in

¹⁸⁷ "My Life in the FSM: Memories of a Freshman," Margot Adler, in in *The Free Speech Movement*, ed. Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 111-129.

people's everyday lives. It shifted the focus from elected leaders to the individual, and from party lines and caucus platforms to one's deeply held moral convictions. Sitting-in at lunch counters, riding buses to challenge interstate travel desegregation laws, and even walking to polls or city hall to vote in the South reflected using one's body, in often dangerous and life-threatening situations, to enact one's political beliefs.

Certainly not inevitably, and in fact I am suggesting otherwise, it is nevertheless possible to make sense of the Filthy Speech Movement as a moment in which the physical act of taping a sign to one's chest or reading a passage aloud to a crowd was understood as a distinctly political act. Moreover, participants did so in order to reframe obscenity and sex as central to politics and political action. Unlike the links made between sex and politics in Chapter One, which were challenges to concepts of *in loco parentis*, Filthy Speech signaled a new sense of sexual politics in the New Left at Berkeley. Sexual politics and the expression of sexual politics, whether leading rallies using the word "fuck" or reading aloud explicit passages from a novel, would become central to notions of Free Speech, individual rights, women's rights, and the anti-Vietnam War movement at Berkeley.

California Senate Fact-finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities Committee

If Filthy Speech politicized sex and obscenity in novel ways for the New Left, the California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities Committee (SUAC) would do much the same for the rising New Right in California. SUAC served as a kind of state supplement, or auxiliary, to the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), the legislative committee most notorious in the postwar period for

ferreting out and investigating communism within the United States. In California, SUAC performed many of the same functions within the state, as HUAC did on the national level, most notably, investigation of communists or communist threats. By the time Ronald Reagan would famously quote from its *Thirteenth Report Supplement* during his gubernatorial campaign in 1966, covered in Chapter Five, SUAC already had quite a history with the Berkeley campus and the University of California system more broadly.

SUAC, however, was not UC Berkeley's first brush with anticommunism on campus. Like many college campuses in the postwar period, Berkeley experienced the academic purges and anticommunism campaigns carried out during McCarthyism.¹⁸⁸ Professors who refused to take loyalty oaths were fired from the University, and there was a campus-wide ban on communist speakers, or as many students believed, anyone simply accused of being "too controversial." But the creation of SUAC marked a new direction in anticommunism both within the state of California more broadly but also specifically in its attention to the University. SUAC would release fourteen Reports between 1960 and 1966 and many of these named individuals, groups, or activities related to the University.¹⁸⁹

After Berkeley students staged the HUAC sit-in in San Francisco in 1960, the first sit-in of the decade for Cal students, they earned the attention and ire of anticommunists in the California Legislature, becoming a key target of investigation. In 1959, HUAC

¹⁸⁸ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*; Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, ed., *The Free Speech Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

¹⁸⁹ Copies of these reports are housed in various locations in California including state archives Sacramento, the Hoover Institute Library and Archives at Stanford University in Palo Alto, and at the Boalt Law Library at the University of California Berkeley. I am also aware of various copies posted online.

called several hundred San Francisco Bay Area public school teachers to testify in hearings to determine their loyalty to the United States. HUAC cancelled the hearings at the last minute but not before many of those teachers called to testify were fired from their jobs.¹⁹⁰ One year later, in 1960, HUAC called a University of California graduate student to testify and was met with opposition both from UC Berkeley students and the wider public. The aborted teacher hearings had created resentment among the public, since many people seemed to sympathize with teachers who lost their jobs despite any proof that they were communists or that HUAC had a valid reason for calling them to testify.¹⁹¹ HUAC's reappearance the following year to interview a graduate student tipped the scales for UC students and they staged a protest.

The 1960 HUAC sit-in was the first of the decade for UC Berkeley students and for student activism in the San Francisco Bay Area.¹⁹² The morning of the scheduled hearing, UC students went to San Francisco City Hall in support of the graduate student. HUAC officials promised them that if there were open seats in the courtroom, students would be admitted into the hearing on a first-come-first-served basis. But when it came time for the hearing to begin, no students were admitted despite plenty of available space in the room. As a response, they staged an impromptu sit-in inside San Francisco City Hall. It became a local media frenzy with live footage of students being dragged down

¹⁹⁰ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 16.

¹⁹¹ *At Berkeley in the 60s*, videorecording, directed by Mark Kitchell (New York, NY: First-Run Features, 1990)

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

the grand marble staircase and shot with fire hoses from the San Francisco Fire Department.¹⁹³

The HUAC demonstrations marked a significant turning point for anticommunism in California, both for UC Berkeley students and for legislators in the State Senate. On campus, UC Berkeley students had wrestled with McCarthy-era faculty purges, opposed the loyalty oath, and challenged the speaker ban. As the early years of the 1960s wore on, students increased pressure on the administration to do away with the speaker ban and tried repeatedly to bring controversial figures to campus, such as Malcolm X in 1961.¹⁹⁴ Of course it wasn't until the December 8 Resolutions that the speaker ban was finally repealed. In addition, Berkeley students became increasingly involved with the growing Civil Rights activism in the Bay Area and this would only continue and intensify throughout the decade.¹⁹⁵

Simultaneously, throughout the early 1960s, SUAC investigated communism and communist influences on campus, attributing much of this early student activism to the Old Left and releasing reports of its findings regularly. The early resistance Berkeley students, and some faculty, had shown to the anticommunism campaigns had certainly put the campus on SUAC's radar and its reports commonly referred to individuals, groups, or events on or near the campus that SUAC suspected, or at least accused, of being communist or communist-inspired. So, when SUAC released the *Thirteenth Report*

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 17.

¹⁹⁵ Jo Freeman, "From Freedom Now! To Free Speech: The FSM's Roots in the Bay Area Civil Rights Movement," in *The Free Speech Movement*, ed. Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

in 1965 and its *Thirteenth Report Supplement* a year later in 1966, it was not surprising or out of the ordinary for it to be focused on the University and the activism there. What is surprising, however, is that despite its history of investigating communism on campus, it was SUAC's Supplemental Report of 1966 that became the most publicly debated of all its investigations. In fact, the Supplemental Report would help remap the politics of not just the University or the city of Berkeley itself but of the entire state of California. And most surprising, this debate, and the surge of activity wrought in its wake, was about obscenity and sex. Despite its anticommunist mission, SUAC ignited a growing conservative movement when it charged that the University's greatest menace in 1966 came not from communist infiltration, as it had previously charged, but from the "sexual filth" that "ran rampant" on the campus.

The Thirteenth Report, 1965

The Thirteenth Report, issued in 1965, began with the Committee's findings of communism and communist influence among the Free Speech Movement. It also printed the names and addresses of all those arrested in the final Sproul Hall sit-in of the FSM, almost eight hundred individuals.¹⁹⁶ As for the Filthy Speech Movement, it claimed, "The impact of the filthy speech incident among legislators at Sacramento, among the alumni of the university, and the community at large was enormous."¹⁹⁷ It described the Filthy Speech Movement as beginning with a "barefoot boy with his dirty little sign," referring to John Thompson, and expressed outrage that, "SLATE and FSM leaders started a

¹⁹⁶ California Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities [hereafter SUAC], *Thirteenth Report* (California Legislature: Sacramento, California, 1965), 103-111. This Report is now available in a bound copy at the Boalt Law Library at the University of California, Berkeley.

¹⁹⁷ SUAC, *Thirteenth Report*, 127.

demonstration that attracted twenty-three hundred students, including women and minors, and the offensive four-letter word was repeatedly shouted.”¹⁹⁸ These figures are at odds with other reports of the demonstrations, which suggest numbers only in the several hundreds, and also suggest that both SLATE and the FSM were leaders of Filthy Speech when, in fact, it was true some members from these organizations participated but not all.

The language of the *Report* was scathing, suggesting that the University had bowed too much to student demands to abolish *in loco parentis* and in fact, Filthy Speech would “indicate that perhaps there should have been a substitute for a parent who had the good sense to get down the razor strap and haul the kids off to the woodshed.” Those who participated in Free Speech and Filthy Speech were not young adults agitating for political rights but, instead, spoiled unruly children in need of a good spanking. It also linked Filthy Speech to the same communist-inspired “united front” that had gathered in the storm of Free Speech and taking over the politics on campus. Exactly what constituted the “united front” is not entirely clear except for a mention of the campus Du Bois Club, a student organization run by Bettina Aptheker, also of Free Speech Movement fame, and some “adults” that visited the campus during the various campus disruptions with obvious communist sympathies.¹⁹⁹ The *Report* concluded, of Filthy Speech, that:

¹⁹⁸ SUAC, *Thirteenth Report*, 126.

¹⁹⁹ SUAC, *Thirteenth Report*, 96-99. I should note that SUAC was right about Bettina Aptheker. The daughter of Herbert Aptheker, she was an avowed Communist. In an interview she claimed that it was because she was a Communist that Mario Savio wanted her in the spotlight of FSM often since, she says, he had a good sense of humor and because he wanted to get the communist claims out in the open so that the entire FSM could not be discredited for the political affiliations of one or two of its members. She recalled that his attitude was that if they were going to call them all communists, why not actually put the

It was painfully clear that at this point the university campus at Berkeley was operating without any discipline or restriction whatever, compendia of filth were being distributed on and off the campus, and in support of this nauseating campaign were some of the most prominent leaders of the Free Speech Movement whose dedication to Communism they had disdained to conceal.²⁰⁰

The logic of the *Report* identifies the Berkeley campus as a target for communist-inspired plots, since it was the largest public university in the Bay Area and the Bay Area had been besieged by Communist organizations since the 1930s, and also attracted new strains of communism because of the student rebellions.

The *Report* agreed that the character and tenor the student demonstrations had taken between 1964 and 1965 were markedly different from those in previous years. The *Report* notes, “Demonstrations by students at Sather Gate are nothing new. What *is* [sic] new is the professional technique, the highly sophisticated organization, the long-range strategy, the outrageous demands...” and, “the mass united front technique is also new, so far as the Berkeley campus is concerned...” Instead of calling this a New Left, however, the *Report* attributed it to a newly powerful communist movement that, although it had been present for some time in the Bay Area, found new strength and vitality on the nation’s largest public university campus.²⁰¹

What the *Report* wrought in its wake was the revitalization of a conservative movement in the state of California that used UC Berkeley as a significant political target. The *Report* made the sexual politics of the New Left central to the state’s New

real communist out in the front? Aptheker, Betinna. Interview by author. Santa Cruz, California, 17 August 2010.

²⁰⁰ SUAC, *Thirteenth Report*, 128.

²⁰¹ SUAC, *Thirteenth Report*, 22.

Right. The *Report* prompted the California Legislature to attempt to wrest control of the entire University system from the Regents and to disaggregate the nine California campuses so as to make them more manageable. Special investigative committees were created to study higher education in California and student unrest. Its language would make its way into Reagan's campaign rhetoric, to be explored in detail in Chapter Five. And finally, it sparked vicious public debates, on both sides, about individual rights, sex and sexuality, obscenity, democracy, and academic freedom.

At UC Berkeley, both the Free Speech Movement and challenges to on-campus housing regulations had been in the name of rejecting the ideas of *in loco parentis*. The FSM in particular challenged the very idea of the University governing students' lives on campus and, they argued, their private lives as well. The FSM characterized it as an unreasonable violation of student's individual, constitutional rights. Filthy Speech pushed claims for First Amendment rights on campus, certainly, demanding complete, unrestricted freedom to say, read, write, and print anything students wanted without penalty or censorship. But since these claims were couched in arguments about freedom, sex, and obscenity, Filthy Speech shifted a debate about sex on campus from rejections of housing restrictions and *in loco parentis* to more explicit New Left articulations of politics and participatory democracy. Conflicts over sex, obscenity, and politics would increase and intensify throughout the rest of the decade at Berkeley, particularly in connection with the rising antiwar movement, and eventually take an entirely new character with Robert Scheer's campaign for Congress.

Chapter Three

“Queer-Minded Social Misfits”: Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom and the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum

On February 3, 1966, Thomas Maddux, a graduate student at the University of Texas at Austin, wrote a letter to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum (CSFF) at the University of California, Berkeley, celebrating the creation of the CSFF and attempting to establish a relationship. Maddux wrote, “Glad to see that the campus political awakening has produced a concern for this vital area in the lives of all of us.”²⁰² Later that spring, Maddux led a group of students at UT Austin to organize the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom (TSLRSF) in order to advocate for the liberalization of Texas penal codes regarding sex and obscenity.²⁰³ In his letter to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, Maddux stated, “I have been interested in the reform of sex crime laws for several years, have written to the editor of a Texas daily as long ago as 5 years. This fall, I decided to make the big push.”²⁰⁴ The push included challenging laws that prohibited or regulated “fornication, sodomy, miscegenation, adultery, and statutory rape” in the state of Texas.²⁰⁵ The student organization was a campus-based chapter of the national Sexual Freedom League, advocating on-demand abortion, use of

²⁰² Letter from Thomas L. Maddux to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, February 3, 1966, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁰³ Ibid., Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical: A Journey Through the Sixties* (Los Gatos, CA: Shire Press, 2001), 152.

²⁰³ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 153.

²⁰⁴ Letter from Thomas L. Maddux to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, February 3, 1966, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁰⁵ “Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth,” Gary Chason, *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History [hereafter cited CAH], University of Texas at Austin.

contraception and family planning, and the liberalization of sex and marriage laws around the country. Interestingly enough, Maddux's appeal to Berkeley's campus chapter, the CSFF, was sent in hopes of establishing something of a working partnership since he expressed an interest in "corresponding with you people in Berkeley, exchanging ideas and news items." Finally, he ended his letter with a few questions about organizing strategies, including a suggestion that the TSLRSF attempt to attract activists from "S.D.S. or other radical organizations."²⁰⁶

The UC Berkeley campus political scene had changed dramatically between 1964 and 1965, so much so that it might be difficult to exaggerate. The rights that the Free Speech and Filthy Speech movements had secured on campus, as discussed in Chapter Two, expanded both the range of political activity on campus and its ease of access. The variety of student organizations and activities represented at Sather Gate grew in ways previously unimagined a year before. Civil rights activism in the Bay Area, heavily influential in the Free Speech Movement, continued within a larger context of activism.

At both UC Berkeley and UT Austin, debates about sexual freedom and individual rights, particularly on campus, took place in an increasingly new context. The pressed-shirt, buttoned-down presentation of students (mostly men) arguing passionately for freedom of speech at Berkeley shifted to the Filthy Speech Movement, which argued that those free speech rights should extend to obscenity and sexual content on campus. Free Speech expanded to include political rights on campus explicitly concerned with

²⁰⁶ Letter from Thomas L. Maddux to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, February 3, 1966, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

sex. At UT, administrative actions to squelch the publication and distribution of material by the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom that advocated overturning the state's sex laws helped spur an all-out University Freedom Movement. Its proponents believed that the political rights they demanded, as student activists, included the freedom to distribute literature without prior approval, even if that literature was sexually explicit in its content. Furthermore, at UT, the underground press had grown in conjunction with the expansion of a new leftist activist community whose interests in antiwar activism, desegregation, and sexual freedom developed simultaneously. UT's *The Rag* would become a significant organizing tool for UT radical student activists and, as this chapter will illustrate, a primary producer in that community's sexual politics.

The Sexual Freedom League chapters on both campuses sought to define what exactly made "sexual freedom" distinct from freedom of speech and rights to publish obscenity or pornography at Berkeley; or from challenges, undergirded by fears of racial miscegenation, to *in loco parentis* and segregated dorms at UT. On both campuses, activists argued over the significance of sexual freedom to the politics of the new left and to students' rights on campus; they also explored limits of that freedom for women activists.

The Sexual Freedom League

In New York City in 1963, an advisory board that included Jefferson Poland, the Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, the actor and poet Julian Beck, and Dr. Leo Koch, a University of Illinois professor fired for advocating premarital sex, founded the Sexual Freedom

League.²⁰⁷ The League participated in a few demonstrations in New York City, but it was not until Jefferson Poland took the League out to the San Francisco Bay Area that the organization actually took off. Poland arrived in the Bay Area in 1964, and by 1967, there were local chapters in New York City, San Francisco, and London and campus chapters at universities from California to as far away as Texas and Florida.²⁰⁸

At the broadest level, the Sexual Freedom League advocated “sexual freedom,” constructed in a variety of ways. The organization was also loosely tied together as a confederation of individual chapters. Poland originally based the central office in San Francisco, but later the East Bay chapter in Oakland emerged as the SFL’s headquarters. The central office produced a newsletter, *SFL Newsletter*, that was distributed to its members and member chapters.²⁰⁹ Each League chapter maintained a significant amount of autonomy, and this seems to be true with regard to the campus chapters in particular; still, each shared a set of basic guidelines that outlined the League’s purpose and central political principles. For example, one of the Bay Area campus chapters, the Stanford [University] Sexual Rights Forum, stated, “We view sexual rights as a proper extension of civil liberties. We prefer open honest acceptance of varying personal sexual practices to the massive hypocrisy of many parts of our society. Our fundamental tenet is that the

²⁰⁷ Letter from Jefferson Poland to Dr. Leo Koch, November 24, 1969, Carton 4, Sexual Freedom League Records, BANC MSS 83/181c, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley. Collection Overview, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁰⁸ Letter from Joel Starkey, student representative of Sexual Liberation Front at the University of Florida in Gainesville, to Kurt Rust, University of California Berkeley’s Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, n.d., Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records. Letter from Thomas Maddux, student representative of the Texas Students for Responsible Sexual Freedom, to the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records. “Stanford Sexual Rights Forum,” Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁰⁹ “Guide to the Sexual Freedom League Records,” Online Archive of California, accessed on April 8, 2011, <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf967nb3x9>.

private sexual activities of consenting adults are *not* the concern of governments, churches, or schools.”²¹⁰ Stanford’s chapter listed among its goals unfettered access to on-demand abortion, the repeal of sodomy laws and those prohibiting homosexuality and fornication, increased availability of clothing-optional beaches, and a host of women’s housing regulation concerns on campus.²¹¹

The Texas Students for Responsible Sexual Freedom

At UT Austin, the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom (TSLRSF) was a short-lived student organization established to “stimulate discussion of the various taboos and archaic laws involving sexual activity. The general policy of the League was that any consensual sex act between adults which did not involve force or physical harm should not be illegal.”²¹² After losing a battle with the university administration to achieve officially recognized status on campus, the TSLRSF disappeared. But the conflict over official student organization status created an impetus, and the context, for UT’s University Freedom Movement, a movement for free speech rights at UT Austin.

Following time, place, and manner rules, the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom appealed to the dean of students for permission to distribute pamphlets on campus describing their new student group and goals in order to drum up support and membership. The dean of students denied the League permission because the

²¹⁰ “Statement of Principles,” Stanford Sexual Rights Forum, March 21, 1966, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records. Emphasis by original author.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² “Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth,” Gary Chason, *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History [hereafter cited CAH], University of Texas at Austin.

pamphlets were in “bad taste.”²¹³ The League ignored the dean’s decision and distributed the pamphlets anyway, but as a consequence, they were denied university recognition and banned from the campus.²¹⁴

Chancellor Harry Ransom issued a press release following the organization’s dismissal from campus that appeared to be a response to student reactions. It began by affirming that UT supports “free inquiry and free discussion” but that a student organization that proposed to “provide dialogue on the question of sexual freedom and to lobby for changes in the law which would permit responsible sexual freedom’ has ignored every regular process recognized for such a group.”²¹⁵ The statement explains that it was actually while the joint student and faculty committee was deliberating about whether or not to offer the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom official recognition that the organization acted rashly and distributed its literature on campus anyway. The chancellor concluded that the organization and all of its activities were banned from campus, writing, “The time has come when universities, which are open doors to responsible discussion, must not be turned into doormats for irresponsible propaganda and willful breach of clearly stated university policy.”²¹⁶ The statement was distributed to the local papers and some radio and television stations.

On the very same day, March 15, 1966, the Student Steering Committee of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Texas issued its own statement to the dean of

²¹³ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 153.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ The University of Texas News and Information Services, *UT News*, March 15, 1966.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

students, Jack Holland.²¹⁷ The Wesley Foundation was a campus ministry organization that, according to its own institutional history, grew out of the Texas Student Methodist Movement, a movement that began after World War II and peaked in the 1960s. The committee members began by expressing support for the student groups involved in the issue of free speech but also note that their statement reflects their own distinct position. They ask that the university administration “act in such a manner as to establish the same freedoms of speech, expression, picketing, hand-bill hand-out, etc. that prevail in any other public area in the City of Austin.” They defend such a position by arguing that full free speech rights on campus would enable students to “learn more accurately the full responsibility of citizenship.”²¹⁸ They also delivered the letter to Norman Hackerman, vice chancellor of student affairs, and the chancellor, Harry Ransom.

Ransom responded quickly, arguing that although the university had a responsibility to “guarantee individual freedom and to advance legitimate concerns,” that this obligation did not include “abandonment of institutional responsibility.”²¹⁹ Hackerman replied that he was conferring with the attorney general to determine how exactly the university was public space, or, in other words, whether students could do the same things on campus that they might do off campus.

²¹⁷ Letter from the Student Steering Committee of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Texas to dean of students Jack Holland, March 15, 1966, Box 128, UT Chancellor Records.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Letter from Chancellor Harry Ransom to the Student Steering Committee of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Texas at Austin, March 24, 1966, Box 128, UT Chancellor Records.

UT's underground new leftist newspaper, *The Rag*, covered the controversy over the TSLRSF in depth as one of its first major stories.²²⁰ *The Rag* story claims that the censorship of the handbill was due to one line, in which TSLRSF supported the repeal of laws against "fornication, sodomy, miscegenation, adultery, and statutory rape."²²¹ It was that particular line that was "in bad taste," according to Chancellor Ransom, and, in the view of *The Rag*, his claim that he was protecting universities from wanton propaganda was probably false. Instead, *The Rag* suggested that the chancellor's revocation of official student-organization status was more likely because of the outcry of parents and incendiary threats by Texas senator Grady Hazelwood, a Democrat from Amarillo. Senator Hazelwood condemned the students in the League as a "bunch of queer-minded social misfits" and, as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, threatened to cut university funding unless "the League was stripped of its Administrative Approval."²²² Indeed, one Texas resident lauded Senator Hazelwood for his response to the League. In a letter to Hazelwood, she wrote, "I wish to commend you for your prompt action and disclosure to [Texas] Governor Connally and to the public of the 'Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom.' Your efforts are appreciated by all parents of the state I am sure." A copy of her letter was also sent to the governor. Perhaps she was right that at least some parents appreciated the administrative attention paid to the organization: *The Rag* also claimed that "parents of UT students in West Austin" had

²²⁰ I want to point out that the first issues of *The Rag* rolled off the presses in October of 1966, a full seven months after the banning of the TSLRSF. This highlights the centrality of sexual politics to *The Rag* and is covered in depth later in the chapter.

²²¹ "Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth," Gary Chason, *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

²²² *Ibid.*

begun to petition for the firing of the League's faculty advisors, Dr. Irwin Spear of the Botany Department and Dr. Robert Montgomery of the English Department.²²³ *The Rag* went on to describe the academic and personal consequences Thomas Maddux, the League's founder, suffered in the wake of this conflict with the administration. Maddux apparently lost his teaching assistantship in the Spanish Department for the following year, a critical funding blow for a graduate student; moreover, *The Rag* claimed, the admissions office failed to notify Maddux's draft board that he was enrolled in school, resulting in Maddux being temporarily classified as 1-A for drafted military service in the Vietnam War.²²⁴ Whether or not the admissions office did so on purpose cannot be ascertained from coverage of the entire conflict, but it was also reported in *The Rag* and via a letter from the chancellor that Thomas Maddux officially withdrew from the University of Texas.²²⁵

Finally, *The Rag* reported that another student organization had formed quickly in response to the League's swift ousting.²²⁶ The Texas Students for Free Speech issued a "Statement of Purpose" that demanded the administration "cease censorship of material distributed on campus or published in student publications" and "allow students of any and all viewpoints to form on-campus organizations to present these several views to the

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ "Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth," Gary Chason, *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

University and larger community.”²²⁷ The organization protested the administration on campus, bearing signs that read, “End Censorship” and “Bring the Constitution to the Campus.”²²⁸

The University Freedom Movement

Like the supporters of Filthy Speech at UC Berkeley, what seemed to trouble many students and some administrators at UT was the dean’s insistence that any and all literature distributed on campus had to receive prior administrative approval. If this had seemed reasonable, or perhaps simply only a nuisance, to students and student activists at UT in the years prior to 1967, events in the spring of that year would incite enough support for a full free speech movement.

Robert Pardun credits the scuffle between the dean and the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom for beginning the University Freedom Movement in his memoir, *Prairie Radical*. Pardun explains that although it was this incident that angered the new left and got them thinking seriously about challenging the rules regarding administrative approval for student pamphlets and fliers, by then it was too close to the end of the 1966 spring semester for students to get organized around the issue.²²⁹ In other words, the administration banned the small student group, and although there seemed to be interest in protesting the decision among the new left and the wider student body, the summer arrived and students scattered, leaving the issue dormant for another full year. In

²²⁷ Texas Students for Free Speech, “Statement of Purpose,” March 21, 1966, Box 128, University of Texas Chancellor’s Office Records [hereafter UT Chancellor Records], Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

²²⁸ “Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth,” Gary Chason, *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

the spring of 1967, however, another confrontation between UT's SDS and the administration would be the impetus for a full-fledged University Freedom Movement.

In the spring of 1967, SDS chapters all over the country coordinated a week of demonstrations to take place simultaneously in a national show of resistance to the escalating Vietnam War. The national Spring Mobilization Against the War included protests that drew tens of thousands of demonstrators in large cities like Washington DC, San Francisco, and New York City.²³⁰

UT's SDS chapter planned events that reflected their understanding of themselves, and Austin activists, as "cultural radicals" or "cultural politicians," two terms Robert Pardun used frequently to describe the overlap of culture and politics he felt was unique to the UT activist scene.²³¹ UT's SDS organized various events as part of "Flipped Out Week," including "Gentle Thursday," a rally where Stokely Carmichael spoke; an antiwar march to the state capitol; a poetry festival; several music concerts; and a picnic on "Soft Sunday" to conclude the festivities.²³² Flipped Out Week was scheduled to coincide not just with SDS's Spring Mobilization Against the War but also with UT's own Roundup Week, a traditional weeklong Greek celebration during which the fraternities and sororities participated in numerous parties and get-togethers on and off campus.

²³⁰ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 185.

²³¹ He uses this term in *Prairie Radical* and in interviews with the author, conducted over two days, July 23-24, 2010, Los Gatos, California.

²³² *Ibid*, 185.

Pardun reports that several thousand people participated in Flipped Out Week and that it was widely considered a success by the SDS community.²³³ Immediately afterwards, however, students discovered that Vice President Hubert Humphrey was scheduled to speak on campus during his visit to address the Texas Legislature. SDS received only four days notice and rushed to organize a rally and demonstration to protest his campus visit. In an effort to get the word out about the planned rally, SDSers distributed fliers on campus without receiving prior approval from Dean Price and, like the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom, faced immediate administrative consequences. Dean Price said that the fliers were “illegal” and that SDS was forbidden from holding the rally. If they did so, the organization would be banned from campus.²³⁴ Two hundred students gathered on campus, in spite of Dean Price’s decision, and held the SDS rally. The following day, Price withdrew SDS’s status as an officially recognized student organization and brought disciplinary charges against six SDS members, including Gary Thiher, Alice Embree, and Dick Reavis.²³⁵ These three students were particularly significant since they were running for student government on an SDS/new left platform, a first for UT. Disciplinary action against them could prevent their taking office, even if elected by their student peers.

In response to the hearings, hundreds of students gathered at College House, a co-op located off campus; the meeting included [?] representatives from the Negro Association for Progress, the UT Veteran’s Association, Young Democrats, the Graduate

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid., 186.

²³⁵ Ibid..

Students' Association, and SDS. The next day, the UT Veteran's Association decided to distribute unapproved literature on campus and hold an impromptu rally on the main mall of the campus, beneath the Tower, that drew a crowd of over five hundred students.²³⁶ The students demanded an end to administrative approval of on-campus literature and began several days of protesting that heralded the start of the University Freedom Movement.

The university disciplined six students, although one faculty member of the disciplinary hearing committee defended the students, stating that while they had shown a "serious lack of respect for legitimate authority, ... the students' actions 'though intentional' were 'less in the spirit of defiance of authority than to assert their constitutional rights.'"²³⁷

It is clear from the reports in *The Rag* that UT students understood the University Freedom Movement to be a smaller but similar version of UC Berkeley's Free Speech Movement. Likewise, according to Pardun, the literature from the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom provided plenty of ammunition, if not the spark, for the campus Freedom Movement. That, of course, suggests that sex and sexual politics were at the heart of UT's own free speech movement. Moreover, the willingness to participate and defend such an on-campus free speech movement likely owed much to the greater national context of student movements; it was, after all, 1966, two years after the big Berkeley student push for First Amendment rights on campus. But it also came after a

²³⁶ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 187.

²³⁷ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 188.

year of run-ins between the campus administration and the writers, publishers, and sellers of *The Rag*, many of whom were also SDS members. *The Rag* faced censorship and, its contributors would claim, harassment from the administration for being “obscene.”

The Rag

In popular and historical imagination, the sit-ins of the new left are iconic and representative of a generation’s move to action. In many ways, this is rightly so. Direct action was significant for building connection, coalition, and profound political bonds among activists. Memoirs of the period are remarkable in their similarities in describing the effects that sitting-in, holding hands, and singing freedom songs in the face of injustice and sometimes significant personal danger had on the ties that bound them together. But these events were likewise ephemeral by nature. They were able to bring together significant numbers of activists from all over a city, state, or nation. Yet ultimately it was the writings of these participants that maintained various movements’ momentum, connected them both locally and nationally, and enabled them to construct and imagine *a* new left community.²³⁸

New leftists were prolific writers and marvelously adept at recognizing and harnessing the power of print in movements for civil rights and against the Vietnam War.

²³⁸ I am employing Benedict Anderson’s concept of an “imagined community.” Although Anderson focuses on the significance of print culture to the creation of nations, I suggest that this is similarly useful for understanding how new leftists used underground newspapers to create a sense of common purpose, common politics, and a shared community. I also emphasized “a” new left community because the new left was, in fact, quite diverse in its political focus and activities, yet activists were simultaneously able to imagine themselves as part of one singular new left that encompassed all of it. Doug Rossinow argues this rather convincingly in *The Politics of Authenticity*. Where Rossinow and I disagree, however, is in regard to conclusions on the centrality of sexual politics to the new left and on whether or not there was a countercultural/political split at UT. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

Earlier in the sixties, much of this writing was in the form of position papers by individuals and groups in the various organizations across the country such as SDS and SNCC. Papers were discussed, shared, mailed, and driven around the nation as activists travelled and worked in economic justice programs and voter registration drives and participated in antiwar activism on college campuses. By the mid-sixties, the emergence of underground newspapers created new outlets and avenues for the dissemination of ideas. Later, from the late 1960s through the 1970s, it would seem that nowhere was the significance of print culture to the new left more visible than in the women's liberation movement, a testament to the power of writing in these earlier political movements.

Independent, underground presses offered an alternative to mainstream presses, certainly, but also functioned to create a reciprocal relationship among their community of readers and those in other places. The exchange of newspapers put activists at the University of Texas, say, in contact with those as close by as Houston or as far away as Berkeley or New York.²³⁹ Significantly, however, they also functioned to put activists in touch with others in their communities, creating an intra-community dialogue that served to create politics as much as report on them. In other words, the communication fostered by the underground press was multi-directional and became vital to what would become the new left. *The Rag* exemplified the attempt by university activists to use print media to nurture a new left community at UT and in Austin.

²³⁹ This is quite obvious during Women's Liberation in Austin when groups collected the publications they sent other places and the publications they received in return as a way to mark connections and like-minded feminist communities outside their own. The underground presses also created an underground press syndicate so that news stories could be easily shared among various communities; in *The Rag* this most often meant stories from *The Berkeley Barb*.

In 1966, SDS student activists at the University of Texas created *The Rag*, one of the nation's first underground newspapers and certainly the first in the South.²⁴⁰ Douglas Rossinow describes *The Rag* as “the most important of the Austin left's countercultural efforts.” In a literal sense, Rossinow's description rings true. Thorne Dreyer, Carol Neiman, Jeff Nightbyrd, Gary Thiher, and George and Mariann Vizard created the newspaper as an alternative to the university's own daily publication, *The Daily Texan*, as well as to local and state newspapers. The major dailies of the state, like the *Austin-American Statesman*, the *Houston Chronicle*, and the *Dallas Morning News*, were viewed as far too conservative and mainstream in their news coverage and unable to fit the needs of leftist activists. Even the *Texas Observer*, a publication devoted to addressing race, class, and labor issues in Texas, was still seen as mainstream press, albeit much more liberal, but insufficient for student activists protesting segregation and the war. In particular, *The Rag* was a response to the changes in editorship at *The Daily Texan*, when John Economidy took the position and was openly hostile to antiwar activists and the new left on campus. In fact, it would later be revealed that Economidy furnished surveillance information to campus police chief Allen Hamilton as a student informer.²⁴¹

The Rag was remarkable in its singularity as an underground paper in the South and as one of only six in the nation in 1966, but also because “Ragstaffers” attempted to implement the ideals of participatory democracy into the everyday work of the

²⁴⁰ Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 260.

²⁴¹ Thorne Dreyer, “The Spies of Texas.” *The Texas Observer*, November 16, 2006. Accessed May 12, 2011. <http://www.texasobserver.org/archives/item/14940-2343-the-spies-of-texas-newfound-files-detail-how-ut-austin-police-tracked-the-lives-of-sixties-dissidents>

publication.²⁴² Abe Peck, a historian of the 1960s underground press, claimed that *The Rag* “was the first independent undergrounder to represent, even in a small way, the participatory democracy, community organizing, and synthesis of politics and culture that the new left of the midsixties was trying to develop.”²⁴³ The operation and production of the paper exemplified the values of participatory democracy by making decisions by consensus and eschewing internal hierarchy. Rather than having editors oversee writers, *The Rag* used what were termed “funnels” and “funnellas,” who suggested stories and editorials to other staff members in meetings but ultimately did not control content so much as facilitate discussions about what to include in each issue.²⁴⁴ Everyone who worked on the paper was, in theory, allowed a say in its form. Beyond its own internal structure, *The Rag*’s format fostered a dialogue with its readership that reflected the ideals of, and commitment to, participatory democracy. Through the publication of editorials and open letters, and a range of contributors that covered a variety of issues, *The Rag* became the central reflection of UT’s new left community and also one of its central organizing mechanisms.

Furthermore, Larry Freudiger, a frequent contributor, described *The Rag* as standing for “such basic things as free speech, Black liberation, sex, student power,

²⁴² “Ragstaffer” was the umbrella term used by activists for anyone on the staff of *The Rag*.

²⁴³ Abe Peck, quoted in Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 260.

²⁴⁴ Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 260. Rossinow claims that although the paper was structured in a way meant to implement and exemplify the ideals of participatory democracy, it was also true that women did most of the typing, including even Alice Embree, who served as one of the first “funnellas” alongside “funnel” Thorne Dreyer.

consciousness expansion, children...and all the other good things in life.”²⁴⁵ Freudiger’s quote speaks to the notion of a single movement, new left, in which various political activities and interests were understood as encompassing one larger grassroots political movement, whose interests were reflected in *The Rag*.²⁴⁶ When asked about politics versus culture, Robert Pardun replied flatly, “It was all political,” suggesting that at least for UT’s new leftists, the two could not be separated.²⁴⁷ If *The Rag* ultimately “became the real center of the left in Austin,” successfully creating a sense of an imagined new left community at UT, and a new left imagined as a single movement of grassroots activists, its imbrication of sex and leftist radical politics is obvious and present from the start.²⁴⁸ Certainly, *The Rag* illustrated that issues of obscenity, sexual freedom, and censorship were at the heart of what it believed constituted politics; this is evidenced rather powerfully by the two major stories of its very first issues.

The first of these stories was an article about the sexual revolution and *Playboy*, “Playboy’s Tinselled Seductress,” by Jeff Shero. It appeared on page four of the very first issue on October 10, 1966.²⁴⁹ The article’s key concern is the difficulty in finding a suitable marriage partner, even among those on the left and those who engaged in the

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Here again I am drawing on Benedict Anderson’s ideas of an imagined community, in which Anderson argues that it is newspapers that enable a sense of “simultaneity” to exist for its readers, encouraging them to think of events and information existing together and, therefore, related to one another. In other words, various political activities and happenings can be drawn together in a newspaper so as to seem part of one larger movement, creating a sense of cohesion and community among readers.

²⁴⁷ Robert Pardun, interview by the author, conducted over two days, July 23-24, 2010, Los Gatos, California.

²⁴⁸ Doug Rossinow argues that *The Rag* and its staff “became the real center of the left in Austin,” in *Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 260.

²⁴⁹ Jeff Shero, “Playboy’s Tinselled Seductress,” *The Rag*, volume 1, number 1, October 10, 1966, 4, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

sexual revolution and the creation of a “new American sexuality.” Shero argued that this problem was largely the result of midcentury marriage experts and, most notably, the advertising industry. Shero wrote, “Marriage counselors often say that successful marriages are built upon compatible interests, liking one another, and a satisfactory sex life,” and that since “liberated couples” have the utmost opportunity to shed their Puritan cultural inheritance and embrace a freer sexuality, “it would seem that, for those who are a part of the sexual revolution, marriage would be much less difficult.”²⁵⁰ But Shero found this to be untrue, exclaiming, “But what a nonsensical idyllic notion!”²⁵¹ The problem that both mainstream culture and leftist culture seemed to share was the difficulty in finding a suitable mate and avoiding becoming just one more couple that ends up divorced and unhappy. Spouses found themselves choosing divorce because young people were misled by a “barrage of experts” who pushed them to accept a single construction of [hetero] sexuality that was ultimately unfulfilling and unattainable. The chief culprit among the barrage of experts was the print media, and one of its principal offenders was *Playboy* magazine.

The problems with *Playboy*, and with advertising like it, were legion, according to Shero. With its emphasis on cosmetics, jewelry, fashion, and high-power occupations, *Playboy* sent the message that “the sexy young woman is young, has large breasts and a cute bottom, is without pubic hair, and unbuttons the latest fashions.” In addition, she has “an interesting job.” It was clear to Shero that “married women, older women, girls with

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

dull jobs, or those who don't shave" cannot ever be sexy.²⁵² Likewise, *Playboy* seemed to send a singular message about what constituted an attractive, suitable man. "Men who get ahead in businesses and girls," Shero wrote, "wear smart attire, have the proper enlightened attitudes, and reaffirm the essential goodness of the rat-race."²⁵³ Together, these myopic visions of what constituted sexual attractiveness in women and men created a "sterile" sexuality in which individuals were judged by the clothing and cosmetics they wore, rather than their "natural attributes."²⁵⁴ The messages, Shero argued, were so convincing and so pervasive that people sought out partners who imitated the images they saw in the magazine. According to Shero, this was both antithetical to a lasting marriage and to the values of "liberated" people. These were the problems with what Shero called the "new American sexuality" that *Playboy* helped create and certainly endorsed.

Embedded in this article were also concerns about masculinity. The real problem with the new American sexuality, Shero suggested, was that those messages were conveyed in *Playboy*, which targeted men. Shero wrote that women had long been "dupes" of the advertising industry but that men, too, were becoming preoccupied with looks and consumerism and were no longer "sure enough of their masculinity," like they had once been.²⁵⁵

Furthermore, although Shero claims that sometimes *Playboy* legitimately tried to liberate sex or construct a liberated sexuality, such as when it "campaigns against postal

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Jeff Shero, "Playboy's Tinselled Seductress," *The Rag*, volume 1, number 1, October 10, 1966, 7, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁵⁵ Jeff Shero, "Playboy's Tinselled Seductress," 4.

regulation, censorship, and outdated sex laws,” which gave the magazine the occasional “enlightened air,” more often it served merely to create a fantasy of sex and relationships that did not promote healthy marriage. The problem *The Rag* found with the *Playboy*-inspired UT coed, the “tinsel seductress,” was that she did not make a good mate, no matter how good she looked sitting next to you in class.

Although the kind of sexual revolution advocated in *Playboy*, and responsible for creating a new American sexuality, was targeted as inadequate for truly liberated couples, issues of sex, obscenity, censorship, and politics nevertheless remained central to *The Rag*. Its second major news story covered the Sexual Freedom League on the front page of volume 1, number 2, issued on October 17, 1966. “Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth” was the only newspaper article devoted to covering the entire contest between the TSLRSF and the University of Texas administration.²⁵⁶ The three-page story covering all the details of the TSLRSF’s struggle with the UT administration is consistent with what *The Rag* argued were “real” or “enlightened” campaigns to change sexual mores with its attack on state laws and university regulations against censorship, obscenity, and “outdated” sex laws. What is surprising is the fact that the story of the TSLRSF was a central, headlining story of *The Rag* a full seven months after the conflict had transpired. A three-page story of a student organization’s fight with the administration, particularly over issues of sex laws and censorship, can easily be imagined as prime fodder for the underground press gristmill, especially a brand-new

²⁵⁶ *The Daily Texan* ran a brief article about the League but it did not compare to the depth of the coverage in *The Rag*.

press like *The Rag*. But the time and space given to the TSLRSF story reveal much about its importance to *The Rag*. Coupled with the *Playboy* article, these early issues of *The Rag* illustrate that, at least to Ragstaffers, there was something politically vital about sexuality, sex laws, and obscenity and that these issues were, or should be, central to a leftist newspaper, a leftist activist, and a leftist political paradigm.

Yet *The Rag* also created a space in the local UT leftist activist scene to link radical politics and ideas about sex and sexuality and open them up for discussion with a broader community base. In addition to the primacy granted issues of sexuality and censorship in the first two issues, subsequent publications continued to grapple with issues surrounding obscenity and sex.

The first volume of *The Rag*, for example, featured an article on the Supreme Court's ruling in the obscenity case of Ralph Ginzburg, creator and publisher of *Eros* magazine. Ginzburg began *Eros* in 1962 as an erotic magazine but one meant to challenge *Playboy* artistically and intellectually with features from famous American psychologist and midcentury sexologist Albert Ellis.²⁵⁷ Ginzburg was charged with obscenity for sending copies of *Eros* via the postal service and eventually lost his case with the United States Supreme Court. Larry Freudiger wrote in his first *Rag* column feature, "Grassroots Sociology," that although rights to sex and obscenity were not explicitly granted in the Constitution, they should be. Freudiger blamed the obscenity charge on Ginzburg's published photographs of nude white women in the arms of nude

²⁵⁷ Steven Heller, "Ralph Ginzburg, 76, Publisher in Obscenity Case, Dies," *New York Times*, July 7, 2006, accessed May 20, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/07/us/07ginzburg.html>.

black men, arguing that the suggestion of interracial love or sex was more offensive and more damning than the nudity in and of itself.²⁵⁸ “But the Constitution,” Freudiger wrote, “does not guarantee the right to social deviation. The Constitution protects political freedom, but politics are only a reflection of social phenomena—and this the court knows.”²⁵⁹ Freudiger’s statement reflects his own position on freedom, obscenity, and sex but also a much broader leftist perspective. Although “sex, music, entertainment, and the social relationships that make society what it is” are not constitutionally protected rights, Freudiger believes they should be politicized. He suggests that “politics” are nothing if not simply reflections of social phenomena or, in other words, social constructions; while sex, obscenity, and social relationships may not receive formal political protections, as do other rights derived from the Constitution, they are nevertheless *political* and form the *politics* of American society. These ideas of politics—that they are as much about human values and relationships as about voting or formal campaigns—were at the heart of what would be termed the new left.²⁶⁰ Like Filthy Speech at UC Berkeley or UT’s SDS housing campaigns for women’s sexual freedom, Freudiger’s linking of sex, obscenity, and political rights illustrates the significance, and salience, of sex for the Austin left.

Finally, what was perhaps another feature of participatory democracy in *The Rag* was the regular publication of “Letters to the Funnel,” which functioned like any editorial page but also served as a direct conversation between Ragstaffers and their larger audience. Issues surrounding the Pill, contraception, premarital sex, and obscenity were

²⁵⁸ Larry Freudiger, “The Supreme Court: Two Decisions Strike at Social Deviants,” *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 7, November 21, 1966, 12, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Students for a Democratic Society, *The Port Huron Statement*. New York, 1962.

discussed and debated in these sections during *The Rag*'s years of publication.²⁶¹ One of the more fruitful and seemingly popular of these discussions was in the second volume, in 1967-1968, in which *Rag* readers weighed in on a debate about the newspaper printing personal advertisements. A critical reader wrote a letter to the funnel complaining that running personal ads, which the reader said were thinly disguised ads for sexual partners, would "diminish the integrity of the newspaper."²⁶² In response, *The Rag* invited its readership to contribute letters and participate in a larger discussion of the place of sexual ads and photos in *The Rag*. One responder, "Smut," wrote that he or she would not like to see the newspaper run ads "for sundry varieties of sex and sexual partners" because it would "seriously detract from the revolutionary effectiveness of *The Rag* by putting it on the level of intellectual seriousness of a girlie magazine...I know you take the revolution seriously."²⁶³ The letter suggested that the ultimate goals of revolutionary social change might not be compatible with sexual liberation, however constructed (and that the type of sexual advertisement or photo greatly determined whether or not sexual liberation was consistent with social change). Not everyone who read the paper agreed with its pairing of sex and radical politics as a legitimate political aim. Moreover, the letter stated,

Accepting those ads would make you silently acquiescent in the American conviction that sex, like everything, is a commodity which can be advertised, bargained for, and sold...I recall the Emancipation Proclamation which was supposed to do away with people being commodities.²⁶⁴

Another response opposed this position, arguing that the:

²⁶¹ These can be found most obviously in volumes one, two, and three, 1966-1969, of *The Rag*.

²⁶² "Letter to the Funnel," *The Rag*, Vol. 2, No. 9, January 8, 1968, CAH, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

revolution is straight across the board and it involves a franker and more open attitude towards sex. By and large the ads are from men who just want a romp in the hay... Now I find the “morality” of some segments of the “Left” sickening. The revolution, if it’s to be worth a damn, is going to be for freedom from the degutting crap which characterizes our current society.²⁶⁵

These comments also illustrate a tension between men and women staffers that was common in underground papers in the 1960s. The experiences and positions of women in underground new leftist newspapers have been well documented by feminist historians and former participants in the movements.²⁶⁶ The feminist takeover of *Rat*, an underground paper in New York City, was perhaps the most public and most famous act of women staffers who, fed up with what they perceived as an increasing amount of pornographic material, literally took over the editorial office, kicked the men out, and refashioned the newspaper as a Women’s Liberation publication.²⁶⁷ *Rat*, incidentally, was started by Jeff Shero. Gary Thiher, from UT’s SDS, was one of the editors kicked out during the women’s takeover.

The Rag, like many underground presses at the time, published sexually explicit drawings or photos of women. A call for typists, presumably female, ran underneath a photograph of a row of women, bare-breasted at typewriters with a headline that read, “Put Out for the Rag.” The photo did not show the women’s faces. Instead, the image depicts a line of available and willing bare breasts to do the typing work of *The Rag*. The

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ See Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000); Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Knopf, 1979); Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

²⁶⁷ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 139.

implicit assumption here too is that women “put out” for the newspaper by doing the mundane and menial tasks of typing, and are objectified while doing so, but not for actually writing. This is not to say that *The Rag* did not have a significant female contingent that did much more than type. Alice Embree and Carol Neiman, two women who helped start *The Rag*, served as “funnellas” and staged UT’s SDS all-women sit-in at the local draft office, leading to an important and early feature story in the newspaper about women’s antiwar activism. But Doug Rossinow writes in *Politics of Authenticity* that even *The Rag*’s own retrospective issue in 1971 claimed “that by 1971, the paper operated in a far less hierarchical fashion than it had at first” and that due to the emergence of feminism in Austin in 1969, Ragstaffers had agreed on a policy to refuse sexist advertisements and move away from the “pornographic tendency of many underground papers.”²⁶⁸

The university administration consistently sought to suppress *The Rag*. Alice Embree described it as a “constant animosity from the administration.”²⁶⁹ Initially, Thorne Dreyer sought official recognition as a campus student paper. He was thwarted by regulations that stipulated that the paper could not contain profanity or advertisements. The reason offered for the second stipulation was that the students could not sell a commercial newspaper on the public university campus. This regulation did not seem to apply to the *Austin-American Statesman*, however, something that Dreyer pointed out in

²⁶⁸ Doug Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 261.

²⁶⁹ “Rag Oral History Project,” People’s History in Texas, accessed May 26, 2011, <http://www.nuevoanden.com/rag/index.cfm>.

negotiations with faculty.²⁷⁰ Although the difficulties with the administration could have inspired a free speech movement at the moment of its first issue, Ragstaffers decided the timing was not right and voted instead to let individual staffers decide if and how they wanted to sell *The Rag* on the campus to students.²⁷¹ The first day of sale, October 10, 1967, several groups of staffers, both students and non-students, began selling on different parts of the campus. Campus police officers approached all of them, ordering them to stop selling and, in some cases, trying to confiscate the paper. George Vizard was selling in the West Mall, a wide area beneath the iconic University Tower frequently used by student organizations and activists, where he was threatened with arrest if he did not stop. But his confrontation with the police only served to increase interest in the new paper, and together, Ragstaffers sold 1500 copies of *The Rag* in only four hours.²⁷² Vizard wrote that later that day, staff members reconvened for another meeting and “the spectre of free speech abridgement danced before us. And there were those of us who would do battle. But most thought the issue was too unclear.”²⁷³ Ultimately, *The Rag* negotiated a deal with the university for rights to sell in the student union if they split profits 70/30 with the administration. They also sold just off-campus across Guadalupe Street, in front of the University Co-op bookstore.

Throughout its eleven years of publication, from 1966 to 1977, however, *The Rag* continued to face difficulties with printing and distribution. Local printers often dropped the paper, unwilling to print what could be seen as obscene pictures or articles. A postal

²⁷⁰ George Vizard, “Ragamuffins face fuzz,” *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 17, 1966, 4.

²⁷¹ George Vizard, “Ragamuffins face fuzz,” 5.

²⁷² George Vizard, “Ragamuffins face fuzz,” 16.

²⁷³ George Vizard, “Ragamuffins face fuzz,” 18.

investigator once visited the home of Thorne Dreyer to speak to him about an “obscene letter” Dreyer had received for *The Rag*, demanding that Dreyer identify the sender.²⁷⁴ Finally, renting space for producing *The Rag* was often like finding a consistent printer, since landlords did not want to be associated with a publication that continually faced harassment. *The Rag* ended up with a permanent office at the University Y. Challenging local laws, federal postal laws, and administrative regulations regarding obscenity and pornography created obstacles for *The Rag*, particularly in its early years. But it managed to create and sustain a wide readership locally and nationally; Doug Rossinow claims that by the 1970s, after the decline of SDS, *The Rag* transformed into *the left* in Austin.²⁷⁵

The Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom did not make *The Rag*, but *The Rag* certainly made the TSLRSF. *The Rag* made the organization’s struggle with the administration a leftist political issue and set a precedent for the newspaper as a leftist publication that grappled with issues of sex and radical politics. Furthermore, I would suggest that Pardun’s claim that the University Freedom Movement began because of the TSLRSF is correct, if overly simplified. The timeline for the year stretching between the spring of 1966, when the TSLRSF came onto the UT scene, and the spring of 1967, when UT’s SDS chapter ignited the University Freedom Movement, reveals the ways in which sexual politics, *The Rag*, and UT’s new left grew up together. The TSLRSF’s struggles with the administration over issues of censorship and obscenity were heightened seven months later when *The Rag* began publishing on the UT campus. These

²⁷⁴ Jeff Shero, “Four Vignettes,” *The Rag*, Vol. 1, No. 26, June 15, 1967.

²⁷⁵ Doug Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*,

contests over sex and obscenity, free speech, and freedom of the press on campus came to a head in the 1967 University Freedom Movement. In addition, the emergence of *The Rag*, with its combination of sex, obscenity, and leftist politics, coincided with the development of UT's antiwar left and the growth of its SDS chapter, the largest SDS chapter in the South and the second largest in the nation.

Campus Sexual Freedom Forum at the University of California, Berkeley

The Sexual Freedom League's campus chapter at UT, the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom, did more to illustrate the centrality of independent newspapers to the left--and the significance of sex and obscenity to the left--than it actually did in creating a movement for sexual freedom out of various new left activisms. At UC Berkeley, the Sexual Freedom League off campus in the East Bay drew students wanting to explore "sexual freedom" and various ways of constructing romantic and sexual relationships and community, usually in the form of nude parties. In addition, activities like the "Nude Wade-Ins" at a San Francisco public beach and in a Berkeley park were meant to advocate for more space for public nudity. On campus, the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum sought to attract activists in order to advocate for abstract concepts of "sexual freedom" but also to challenge women's dorm regulations, abortion laws, campus rules, and the availability of contraception to students. Furthermore, the CSFF used newly won free speech rights to host various speakers on campus, such as representatives from the Daughters of Bilitis, a lesbian political advocacy organization, and Planned Parenthood, and to offer free sex/sexuality education classes from area

doctors.²⁷⁶ Finally, the CSFF self-consciously attempted to draw to its organization students who were active in civil rights and the growing antiwar movement. UC Berkeley's CSFF chapter mailed out a "Statement of Position" in December of 1965 that defined its central mission:

The Campus Sexual Freedom Forum is a group of students, faculty, and staff at the University of California at Berkeley who join together to defend freedom of choice in everyone's sex life. We believe that no person or social institution has the right to force his will on anyone else—neither by physical force nor by regulation.²⁷⁷

In order to "defend freedom of choice in everyone's sex life," the mailing outlined several core issues that focused the group's purpose and activities, such as "sexual expression," "contraception and abortion," "prostitution," "youth," "clothing," and "sex education."²⁷⁸ Sexual expression was defined as the support of any sexual activity that involved the consent of adults; so long as there was not force or coercion, a sexual activity between two or three adults, married or unmarried, was considered free "sexual expression." Contraception and abortion included on-demand abortion and easy access to birth control. The CSFF called for the repeal of any law or hospital regulation that interfered with "freedom of choice" in regard to family planning.²⁷⁹ Furthermore, sexual expression and "freedom of choice" extended to prostitution, with the flyer stating that

²⁷⁶ Letter from Jo Chadwick from Daughters of Bilitis to Holly Tanner from the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, March 11, 1966, Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records; Letter from Mrs. Sybil A. Dinaburg, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood/Alameda County to Lawrence Baldwin of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, September 24, 1965, Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records; "Seduction: Art and Science, A Series of Lectures and Discussions by Robert Kramer, M.D.," Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁷⁷ "Statement of Position," Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, December 1965, Folder 3:17, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

any sexual activity between consenting adults ought to be legal, even those with “financial return.”²⁸⁰ The CSFF’s concern with youth was slightly more complicated. It attacked statutory rape laws, suggesting instead that the age of consent be lowered to sixteen, and together with this, challenged university *in loco parentis* rules of housing curfews. The university’s rules, in particular, were said to “restrict the sexual and personal rights of students.”²⁸¹ Related to issues surrounding youth, CSFF advocated for sex education in primary grade school for all children in order to promote the freedom of “non-coercive” sex. Finally, the CSFF rejected public nudity and indecency laws, arguing that men and women ought to have the right to wear any type of clothing they wanted, or none at all, should that be their preference.

This platform guided the CSFF’s activities in a variety of directions, ultimately creating a trajectory rather different than the TSLRSF’s at UT. For some students, the CSFF served as an early springboard for gay liberation on campus, and the same activists involved in CSFF later participated in advocating for “gay rights” at the university, which at that time revolved primarily around issues of police harassment.²⁸² As early as 1966, the CSFF began selling buttons that read, “Equality for Homosexuals.”²⁸³ For others, the growth of the Sexual Freedom League in the Bay Area and the CSFF’s eventual absorption into a large East Bay chapter offered the opportunities for nude parties and

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² “Students (and Friends) for Gay Power,” n.d., Folder 5:3, Carton 5, Sexual Freedom League Records; “Statement of Purpose—Gay Liberation Front, Berkeley, California,” n.d. Folder 5:3, Carton 5, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁸³ Holly Tannen ordered buttons with “Equality for Homosexuals” for sale on campus as part of CSFF activities. Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

experimentation with various forms of romantic and sexual relationships that had been part of CSFF's activities off campus, to a lesser degree. But, like the UT chapter, the CSFF remained a campus chapter of the larger SFL, meaning that they shared some overall ideas about what constituted "sexual freedom" and who might be interested in pursuing such a goal. Like the TSLRSF, the CSFF used its notion of "sexual freedom" to extend the gains made by the Free Speech and Filthy Speech Movements and to continue challenging university censorship policies.²⁸⁴ Although less wedded to the left than the TSLRSF, the CSFF similarly believed that leftist activists would be interested in sexual freedom alongside other campaigns, reflected by the fact that they self-consciously tried to recruit leftist activists who were also antiwar or interested in birth control and abortion as women's rights issues.²⁸⁵ At one point, Jeff Poland wrote an open letter to the CSFF encouraging the campus chapter to continue the social events of the League, like nude parties, instead of maintaining an exclusive focus on political activities because, he wrote, "without social activities, we will be merely a political organization," illustrating the extent to which the CSFF was grounded in campus politics.²⁸⁶

Activists in the CSFF, however, articulated what they perceived as the negative consequences of the organization's pursuit of so-called "sexual freedom." Sam Sloan, a founding member of the CSFF, wrote a term paper for a course at UC Berkeley

²⁸⁴ CSFF activity attendance/participation records, Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁸⁵ Membership lists of the Sexual Freedom League East Bay chapter and the UC campus chapter list people involved in legalizing abortion, such as the Cal Committee to Legalize Abortion, and the Cal Conservatives for Political Action who put out buttons reading "No More Coat Hangers—Legalize Abortions," Folder 3:3, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League. Letter from Jeff Poland to the East Bay Sexual Freedom League Chapter suggesting the recruitment of activists from the Vietnam Day Committee, SDS, and SNCC, "Explanation of the Circle Plan," Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁸⁶ Jeff Poland, letter to CSFF members, n.d., Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League.

describing what he called the “sociological phenomenon” of the Sexual Freedom League and documenting his own experiences and observations in the League. While Sloan’s paper focused almost exclusively on the nude parties, Sloan hinted at some of the limitations of “sexual freedom” that another founding member, Holly Tannen, would later write about in her response to the sexual freedom movement in Berkeley.

After providing a brief overview of the League’s purpose, much of which was summarized in the “Statement of Position” pamphlet distributed on the UC campus, Sloan explained that the internal organization consisted of four committees (social, issues, membership, and publication) and that a gender imbalance existed in its structure. Men, Sloan noted, held all of the leadership positions in each of these committees, and the vast majority of dues-paying members were men.²⁸⁷ Sloan explained that although men filled the membership rosters, they often recruited women into the organization by bringing them as dates to the nude parties. Sloan suggested that although men dominated the membership rolls, the women they invited later participated more often in activities and for a longer period of time. Mostly, however, the women in attendance were either married to the men that brought them or at least living together. Few single women attended League nude parties.²⁸⁸ As for who might be drawn to the League’s parties, Sloan wrote that they mostly consisted of UC students and not “hippies.” “Hippies” for Sloan were “beatnik non-student types” found in the Telegraph Avenue area near the

²⁸⁷ Sam Sloan, “Socio. Phenomenon of the Sexual Freedom League,” n.d., Folder 3:3, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

campus.²⁸⁹ Sloan explained, “The so-called ‘Berkeley hippies’ are almost totally non-existent. This is very surprising since these hippies provide the basis for all other active student groups on campus. The VDC [Vietnam Day Committee] and Scheer for congress committee, for example, would never have been successful except for their effort.”²⁹⁰

Sloan expressed particular concern with the various reasons people joined the League and attended nude parties, particularly the differences among male and female members. He argued that sexual freedom could be more difficult for men to achieve: it is “a very masculine trait” for them to be possessive of their (implicitly female) sexual partners, but that was not a sexually free attitude. Women, on the other hand, he argued, had an easier time seeking sexual freedom in the League largely because they didn’t seem to struggle with the possessiveness that men did. Women shed their “social status” along with their clothes, and nudity and sex at parties allowed women greater opportunities to behave in ways vastly divergent from strict social norms. This stood in contrast to men. In fact, Sloan stated that the sexual activity women chose to engage in at the parties revealed “much about their true personality that would never be discernable from their outside activities.”²⁹¹ Sex was the key to one’s true self, or the enactment of one’s true self, and the freedom that the League offered was the ability to participate in sexual behavior otherwise deemed unacceptable by mainstream society, particularly for women.

²⁸⁹ Telegraph Avenue, as explained in the previous chapter, became a significant site for student political activity on both sides of the street, both on and off the UC campus.

²⁹⁰ Ibid. The sexual politics of the Vietnam Day Committee and the Scheer for Congress campaign are the subject of Chapter Four.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Despite Sloan's musings about the gender imbalances of the organization and the divergent experiences of men and women at parties, Sloan's account of the League was almost uniformly positive, unlike another member who criticized the treatment of women in the CSFF. Holly Tannen was an active member of the CSFF, often tabling and distributing information about the organization's activities on the campus. Tannen wrote a rather fierce critique of the CSFF called "The Berkeley Scene: A Criticism."²⁹² Tannen believed that the group's primary purposes were to educate the public (understood here as UC students) about birth control, abortion laws, and venereal diseases and to "combat widespread myths about homosexuality."²⁹³ In fact, she argued that the combating of "cultural myths and taboos" was central to the organization's mission. The second main purpose of the CSFF was to challenge laws and institutional regulations that infringed on individual privacy and rights, such as the UC women's dorm regulations and campus censorship. Tannen's criticisms were twofold: she focused on the experiences and treatment of women at the nude parties Sam Sloan described and on the idea of joining the CSFF anonymously.

Concerning women, Tannen expressed a different notion of sexual freedom. While Sam Sloan lamented the difficulties men confronted in their efforts to attain sexual liberation, Holly Tannen suggested that women's experiences were quite different. If at a party, for example, a woman rebuffed the advances of a man--if she "didn't want to be grabbed by every man she passed"--she was ridiculed for not being liberated enough.

²⁹² Holly Tannen, "The Berkeley Scene: A Criticism," Folder 3:3, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

²⁹³ Ibid.

Tannen wrote that she had been asked, “If you believe in sexual freedom, how come you won’t fuck me, you bitch?”²⁹⁴ Later women’s liberationists cited this male perception of sexual liberation as a reason that women had to “leave the Left.” Some women referred to the left as the “counterfeit Left,” arguing that when it came to women, the new left did not live up to its ideals, that the ideas and language of civil rights were not applied to women. Casey Hayden and Mary King, veteran civil rights activists by 1965, wrote in their SDS position paper, “Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo,” that women represented an oppressed group of people and that sexism functioned much the way that racism did. Ruth Rosen writes that Hayden and King “self-consciously chose to rely on the movement’s own rhetoric of race relations and relied on ‘clear-cut analogies between whites’ treatment of blacks and men’s treatment of women.’”²⁹⁵

The politicization of sex would become central to the women’s liberation movement. A key component to the phrase “the personal is political,” the idea that intimate relationships reflected greater social and political power imbalances, particularly between men and women, was rooted in the idea that a person’s romantic and sexual life had enormous political meanings and consequences. Whereas new leftists were convinced that the constraints of democratic liberalism and the federal government made real political change impossible, women’s liberationists argued that the unchecked, unacknowledged sexism of the new left made it impossible to address the needs of women activists. Just as the new left had “left” liberalism, so too would some women

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 107.

leave the new left.²⁹⁶ Activists founded the CSFF in the belief that individual freedom and sexual activity or sexuality were bound up together and had vast social and political implications. But what wove sex and freedom together was obviously quite different for men in the CSFF and for women, as the divergent accounts of Sam Sloan and Holly Tannen illustrate. Furthermore, much of the CSFF's platform might have been in the name of women's rights and sexual freedom for women, but overall, Tannen's criticisms of the CSFF reflected what other women felt about their experiences in various leftist or new left organizations.

Finally, Tannen criticized the ability to join the CSFF or participate in sexual freedom activities anonymously. She expressed frustration with the difficulties of educating the public against "sexual taboos" and changing people's minds on a widespread scale. For Tannen, handing out leaflets or providing information from a table on campus was not enough to reach a wide audience or to change people's minds, central goals of the CSFF. Furthermore, she argued that individuals preferring anonymity and using aliases to join the organization were inhibiting the movement. She wrote, "We are the avant garde, the radical front for the fight for individual rights. We must expect reprisals and ridicule."²⁹⁷ She went on to challenge anyone who preferred anonymity to "join a wife-swapping group, or a more respectable political organization such as the

²⁹⁶ For a longer discussion of the roots of women's liberation and the phrases "leaving the Left," see Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

²⁹⁷ Holly Tannen, "The Berkeley Scene: A Criticism," Sexual Freedom League Records.

Society for Humane Abortion or Planned Parenthood.”²⁹⁸ Tannen claimed, “The only way [for] nude parties, legalized homosexuality, and all the rest of it to become accepted is for enough people to take a stand for these things.”²⁹⁹ Visibility as members mattered as an important political tool.

Larry Baldwin, founder and president of the CSFF, went very public with his membership in the organization and his support for sexual freedom on campus when he ran for election to the Campus Rules Committee on a sexual freedom platform. The Campus Rules Committee was established as a joint student-faculty committee after the Free Speech Movement. Its purpose was to unite students and the administration to work together to discuss, evaluate, and implement new campus regulations and disciplinary proceedings. The Committee intended to give students a voice beyond student government and to alleviate some of the conflicts revealed during the Free Speech Movement regarding policy changes. The student body elected committee members, and in fact, one of its first members was Bettina Aptheker, illustrating the significance of the FSM for the creation of the Rules Committee. Larry Baldwin’s campaign flyer explained that he was running for the Rules Committee “for the same reasons that led me to found the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum: namely, that no group or individual has the right to force his views on anyone not harming others by his actions.”³⁰⁰ The campus policy changes Baldwin sought were complete free speech rights at U.C., no university regulations that infringe upon constitutionally protected rights, academic punishments

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Campus Rules Committee flyer, “Grads: Rules and Sex?” Folder 3:16, Carton 3, Sexual Freedom League Records.

only for academic infractions such as cheating, and the complete abolition of dorm rules.³⁰¹ Baldwin's choice to run for election to a student campus rules committee mirrors UT-SDS member Gary Thiher's similar decision to run for student body president in 1966 on a platform that was antiwar and pro-birth control and sexual freedom rights, covered in Chapter Four. Ideas about sexual freedom on both campuses had coalesced into student organizations and bids for student government positions. At UC Berkeley, both the CSFF and Larry Baldwin's campaign illustrate how abstract notions of obscenity and free speech rights in the Filthy Speech Movement transformed to a much more explicit and organized platform of what constituted "sexual freedom" on campus. Sexual freedom included nude parties but also on-demand access to abortion and birth control, the abolition of dorm regulations for women, and the overturning of laws that criminalized homosexuality and prostitution. Towards the end of the decade and into the early 1970s, the UC Berkeley campus would see organized student campaigns for birth control at the university health center and the emergence of a visible gay rights movement, the latter of which had some roots in the activities of the CSFF.

The Campus Sexual Freedom Forum was a campus chapter of the Sexual Freedom League, a national organization that had no connections to university student movements or leftist student politics. But as a campus chapter, the CSFF came out of a longer struggle with politics and obscenity that had its roots in the Free Speech Movement and Filthy Speech Movement. The CSFF wanted to unite those on the left interested in sexual freedom—variously defined—with other leftist political movements.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

Moreover, the CSFF agitated for access to abortion, and birth control and for the decriminalization of homosexuality, the first two of which would become central to women's liberation and the last of which would become central to the gay liberation movement. But the CSFF also revealed its limitations for some of its female members and the fault lines of sexual politics on the radical left.

At UT, the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom did not grow out of larger student movements on campus for greater political rights. Instead, the TSLRSF was a significant factor in the creation of the University Freedom Movement. SDS members fed up with university restrictions of student political publications began the UFM; SDS members were also founders of *The Rag*, illustrating that at the University of Texas, the left, the underground press, and sexual politics were inextricably interwoven. In fact, they grew up together.

At both campuses, the imbrication of sex, obscenity, and pornography would shift from presses for free speech rights to antiwar activism. Student movements for expanded political rights on campus continued--sometimes in the name of "sexual freedom," but much more often in a larger context of activism against the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War would become the primary focus of radical leftist students at UC and UT, radicals we would later call the new left. With there already being a history on both campuses for combining leftist politics with sexual politics, the emergence of the antiwar movement would continue to reconfigure the significance of sex or obscenity to leftist politics and new left communities.

Chapter Four

Electoral Politics and the University

By 1966 in Berkeley, the ground had shifted in the new left considerably. The rapidly strengthening antiwar movement overlapped with the emergence of several liberation movements out of new left activism—namely Black Power, Women’s Liberation, and the Chicano Movement—and by the mid to-late-1960s, remapped the political landscape of student activism on campus. Sexual politics became even more of a moving target as Women’s Liberation (and later Gay Liberation in 1969 and 1970) built a movement out of examining and characterizing sex and gender as the most significant and defining aspects of the relationships between activists. Within the messiness of this period and the continual evolution of ideas about sex or sexuality within various and overlapping movements, Robert Scheer and Ronald Reagan engaged in electoral political campaigns in California that privileged sexual politics as key to their platforms. Neither of these campaigns were confined to the campus but were, in fact, focused on the sexual politics of the Berkeley campus.

In 1966, both Robert Scheer, a new left radical, and Ronald Reagan, a neoconservative upstart, ran for office in the state of California. Robert Scheer was a graduate student in Economics and Chinese Studies at the University of California Berkeley, who travelled extensively covering the Vietnam War for *Ramparts* magazine, an antiwar underground newspaper, and was an active leader in the campus antiwar organization, the Vietnam Day Committee (VDC). The Vietnam Day Committee, as the

vanguard of the Berkeley antiwar movement, looked to challenge the Democratic incumbent in the 1966 congressional campaign for the 7th district. Scheer, with the support of the VDC, ran for a seat in Congress on a “peace and freedom” platform that—alongside issues such as poverty, housing shortages in Oakland, environmental concerns, and the Vietnam War—called for free access to birth control on the Berkeley campus, support for on-demand abortions, and the decriminalization of homosexuality. If “sexual freedom” had remained somewhat amorphous and difficult to define in the student new left at Berkeley prior to 1966, it became a discrete set of clear, articulated political demands in the Robert Scheer campaign.

By contrast, Ronald Reagan burst onto the state political scene as a rising star in the California Republican party, which was busy remaking its image in the wake of the defeat of presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. Reagan crafted a “law and order” gubernatorial campaign that promised to bring about a moral restoration of the state and government. He successfully beat the long-time Democratic governor of California Pat Brown, eventually carrying a rising neoconservative movement all the way to the White House by 1980. Relying on information supplied by the California Legislature’s special legislative report of antiwar activism at Berkeley, Reagan repeated the report’s characterization of the VDC as treasonous, interfering with the war effort, and most importantly, for promoting obscenity and lewdness on the campus. Among the key focal points of his 1966 gubernatorial campaign was sexual immorality at Berkeley—obscenity, the Filthy Speech movement, “ragged bearded beatniks,” the lewdness of the

antiwar movement, and nude parties. If elected, Reagan had promised, he would “clean up that mess at Berkeley.”

While the two 1966 campaigns were not the same in size or scope, when viewed together they reveal how sexuality on the Berkeley campus became central to formal state electoral politics. Unlike the covert operations of FBI surveillance or the behind-the-scenes meetings of university administrators, as discussed in the next chapter, these two electoral political campaigns clashed directly over the sexual content of student campus movements. In doing so, they engaged in a public debate about the politics of sexuality. Campus politics, which had once been confined to the boundaries of the University of California, spilled over into broader city and state politics.

Furthermore, these two concomitant campaigns illustrate the various ways in which issues of sex on campus—obscenity, morality, birth control and abortions, and the decriminalization of homosexuality—became a cornerstone of deeply conflicting definitions of “freedom” and the articulation of broader political values between the new left and the new right.

The VDC: The turn towards Vietnam at Berkeley

Vietnam caught the attention of student activists as early as the fall of 1964 with the Gulf of Tonkin incident, but by March of 1965, when American troops landed on the ground in Vietnam, turning the Cold War hot, it transformed into a central issue of new left activism. In August 1964, the press reported that the North Vietnamese Navy had torpedoed the USS *Maddox*, stationed in international waters off the coast of North Vietnam. For many Americans, this was the first time they learned about escalating U.S.

involvement in Vietnam and the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed by Congress portended Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War. At Berkeley, these events occurred simultaneously with the Free Speech Movement and while activists there became aware of Vietnam, the FSM had been the issue at hand. With the FSM victory in the spring of 1965 and the landing of U.S. Marine troops in Vietnam, activists turned rather abruptly to the Vietnam War.

In the spring of 1965, President Johnson escalated the Vietnam War under the authority of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and ordered the deployment of ground troops.³⁰² U.S. military advisors had been sent to Vietnam since 1954 in efforts to build a democratic nation and their numbers had risen every year. By January 1965, roughly 23,000 military advisors were in Vietnam and at the close of the year they numbered 184,000. In March 1965, Johnson ordered approximately 3,500 Marines to land on Vietnamese soil and effectively turned the conflict into war.³⁰³ Almost immediately, several university campuses around the country organized debates and informational sessions about Vietnam in what came to be known as "teach-ins."³⁰⁴ At the University of California, Berkeley, a sociology student named Jerry Rubin and a faculty advisor from mathematics named Stephen Smale formed the Vietnam Day Committee to sponsor a

³⁰² In August of 1964, the American press reported that the North Vietnamese Navy fired torpedoes, without provocation, at the USS *Maddox* stationed off the coast of North Vietnam in international waters. The crisis became known as the Gulf of Tonkin incident, after the location of the attack. See Douglas Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 210; Maurice Isserman, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ The University of Michigan's teach-in, March 24, 1965, was one of the very first and popularized the practice and format of a teach-in, which usually included faculty speakers and experts in Southeast Asian history and U.S. foreign policy. The teach-in at the University of Texas was also in March of 1965, two months before Berkeley's.

two-day teach-in May 21-22, 1965 on the campus.³⁰⁵ The VDC received official administrative approval and planned a thirty-two hour star-studded event to take place on campus grounds. Vietnam Day attracted speakers like Benjamin Spock, the noted pediatrician, Bob Moses, the leader of SNCC, and Norman Mailer, author and co-founder of the arts and politics magazine *The Village Voice*. Vietnam Day also included food vendors and attracted local talent like folk singer Pete Seeger, Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Participants numbered 30,000 over the two-day period, with peak afternoon crowds ranging from 10,000-15,000.³⁰⁶ From the perspective of leftist students it was a success and the VDC transformed from an ad hoc planning committee to the campus's permanent leading antiwar organization.

Rubin and Smale started the organization but the VDC drew a broader circle of leadership from the ranks of the Free Speech Movement. Steve Weissman, a graduate student leader of the FSM, and Jack Weinberg, the man whose arrest on campus prompted the thirty-two hour sit-in around the police car, both took up leadership positions in the VDC.³⁰⁷ Other Free Speech activists, like Bettina Aptheker, were also heavily involved in the organization and the antiwar movement.³⁰⁸ Finally, Robert Scheer, a VDC activist who later emerged as a political candidate for Congress.³⁰⁹ In this way, the VDC reflected the coalitions forged by student activists in the Free Speech Movement. Furthermore, the membership of the VDC, particularly reflected by those

³⁰⁵ W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 91. Jerry Rubin later ran for mayor of Berkeley as a radical but lost.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 97.

³⁰⁸ Aptheker, *Intimate Politics*, 180.

³⁰⁹ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 98.

with positions at the helm, illustrated the Berkeley white student left's reorientation towards the Vietnam War as an issue of almost singular importance.

In addition to teach-ins, the VDC planned several large demonstrations that caught the attention of the California Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities (SUAC). The first of these were troop train protests in August and October of 1965 and the second were protest marches from Berkeley through Oakland to the Oakland Army recruitment center. Furthermore, because the VDC was a registered, recognized campus organization, the leadership held meetings in UC Berkeley facilities and planned off-campus demonstrations, which included using civil disobedience tactics learned from the Civil Rights Movement. State legislators and SUAC seized on the fact that the VDC used state campus facilities—that taxpayers funded, no less—to plan “illegal” activities throughout Berkeley and Oakland and urged the administration to banish the VDC from campus. When administrators Kerr and Heyns (the President and Chancellor of the University of California system, respectively) refused, SUAC targeted the VDC with another, more successful tactic: they used sexuality and obscenity to discredit the VDC and embarrass the University to gain public support for the repression of the larger antiwar movement.

The first of the troop trains protests occurred in August 1965, just a few months after the big May teach-ins, and were the first large-scale VDC protests. After the army began using a stretch of little-used train tracks that ran through neighborhoods in west Berkeley to charter Vietnam-bound troops to the Oakland military induction center, the VDC took

the opportunity to organize a demonstration on the Berkeley section of the tracks.³¹⁰ The first day of protests, August 12, 1965, some 300 protesters gathered in the morning to picket and stop a Santa Fe rail line carrying soldiers through Berkeley to the Oakland Army Terminal. The day before, the VDC leadership Jerry Rubin and Stephen Smale had sent a telegram to the Santa Fe Railway demanding the train be stopped, “They [the soldiers] have a right to know what they are fighting for and we have a moral responsibility to tell them,” they declared. “Stop the trains and let us talk to the soldiers.”³¹¹ Berkeley uniformed police officers and FBI agents met the protesters at the demonstration and refused to allow anyone to get within five feet of the tracks themselves. Activists responded by moving farther north up the tracks and spreading out in smaller groups and thus thinning out police ranks as well. Some groups of activists sat down on the tracks and jumped out of the way at the last minute. Others attempted to board the trains to hand out anti-war literature. Police removed anyone who managed to jump onto the train and ultimately the trains continued without any interruption.³¹² On three more separate occasions, demonstrators also gathered at the tracks and attempted to stop the trains.³¹³ Trains and buses with recruited soldiers passed through Berkeley on their way to Oakland, to be processed and put on planes bound for Vietnam. Bettina Aptheker writes,

³¹⁰ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 93.

³¹¹ John Rodgers, “Viet Critics Board Troop Train,” *Daily Californian*, August 13, 1965, p.1. Jerry Rubin and Stephen Smale were among those who signed the telegram.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Bob Randolph, “Peace Action: GIs Cheer, Trainmen Jeer,” *Berkeley Barb*, Vol. 1, no. 1, August 13, 1965, p.1.; Aptheker, *Intimate Politics*, 180.

We sat down on the tracks of the Southern Pacific railroad in west Berkeley to stop the trains, marched to the Oakland induction center, threw up picket lines around it, leafleted soldiers, and counseled young men to resist the draft.³¹⁴

As with the first protest, the troop trains protests ended with police arresting a few VDC demonstrators and without any interruption to the transport of soldiers through Berkeley on their way to Vietnam. Rather than letting the issue die, VDC members pushed the issue during city elections and made the war a serious campus issue.³¹⁵

Because the VDC shared members of the FSM leadership, it modeled the VDC on the same principles of participatory democracy and convictions about individual moral responsibilities in society. Significantly, on the first page of coverage of the protests in *The Daily Californian*, under a photo of an activist attempting to board a passing train was a caption that read, “Bodies on the gears.”³¹⁶ This quote is a direct reference to the most famous of all of Mario Savio’s FSM speeches, in which he explained that for activists, “there is a time when...you’ve got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you’ve got to make it stop.” The activists attempted to literally stop the trains of soldiers from travelling to take part in a war they believed was immoral. Any UC student reading the *Daily Cal* news story of the troop trains protest would have made this connection. The VDC portrayed itself as another organization of the new left, and references to the FSM would have also made this obvious to outsiders.

³¹⁴ Aptheker, *Intimate Politics*, 182.

³¹⁵ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 94-95.

³¹⁶ John Rodgers, “Viet Critics Board Troop Train,” *Daily Californian*, August 13, 1965, p.1

In addition, in a telegram sent to Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan from Oakland, the VDC criticized the congressman for failing to vote against war in Vietnam in Washington and failing to meet with the leaders of the VDC. Due to his “unresponsiveness” to his constituents, the VDC informed the congressman, “Mr. Cohelan, your easy days are over. The Vietnam Day Committee along with numerous other groups has begun daily picketing of your local office and is planning other direct action projects to force a direct confrontation between yourself and the thousands of people in your district who oppose American participation in the war in Vietnam.”³¹⁷ Furthermore, the VDC declared, “We are organizing a movement to challenge you in the next election.”³¹⁸ The VDC was true to its word and Robert Scheer, a VDC leader, ran for Congress in 1966 on a broad new left platform.

Two months after the troop trains demonstrations, in October 1965, the VDC planned antiwar parades as part of the International Days of Protest, which included collective, coordinated student protests of U.S. involvement in Vietnam around the world.³¹⁹ Like the August troop trains incident, student activists in Berkeley targeted the Oakland Army Terminal. The VDC planned to hold an on-campus teach-in, for which they received university permission, and then to march from the campus in a nighttime parade down Telegraph Avenue through Oakland and end up at the terminal.³²⁰ Unlike

³¹⁷ “Vietnam Day Group Declares War on Cohelan,” *Daily Californian*, August 20, 1965.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Protests were scheduled in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Portland, Londong, Tokyo, Montevideo, and Vancouver, to name a few. “Vietnam Com Set to Defy Army Base,” *Berkeley Barb*, September 10, 1965.

³²⁰ Lawrence Gartner and Christine Cudiamat, “VDC Plans No Civil Disobedience at Oakland Army Terminal Protest,” *Daily Californian*, September 28, 1965.

the troop trains protest, the march to the Oakland Army Terminal was not meant as any form of massive civil disobedience but instead a way to reach and educate soldiers.

The VDC faced immediate resistance and backlash from various levels of local and state authorities. Initially, the city of Berkeley denied the protest a parade permit but after the state attorney general's office said that a permit could not be denied, the city relented. The activists had much more trouble with Oakland city authorities. Oakland officials refused to grant the VDC the right to cross into the city of Oakland and threatened that activists would be forced back if they attempted the march towards the Army Terminal.³²¹ The Oakland City Manager denied a permit on statutory grounds, claiming that, "he could exercise his discretion to refuse where there was 'possibility of violence' or 'too much traffic congestion.'"³²² Finally, the Oakland Port Authority ruled that the organization could not use any port land for their teach-in and ordered the area to be fenced off and marked with "No Trespassing" signs.³²³ That meant that the VDC could not use that open space near the Terminal to gather and distribute antiwar materials. When the VDC defied the orders, Assemblyman Jesse Unruh, the leader of the California Senate Committee investigating the UC system declared that if National Guardsmen were called out to the march, "that would be all right." Unruh was quoted as saying "he favored a strong response 'if the protests take the form of illegal action.'"

Jerry Rubin responded to these threatening words by wondering aloud in the *Daily Californian* "why the National Guard would be needed," and that "our plan does

³²¹ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 96-97.

³²² "UC Center of Worldwide Peace Action," *Berkeley Barb*, October 15, 1965.

³²³ *Ibid.*

not call for blocking anything or civil disobedience...If Unruh feels that Americans telling other Americans something requires National Guardsmen, then this country is in terrible shape.”³²⁴ Rubin continued, “The public should condemn Unruh for making such as horrendous suggestion.”³²⁵ There also appeared to be threats of charging the VDC with federal indictments of espionage if they handed out leaflets to soldiers, discouraging them from fighting in Vietnam.³²⁶ Oakland authorities remained hostile to the planned antiwar march and teach-in and refused to issue the VDC a parade permit.

The first October march drew crowds of 10,000-15,000 protesters who marched peacefully towards the Berkeley-Oakland city limits but then turned, at the last minute, and remained within Berkeley proper so as to avoid a confrontation with Oakland authorities. The following day, however, marches convened again and this time organizers decided to cross into Oakland, where they were met with a wall of Oakland police. Bettina Aptheker remembers walking, her arms linked with fellow activists, and facing Oakland police and hearing Berkeley police behind her. The Berkeley police urged the protesters to sit-down in the street to prevent a confrontation with Oakland authorities. She writes, “Someone yelled and turned to the crowd behind us, ‘Sit down! Sit down!’ They did, filling the streets for as far as the eyes could see. Mustering

³²⁴ “VDC Discloses Plans for Teach-In, March,” *Daily Californian*, September 30, 1965

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ The Vietnam Day Committee believed they might be charged under the McCarran Act or the 1917 Espionage Act if they counseled soldiers not to fight in Vietnam. The *Daily Californian* reported that a local U.S. Attorney Cecil Poole refused to comment on whether or not federal agents would supervise the Oakland Army Terminal March. “VDC Debates Protest Day Rule Breaking,” *Daily Californian*, October 1, 1965. Unbeknownst to the VDC, however, Don Mulford, a California Assemblyman from Oakland, did attempt to get Poole to charge the VDC with federal conspiracy charges.

astonishing discipline, the crowd of thousands remained seated.”³²⁷ The march was tense but avoided violence and eventually, a month later, the Vietnam Day Committee did receive a permit to march into Oakland and student activists did so, with little trouble.³²⁸

The immediate response to the VDC’s antiwar marches and troop train protests reveal intense and dramatic efforts on the part of local and state conservatives to limit antiwar activism on and off the UC campus. Threats of federal espionage and conspiracy indictments, for example, indicate the degree of resistance to the VDC. The Alameda County District Attorney wrote a letter stating that the VDC protests were illegal and those involved should be charged with conspiracy.³²⁹ Furthermore, conservatives coordinated resistance to the VDC among various levels of authority and often worked in concert to limit its activity. When the VDC tried to continue holding marches, such as one planned in November of 1965, the mayor of Oakland wrote letters to the Governor of California urging him to intervene to stop the protests. Mayor Houlihan wrote that although the October marches were legitimate protests he feared future planned marches were a “calculated effort to assault the people of this community represented by their duly constituted authority.” Houlihan urged Brown to intervene whether as Governor of California or a regent of the University of California. Another major criticism wielded against the VDC was aimed at the VDC’s major fundraising activities.

³²⁷ Aptheker, *Intimate Politics*, 189-190.

³²⁸ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 97-98.

³²⁹ Letter from Alameda County District Attorney Coakley to the editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 30, 1965. Folder 135, UC Chancellor Records. Records of the Office of the Chancellor, University of California Berkeley, CU-149, University Archives, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley [hereafter UC Chancellor Records].

Conservative legislators characterized the San Francisco Mime Troupe performances and the VDC dance as prime examples of the kind of sexual immorality rampant on the university campus. Their attempts to charge the VDC with federal crimes of conspiracy or espionage fell flat, as explained above. The charges of rampant sexual indecency, however, enjoyed a longer-lived, and powerful, political controversy over sex at Berkeley. Ronald Reagan used its language, and its charges, as key points in his platform for his 1966 gubernatorial campaign. The SUAC report became so important to local and state politics in 1965 and 1966, that it warrants considerable attention.

SUAC's *Supplement*

SUAC's long-standing interest in the University peaked in 1965 and 1966, illustrated by the 1965 publication of the *Thirteenth Report Supplement*, a legislative report that covered the aftermath of the Free Speech Movement and the rise of the Vietnam Day Committee. The *Thirteenth Report* teemed with accusations that characterized the Free Speech Movement as little more than a communist front. It also focused on the Filthy Speech Movement, raising a question about obscene and licentious behavior on the UC Berkeley campus.³³⁰ Although SUAC did not officially release a report every year, the legislative subcommittee made an exception with its *Supplement* largely because of the activism of the VDC.

Furthermore, although SUAC investigations dated back to 1960, the California Legislature itself announced new intentions to “study” the University of California system. While not confined to the Berkeley campus, the legislature's interest marked a

³³⁰ I cover these at length in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

response to the Free Speech Movement. An article from the *Daily Californian*, “Senators Named to Study UC,” asserted, “Although the University of California at Berkeley and its student disturbances will be the committee’s major interest, the committee will also investigate state colleges, junior colleges, and private institutions of higher learning as well.”³³¹ In other words, SUAC, as an anti-communism subcommittee, had kept the Berkeley campus in its crosshairs for years but its focus intensified after 1964. This heightened interest, politically motivated from the outset, provided fodder for Assemblymen and gubernatorial hopeful Ronald Reagan to attack the growing antiwar movement.

SUAC charged the VDC with interfering with the Vietnam war effort because activists tried to stop the transportation and induction of army soldiers in Berkeley and Oakland. Furthermore, the *Supplement* reported SUAC’s outrage at activists’ use of the Berkeley campus to plan what they considered illegal, off-campus protests. The committee claimed that “rooms in university buildings were being used freely by pro-Viet Cong leaders, many of whom had no connection with the university, for the purpose of formulating plans for blocking the movement of U.S. Troop trains and staging demonstrations at the Oakland Army Terminal.”³³² The committee also blamed the Free Speech Movement for softening up the administration and rendering the campus

³³¹ “Senators Named to Study UC,” *Daily Californian*, July 16, 1965; “Legislature to Study UC,” *Daily Californian*, July 9, 1965.

³³² SUAC, *Supplement*, 89.

susceptible to “all manner of political radicalism, even for the Vietnam Day Committee’s planning of off-campus illegal activities.”³³³

The origins of the VDC and the manner in which the organization came into existence cast it in a suspicious light to the state legislature since it did not seem rooted in any “real” campus issue and yet maintained virtually the same leaders as the FSM. This made the Vietnam Day Committee seem like another communist front organization and SUAC dismissed it as having little to do with legitimate student activism or genuine dissent.

The SUAC Report’s first subheading, “Old Leaders-New Cause”, explains SUAC’s understanding of the roots of the antiwar organization. SUAC drew a straight line from the leadership and membership of the Free Speech Movement to the Vietnam Day Committee. “There were no great issues around which the [FSM steering committee] could rally a following,” SUAC charged, and “few issues to determine and no activity to stimulate the members and keep alive their enthusiasm.”³³⁴ The steering committee seemed to SUAC to lay dormant in the spring until 1965 when “the controversy over Vietnam provided a new rallying point. When demonstrations began, arrangements were made by the [steering committee] to lend the Vietnam Day Committee some electronic equipment, and the leaders of the old FSM now became active in the VDC.”³³⁵

SUAC believed the VDC deserved and required state surveillance by the legislative committee in the same ways that the U.S. Senate had investigated and

³³³ SUAC, *Supplement*, 90.

³³⁴ SUAC, *Supplement*, 76.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

surveyed other antiwar activities around the country. Since, in SUAC's eyes, the origins of the VDC had nothing to do with actual protest, SUAC explained that the impetus for the creation of Berkeley's antiwar organization came from the influence of University of Michigan's teach-in in March 1965. The *Supplement* included a quote from a report by the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee about the nature and origin of the antiwar teach-in, linking it to what they believed were the influences of other campuses rather than any genuine dissent by Berkeley students:

In reality, the great majority of these teach-ins have had absolutely nothing in common with the procedures of fair debate or the process of education. In practice, they were a combination of indoctrination session, a political protest demonstration, an endurance test and variety show... People of known Communist backgrounds were frequently involved.³³⁶

SUAC suggested that the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee had found that while many of those involved with antiwar teach-ins and marches in the spring of 1965 "were sincere and loyal dissenters," those activities also provided ample opportunity for communist infiltration.³³⁷ At once, the VDC seemed to SUAC to be both the result of sincere and loyal dissent on the one hand, and nothing but a communist front on the other. SUAC understood itself as the state arm of national anti-communism.

What troubled SUAC most about Berkeley's May teach-in was its guest list of speakers and the composition of the emergent VDC organization. The *Supplement* names Professor Staughton Lynd, a professor from Yale who took an "unauthorized" visit to Hanoi along with Herbert Apetheker, nationally noted Communist and the father of UC

³³⁶ SUAC, *Supplement*, 77.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

Berkeley's own Bettina Aptheker. In addition, SUAC also listed the names of several Free Speech Movement leaders that it believed ran the VDC, names that were familiar on campus: Bettina Aptheker, Steve Weissman, Robert Scheer and newcomers like Jerry Rubin. Moreover, since they claimed that many other members were non-students who nevertheless "roamed the campus at will, agitating, exhorting, speaking, distributing literature, soliciting funds and other using the state-owned facilities of the institution without any hindrance," it was clear that they perceived VDC as vulnerable to infiltration. Consequently, SUAC claimed that by the summer of 1965 its investigations convinced them that the communists had taken over the antiwar demonstrations and that the U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee had made a similar conclusion. SUAC quoted the Subcommittee's findings that:

The control of the anti-Vietnamese movement has clearly passed from the hands of the moderate elements who may have controlled it at one time, into the hands of the Communists and extreme elements who are openly sympathetic to the Viet Cong and openly hostile to the United States, and who call for massive civil disobedience, including the burning of draft cards and the stopping of troop trains.³³⁸

The troop train protests in August of 1965 and the antiwar marches into Oakland in October of that same year convinced SUAC of the need to contain the VDC. It was indeed these protests that various local and state authorities--from police officers to city mayors to state legislators—believed required coordinated efforts to slow or resist growing antiwar activism. Ultimately, however, some of SUAC's most damning charges against the Vietnam Day Committee and those most successful in garnering public and

³³⁸ SUAC, *Supplement*, 78.

political support were those about the sexuality in the Mime Troupe performances and the VDC dances. Sex and obscenity became SUAC's most effective weapon against the antiwar movement, more so than anticommunism.³³⁹

The Mime Troupe and the VDC Dance

In addition to charging the leadership of the VDC with communism, SUAC had two main criticisms of the organization, both centered on the VDC's fundraising activities. The San Francisco Mime Troupe performances and the VDC dances, SUAC declared, were obscene, lewd, immoral, and sexually deviant. Beginning with the May teach-in in 196 the Vietnam Day Committee relied on famous public speakers and local performers to drum up interest in the organization and to financially support their activism. This was also hardly unique to the VDC; it had also been the case with the Free Speech Movement and the Bay Area Civil Rights Movement. Nationally, this was de rigueur for leftist activists. At the May teach-in, for example, Allen Ginsburg spoke and performed poetry and performed again during several of the Oakland marches.³⁴⁰ But the legislature focused its criticism on the Mime Troupe's participation in antiwar fundraising activities.

³³⁹ The SUAC reports were in line with 1960s anticommunist efforts, even if the popularity of national committees such as HUAC were on the decline by 1966. Furthermore, SUAC was not wrong about the vitality of communist activity in the Bay Area or about communists in the student movements. Largely, however, the student movements were democratic and deeply invested in notions of popular democracy and individual political power.

³⁴⁰ Interestingly enough, Betinna Aptheker was initially angry about Ginsburg's behavior at one of the Oakland marches during which he moved to the front of the crowd and began to chant. Aptheker feared his performance would make the march look silly and apolitical. She later wrote in her memoir that she learned he had recited a Buddhist peace chant during tense moments in front of Oakland police officers. That changed her opinion of his role.

SUAC singled out the VDC's sponsorship of on-campus dances and performances by the San Francisco Mime Troupe to raise money for the organization. The Mime Troupe, founded in 1959 as a political theater group, performed around the Bay Area in public parks and on various UC campuses incorporating current political news and satire into their shows. By the mid-1960s, the group was performing regularly at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and commenting on the Civil Rights Movement, capitalism, sexism, and Vietnam. The Troupe performed on the Berkeley campus in August 1965 to raise money for the Free Speech Movement Defense Fund, a fundraiser for the students arrested in the December 1964 sit-in, who were in the process of appealing their trial decisions in the fall of 1965.³⁴¹ A Berkeley student reviewer described the Troupe's performance of "A Minstrel Show"—a skit about the Civil Rights Movement—as "funny but disturbing" because of its frank portrayals of racial stereotypes, the use of blackface, and a depiction of an interracial love affair.³⁴² For a few shows during the summer of 1965, the Troupe ran into trouble with the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Commission for use of public space to perform without obtaining all the proper permits to do so. However, the University of California Chancellor, Roger Heyns, gave the VDC and FSM steering committees permission to invite the Troupe to the Berkeley campus to perform, "A Minstrel Show," as well as "Civil Rights in a Cracker Barrel." The Troupe also received permission to perform at UC Davis.

³⁴¹ "Mime Troupe Here for FSM," *Daily Californian*, August 27, 1965.

³⁴² "Mime Troupe Show Funny But Disturbing," *Daily Californian*, August 3, 1965.

SUAC reported that, in fact, it was the outright obscenity and vulgarity of the performances that led the city of San Francisco to ban the performances in the parks and was outraged that the Chancellor would allow such performances on the university campus. In the *Supplement*, SUAC described the Mime Troupe as a “theatrical group” that uses “mime” but that “some of the gestures indulged in by the Mime Troupe at the Berkeley and Davis campuses were incredibly obscene, as indicated by reports of two persons who witnessed the performances.”³⁴³ In a memo to California Regent Jesse W. Tapp, Chancellor Roger Heyns informed him that the preliminary comments of the *Supplement* report claimed that the Troupe “performed some plays all over the Bay area and that someone [in the report] called it ‘obscene and vulgar,’ ‘too vulgar for public presentation,’ and ‘unfit for production on the campus.’”³⁴⁴ Heyns explained that SUAC called the performances, “filthy, disgusting, debased.”³⁴⁵ Heyns’ attention to SUAC’s characterization of the Troupe’s skits reflected the increased attention paid, in general, to SUAC after the damaging *Thirteenth Report* which criticized the UC Berkeley administration for how it handled the Free Speech Movement. The UC administration did not want another serious blow up from the California Legislature over student activism on campus, particularly if SUAC could construe that activism as lacking true political purpose and, instead, constituting nothing more than student licentiousness just as SUCAC characterized the Filthy Speech Movement.

³⁴³ SUAC, *Supplement*, 129.

³⁴⁴ Memo from Chancellor Roger Heyns to Regent Jesse W. Tapp, “Preliminary Comments on the April 28th Supplemental Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee Un-American Activities of the General Research Committee, California State Senate,” June 6, 1966. UC Chancellor Records.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

The *Supplement* went on to say that the Troupe’s performances were so distasteful that members of the Recreation and Parks Commission had determined, unanimously, they were too vulgar for public presentation. Despite the fact that the manager of the Troupe had been arrested and charged with “presenting a program at Lafayette Park without a permit,” SUAC claimed the truth was that the shows were too obscene since “accounts of this occurrence were carried in the Bay Area newspapers and all made it very clear that ‘lewdness’ was the reason for the ban.”³⁴⁶ The fact that the Troupe had been permitted to perform on campuses seemed beyond the pale. “Nevertheless,” the *Supplement* reads, “the action of San Francisco in forbidding the Mime Troupe’s objectionable performances in that most liberal of cities did not convince the administration at the University that its performance was unfit for production on campus.”³⁴⁷ SUAC, in other words, believed the University administration had no excuse for permitting performances on the campus.

In addition, SUAC charged, no one in authority at the Berkeley campus had paid any attention to the nature of the shows. In fact, SUAC argued that if university students witnessed the performances, that perhaps it would be appropriate to reproduce the transcript of the performance within the report “but the filthy nature of its contents prompted our decision to omit it.”³⁴⁸ A *San Francisco Chronicle* article about the report explained that the “tone of the report is most aghast” when describing the Mime Troupe’s

³⁴⁶ SUAC, *Supplement*, 130.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁸ SUAC, *Supplement*, 131.

and the “foul and disgusting” simulated acts of masturbation prevented the Committee from printing a full account of the performances.³⁴⁹

Significantly, immediately preceding these comments about the Mime Troupe and its associations with the VDC the report criticized the VDC’s decision to picket Congressman Cohelan’s office and private residence after he refused to attend an on-campus teach-in on Vietnam in preparation for the troop trains protests and Oakland marches. Buried in the same rhetoric about the filthy and debased VDC-sponsored performances by the Troupe, it expresses outrage that the VDC would target Cohelan for “abuse,” due to his congressmen’s unresponsiveness to antiwar activists:

This is normal procedure by radicals when a liberal collaborator finally gets fed up with their tactics and declines to do their bidding...[the abuse of Cohelan] This, we point out, is hardly routine procedure simply because a Congressman is unable to attend a rally on Vietnam. But in this instance other elements were plainly involved, and provide the only explanation for the vindictive tirade of oral and written abuse against the Congressman, and for the sit-downs in his office.

Although the Committee did not clarify in its report, it suggested that the participation of Mime Troupe, and its debased performances, are the “other elements” at play in the Vietnam Day Committee’s politics and activism. Part of the reason for this might have been, according to SUAC’s repeated suggestions that radical activists were emboldened by the administration’s failures and the campus became susceptible to their treasonous and lewd behavior. The administration had, in SUAC’s view, caved to student pressure during the Free Speech Movement and the results were a serious decline of University prestige and credibility. Senator Burns, the chairman of SUAC, said that it was not until

³⁴⁹ “New Burns Report Criticizes UC Again,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 7, 1966.

after the victory of the Free Speech Movement that, “these deluges of filth manifested themselves.”³⁵⁰ Furthermore, SUAC argued, “with the Mime Troupe’s occupancy of University buildings and the presentation of its show, the campus sank to a new low.”³⁵¹ The report thus links the Mime Troupe and the antiwar movement as represented by the Vietnam Day Committee.

Ultimately, Senator Burns’ comments, and the attitudes reflected in SUAC’s reports of the VDC’s decision to make a formal entrance into electoral politics, reveal how SUAC constructed its criticism of the VDC and its politics. Rather than focusing on the antiwar platform of the VDC, the report instead dismissed the activism as treasonous at best and disgusting, lewd, and devoid of any political value at worst. Moreover, the inclusion of comments about the Mime Troupe and the protests against Representative Cohelan sought to discredit the movement and the VDC’s bid for a Congressional seat. The California Legislature, therefore, rendered the antiwar movement at UC Berkeley as a spectacle of sexuality and immorality run amok rather than an organized, collective movement of student activists against the Vietnam War.

Finally, the last event of the VDC covered at length in the *Supplement* was a dance held on campus in March 1966. Like the Mime Troupe performances, the VDC held dances in the campus gymnasium for fundraising and publicity. The dances began in 1965 and continued into 1966. Students paid a modest entry fee to listen to rock music and hang out. In a police report dated March 25, 1966, a Berkeley police officer

³⁵⁰ “New Burns Report Criticizes UC Again,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 7, 1966.

³⁵¹ SUAC, *Supplement*, 133.

describes, in two-page detail, the events of the dance that SUAC claimed “aroused the indignation among alumni, University officials, and the general public.”³⁵²

A police report of the dance described a scene of chaos, and most importantly, sexual misconduct on the campus. The Dean of Students had granted the VDC a permit to hold an on-campus dance in Harmon Gymnasium, expecting a few dozen students. The police report claimed, however, that several custodians working in the building purportedly alerted the University police, who estimated a crowd of over 3,000 “including a number of less than college-age juveniles.”³⁵³ The police described a room that was in general chaos. “There were three rock and roll bands on the stand, facing three different directions. At times, all the bands were playing at the same time.” The noise level, the police described, was “sufficient to make it necessary to shout in order to be heard.” In addition the cacophony of the bands, someone set up what police described as a “homemade contrivance which emitted random noises” and played continuously throughout the show.³⁵⁴

Underlined in the police report it states that “*sexual misconduct was blatant*,” and described the offenses at length. Officers discovered couples having sex in the bleachers of the gym and women half-dressed on the dance floor: “One young lady on the dance floor held her skirt at her waist and moved in obvious mimicry of an act of intercourse,” and “other girls danced with blouses open.” Another couple was “fondling each other” in

³⁵² SUAC, *Supplement*, 133.

³⁵³ “Police Report”, *Don Mulford Papers*, Library and Archives, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University; David Hope, “U.C. Probe Demanded by Regan,” *Oakland Tribune*, May 14, 1966.

³⁵⁴ “Police Report”, *Don Mulford Papers*, Library and Archives, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University

the doorway of the entrance and after the show, custodians found used condoms littering the floor. Contributing to the licentiousness was evidence of the use of narcotics, alcohol, and marijuana. “In the northeast corner of the gym the *sweet, peculiar odor of marijuana* was very strong.” After the dance, broken liquor bottles littered the bathrooms and floors and young people were seen “standing against the walls or lying on the floors in a *dazed condition*.”³⁵⁵

A light and film show accompanied the discordant symphony of noise in the gymnasium that especially troubled the police and to the California state senate because of its sexual content. The police reported, “these sounds seemed to be timed with a pulsating projection of multi-colored lights. All during the dance movies were shown on the two screens...”³⁵⁶ SUAC described it as being “advertised as hallucinogenic sounds, projections, and lights,” in language lifted almost directly from the police report. Moreover, during the entirety of the music and light show, images were projected onto the suspended screens of “color sequences of liquids spreading across the screen” coupled with pictures of nude torsos of men and women exhibited in “a sensual and provocative manner.” According to the police, these movies also depicted a half-nude man fondling the breasts of a nude woman.³⁵⁷

The VDC had been threatened with charges of sedition and conspiracy to commit treason. But conservative legislators in the California Senate were most concerned with

³⁵⁵ “Police Report,” *Don Mulford Papers*, Library and Archives, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁷ SUAC, *Supplement*, 133; “Police Report,” *Don Mulford Papers*, Library and Archives, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

issues of sex on campus. If taken at face value, the reports by both police and SUAC were quite damaging to the image of the Vietnam Day Committee and the University of California Berkeley for allowing the organization to use campus facilities to engage in or endorse illegal behavior. The two-page police report offered no definite reason to believe that either the UCPD or the Berkeley PD had cause to embellish or fabricate what they reported. The police report, however, is located in California Assemblyman Don Mulford's political papers collection, so it is reasonable to assume that Mulford underlined all those catch phrases in the document. Mulford was a conservative legislator who later gave Reagan SUAC's report by hand, which Reagan used in his gubernatorial speech in San Francisco. Putting the report into a larger context of VDC activities, it is likely that the events described simply illustrated a planned dance that got out of hand. The VDC had not expected so many attendees, as admitted in the police report, and lacked the ability to monitor the entrance of minors, alcohol, drugs, and so forth. Yet, the Vietnam Day Committee had held dances from as early as 1965, almost a full year before this particular event had caused so much political commotion. Furthermore, Don Mulford had been highly critical of the University's tolerance of campus activism and he was directly connected to the investigations of SUAC.

The California Senate committee ordered surveillance of campus activists and the VDC itself, and used the information gathered from legislators like Mulford, the *Daily Californian*, district attorneys, and other law enforcement to wage a campaign against leftist activists at the University. SUAC also relied on support from East Bay conservative legislators and various levels of local and state authorities to discredit the

antiwar movement via issues of sexuality and sexual immorality—a tactic that was most effective. Sexual misconduct, licentiousness, or lewd behavior by campus activists themselves or as part of their sponsored protests, rallies, or fundraising efforts were not the only accusations against the Vietnam Day Committee listed in the *Thirteenth Report Supplement on Un-American Activities in California, 1966*.

The references to events and movements covered in the *Thirteenth Report*, coupled with the additional material included in the *Supplement*, reveal the ways in which the surveillance and criticism of Berkeley's antiwar movement was part of a longer tradition, and larger context, of conservative backlash against leftist activist students. In their conclusive comments about sexual immorality at Berkeley, SUAC wrote:

These instances: agitation by SLATE to show the French film on love between homosexuals in prison, the Filthy Speech Movement, some of the contributions to *Spider* [magazine], and the Mime Troupe performances on the Berkeley and Davis campuses, are illustrations of the abnormal conditions within the University...It was not until after the student rebellion (i.e. the Free Speech Movement) that these deluges of filth manifested themselves.³⁵⁸

The two reports, published in 1965 and 1966, profoundly impacted the University administration, the general public of California, and the activists themselves. News coverage of the charges in the reports made front-page news of the Bay Area's major newspapers like the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Oakland Tribune*. Clark Kerr, the

³⁵⁸ SUAC, *Supplement*, 135.

UC President, made public remarks disputing SUAC's findings and published his own responses, which also made headlines.³⁵⁹

Moreover, although the surveillance of activists was not new with the antiwar movement, SUAC took it in new directions in 1965 and 1966 by focusing on campus issues of sexuality and the activists themselves. While the VDC may have been threatened by federal conspiracy charges or treason, these were not the key issues that politicians like Ronald Reagan used in a successful campaign, or, at the University of Texas, as the basis for a conservative response to the antiwar movement. Activists--not the politics of collective movements--but instead their personal lives, their individual behavior, their physical appearance and what it might signify, became the targets of surveillance and repression.

Unabashedly Radical: Robert Scheer and The Vietnam Day Committee's campaign for Congress

In the spring of 1966, Robert Scheer, tossed his hat in the ring to represent the 7th Congressional District. Scheer ran on an antiwar platform as a VDC candidate. Frustrated by Jeffery Cohelan, a "liberal Democrat," Scheer and the Vietnam Day Committee sought to unseat the long-time incumbent and usher in a new political era in the city of Berkeley and across the country. In a campaign he called "unabashedly radical," Scheer hoped to win the congressional nomination in the June Democratic primary election.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ Don Mulford supplied Reagan with a copy of the report when Reagan visited his home during his campaign trip to San Francisco. The actual text of the speech is discussed in greater length later in this chapter. Furthermore, I address the press coverage of these reports in greater detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

³⁶⁰ W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 102.

Winning the primary would mean an almost certain victory in November and a seat in Congress for a self-proclaimed radical, antiwar, new leftist.³⁶¹ Scheer's campaign wove various political ideas of the new left together to create a platform that protested U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and supported lunch programs for school children, rent-controlled housing in Berkeley and Oakland, enforcement of California's Fair Housing law, conservation, and, significantly, birth control and on-demand abortions. The Scheer campaign combined antiwar, civil rights, and "sexual freedom" issues on a single ticket. Together, Scheer and the VDC called it the "Peace, Jobs, and Freedom" campaign.³⁶²

Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan had represented the district for years, from 1959 to 1971, and enjoyed impressive institutional political support but the Scheer and his campaign argued that Cohelan's politics were out of touch with the people of the 7th Congressional District which included the city of Berkeley (including the university campus), Albany on the northern border of Berkeley, and most of Oakland. Cohelan supported civil rights and President Johnson's Great Society programs and had the support of The *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, as well as local Democratic clubs, virtually every Democratic Berkeley city council member, Senator J. William Fulbright, and the AFL-CIO.³⁶³ But the Scheer campaign challenged him on his position towards Vietnam and his voting record. Cohelan had consistently voted in favor

³⁶¹ The primary system in California works so that whichever candidate wins in June is heavily favored to go on to win again in the actual election in November. Of course a June primary win would not have guaranteed Scheer a November victory, it would have certainly positioned him well to win, and the Vietnam Day Committee and the Berkeley antiwar movement believed they stood a good chance to unseat Cohelan and put a "radical" in office.

³⁶² Campaign flyer included in Serge Lang, *The Scheer Campaign* (New York: W.A. Benjamin, Inc., 1967), 31-32.

³⁶³ W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 101-102.

of increasing military spending and presence in Vietnam, aligning himself with LBJ in the minds of many of Berkeley's new left activists.³⁶⁴

As an antiwar organization of the new left, the VDC's interest in electoral politics was somewhat unusual. The new left, as broadly and variously constructed as it was, defined itself in opposition to the "mainstream" political process of electoral politics. Influenced by the Black Freedom movement, new left activists pointed out that for many African Americans, voting was impossible and even those Americans who did have access to voting, were largely alienated from the political system. Faith in the efficacy of voting had been severely damaged by the refusal of white Mississippi Democrats to seat newly-elected African-American representatives at the 1964 Democratic National Convention.³⁶⁵ Voting, they believed, was ineffective for real social change. As opposed to participatory democracy, it was too slow and, more importantly, elected representatives they argued were uninterested, unwilling, or unable to meet their constituents' needs.

But in the midst of heightened, visible activism to end the Vietnam War, the VDC began arguing that the congressional representative for Berkeley and Oakland had grown resistant and unresponsive to the demands of his antiwar constituents and emphasized the

³⁶⁴ Campaign flyer, "Cohelan's pro-war votes," Ron Dellums folder, Social Protest Collection, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

³⁶⁵ After months of voter registration drives by Students Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in the Deep South, the Democratic "Mississippi Regulars" refused to recognize and seat the newly-elected African-American representatives. In a dramatic moment, leader Fannie Lou Hamer addressed the Convention on national television but President Lyndon B. Johnson interrupted the broadcast, cutting off Hamer's speech and virtually silencing the protest at the convention. As Cleveland Sellers describes in *A River of No Return*, the effect was crushing on civil rights workers and they began questioning the push for voting rights and electoral politics as a goal.

need for a change in electoral politics. The *Berkeley Barb* covered the activities of the VDC closely and began reporting the organization's frustrations with Cohelan.³⁶⁶ A correspondent writing for Berkeley's underground newspaper, the *Berkeley Barb*, criticized Cohelan in August 1965 for failing to take an antiwar position in Congress calling him, "a moral coward in not facing up to the fact that it was the United States who has refused since 1954 to allow free elections and unification in Vietnam as per the Geneva agreement."³⁶⁷ Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan replied, "I am quite willing to exchange views with you, even when we disagree, if there is a remote possibility we can both benefit," but as the VDC's protests escalated, they did not perceive Cohelan as willing to engage with activists.³⁶⁸

Also in August 1965, the Vietnam Day Committee itself wrote an open letter to Cohelan published in the campus newspaper, *The Daily Californian*. The VDC warned Cohelan that his "easy days" were over. The VDC had begun daily picketing of his office and planned what they described as "direct action projects" to force a confrontation between Cohelan and antiwar supporters.³⁶⁹ The letter went on to say that the challenge to Cohelan also signaled a new approach to electoral politics: "Politics behind closed doors 'between experts' must end in this country."³⁷⁰ The VDC promised to continue

³⁶⁶ The *Berkeley Barb* was an underground newspaper in Berkeley. It was not an official paper of the Vietnam Day Committee, or the UC campus, it nevertheless followed both the VDC and campus politics closely. The impetus behind creating the paper in the first place was due to perceived inaccurate or inadequate coverage of the VDC's troop trains protests and activism. Please see Chapter Four of this dissertation for more on the *Barb*.

³⁶⁷ "Cohelan Miffed," *Berkeley Barb*, Vol. 1, no. 5, September 10, 1965, p.1.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ "Telegram sent to Cohelan," *The Daily Californian*, August 20, 1956, p.4.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

direct action politics in order to get the proper political representation they argued the 7th Congressional District needed. Jerry Rubin, a leader of the VDC, stated that the letters and protests of Cohelan's office were the beginning of a campaign to unseat Cohelan through direct action and electoral politics.³⁷¹

Between the letters to Cohelan published in the *Barb* in September and October, *Barb* writer George Kauffman published another article criticizing liberal Democrat Berkeley professors. In his article titled, "The Liberal Crackup in Berkeley," Kauffman took several individual professors to task for making remarks that the war in Vietnam was to prevent the spread of communism and that the Vietcong were directed by communist leaders. The *Barb* criticized the professors, claiming they had changed their positions on Vietnam, and generally bemoaned the direction of liberal Democrats in Berkeley.³⁷² The VDC and writers for the *Barb* expressed growing discontent with mainstream Democratic representatives and their continued support for the war in Vietnam. But within mainstream electoral politics, Cohelan enjoyed good company regarding his support for Vietnam. President Johnson still occupied the White House and supported the war. Most Americans, too, supported American involvement in Vietnam until 1968 after the Tet Offensive, when the Viet Cong surprised the U.S. military with attacks. Moreover, the Tet Offensive demonstrated to many Americans at home that despite the President's assurances that the U.S. was winning the war, that was not the

³⁷¹ "Vietnam Day Group Declares War on Cohelan," *The Daily Californian*, August 20, 1965, p.4.

³⁷² George Kauffman, "The Liberal Crackup in Berkeley," *Berkeley Barb*, Vol. 1, n.d. p.4.

whole picture of what was happening in Vietnam. American support began to drop for the war. In 1966, however, the VDC's challenge to Cohelan was new.

In October 1965, the *Barb* announced the Vietnam Day Committee's decision to run a candidate to represent the 7th Congressional District. "Two groups are now attempting to find a candidate to oppose Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan in next year's 7th Congressional District Democratic Primary," the article explained, pointing to a Democratic group composed of Berkeley residents and a new left challenger, the campus-based Vietnam Day Committee.³⁷³ The Community Work Committee, a subcommittee of the VDC tasked with the search for a candidate did not have anyone specific in mind but instead, the *Barb* explained, "the Community Work Committee is apparently interested in electing any candidate who will work in Congress to stop the war in Vietnam but has not yet decided on specific plans." The group of Berkeley Democrats described their position as very different from the VDC's approach, since they were "middle-aged, middle-class," and "not primarily pacifists."³⁷⁴ The older group viewed themselves as Democrats interested in someone who would oppose the Vietnam War on various grounds but not a new left organization that was advocating a radical reconsideration of U.S. military involvement around the world. Cohelan responded to the opposing groups by saying that he had studied the war in Vietnam carefully and "concluded that the President should be supported in this critical period."³⁷⁵ To the VDC, Cohelan was the epitome of a Democrat and an example of the problems with

³⁷³ "Cohelan Faces Opposition by New Groupings," *Berkeley Barb*, Vol.1, no. 8, October 1, 1965, p.1.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

mainstream electoral politics. To Scheer and some of the VDC, Cohelan's support for Vietnam represented little more than blind obedience to President Johnson and illustrated the power imbalance in American electoral politics.³⁷⁶

For the VDC, however, a rejection of mainline Democrats did not necessarily spell a rejection of the party per se. The VDC's decision to run a congressional candidate put them in a somewhat complicated political situation. In fact, the leadership split over the decision. A large majority endorsed and worked for Scheer's campaign including veteran new leftists like Steve Weissman from the Free Speech Movement, Jerry Rubin, and others.

A smaller contingent of the VDC opposed engaging in electoral politics. Echoing the criticisms many new leftists often made about mainstream politics, one member claimed, "You shouldn't be burning your draft cards, you should be burning your Democratic Party cards."³⁷⁷ The disagreement fractured the Vietnam Day Committee in two. In his statement of candidacy, Robert Scheer declared that "Today we launch a political campaign that is part of a continuing movement for change in the United States." The VDC viewed a congressional campaign as part of its longer trajectory of activism—a view not shared by other new left antiwar activists who rejected electoral politics as a meaningful vehicle of change.

Among Scheer's primary goals was to challenge the incumbent Cohelan but "beyond this immediate objective, however, this campaign will be the opportunity to

³⁷⁶ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 102.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

bring into the political arena the energies, the moral example, and the excitement of America's protest movement... We will attempt to breathe new life into the political process in this district... We will examine every issue which we feel should be of concern to the people of this district."³⁷⁸ In this first statement of the character, direction, and goals of the campaign, Scheer identified his political pedigree as emerging out of the new left protest movements of Berkeley and imagined himself (and his campaign) as aligned with civil rights activists in the South and in the Northeast.³⁷⁹ Thus, the first two major issues he outlined for his campaign were the war in Vietnam and social injustice in Oakland, issues Scheer articulated as intertwined and interdependent.

Criticizing the Johnson Administration and Jeffrey Cohelan, Scheer argued that Oakland was an urban ghetto perilously close to erupting like what had happened in 1965 in Watts in Los Angeles because of the redistribution of money from social justice programs to the Vietnam War. "The city of Oakland contains within its borders one of the most dismal and explosive ghettos in the nation," read his statement of candidacy and that the misuse of War on Poverty funds was deplorable.³⁸⁰ Scheer wrote that Johnson's Great Society was a fraud in Oakland and that, in addition to programs that had failed to provide affordable housing and increased employment, President Johnson had been cutting funding to social programs in order to continue financing the escalating war in Vietnam.

³⁷⁸ Robert Scheer, "Statement of Candidacy for the House of Representatives—Seventh District," Social Protest Collection [hereafter Social Protest Collection], BANC FILM 2757, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p.2

In a letter to his constituents and possible Democratic supporters, Scheer described his campaign as an attack on Johnson's "Great Society" program—he did not call for an end to the Great Society programs but for its expansion. He explained, "We intend to put forth a radical critique of the 'Great Society.' We will speak about everything from the War on Poverty, to hot lunches in ghetto schools, to the problem of taxes in a war economy."³⁸¹ His campaign platform materials illustrated the many ways in which he and Berkeley's new left envisioned this challenge to the Johnson administration's programs. In a two-page handout of the candidate's position on the issues, the Scheer campaign covered a vast array of topics from foreign and domestic national policy to local issues; from expanding Medicare coverage to preventing Oakland residents from losing their homes to expanding transportation infrastructure projects like Bay Area Rapid Transit.³⁸²

However, the Scheer campaign combined issues of "sexual freedom" alongside the other key issues of the platform. In addition to a political vision that emphasized Vietnam and poverty and unemployment, Scheer wrote that while "the primary purpose of the campaign is to speak out for peace in Vietnam," but that this was not the only purpose. In fact, the Scheer campaign included among its major political positions free access to birth control and birth control information and the decriminalization of abortion and homosexuality. As an outgrowth of the campus-based antiwar movement at the University of California, Berkeley, the Robert Scheer congressional campaign for

³⁸¹ "Scheer for Congress," Social Protest Collection.

³⁸² "Scheer-for-Congress-Campaign Position on the Issues," Social Protest Collection.

Congress was shaped by the movement's activism and its imbrication of new left politics and sexual politics. Coincidentally, the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum had organized on campus at the same moment that the Vietnam Day Committee had begun searching for a congressional candidate to run, in the fall of 1965. The CSFF's political language surrounding birth control on campus and the decriminalization of homosexuality found similar expression in the language of Scheer's campaign handouts.

Birth control and decriminalization of homosexuality became cornerstones of Scheer's congressional campaign through the support of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum (CSFF).³⁸³ On August 27, 1965, the *Daily Californian* ran an article about the CSFF's protest of a San Francisco beach demanding bathing suits and clothing should be made optional on a small section of the beach.³⁸⁴ *The Daily Californian's* assessment of the entire protest included an interview with Holly Tannen, a member of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum who participated in the protest and claimed that the organization had "a mailing list of 200," and was worked on the legalization of abortion, rights for homosexuals, and birth control information for married women. In fact, Tannen hoped that the campus chapter would turn towards working for birth control on campus from Cowell Hospital, the University's student health center (and later hospital with medical residency program).³⁸⁵ In 1965, the health center refused to disseminate birth control or information to unmarried students. Tannen and the CSFF were not the first to raise the issue of the Pill at Berkeley.

³⁸³ I discuss this organization at length in Chapter Three.

³⁸⁴ "Naked Pickets Want Free Beach," *The Daily Californian*, August 27, 1965, p.10.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.* Cowell Hospital began as the student health center but later turned into a hospital with a medical residency program.

The first activist to work towards birth control on the campus came from a former Free Speech Movement leader. Brian Turner had raised the issue of contraception on campus in the spring of 1965, months prior to the formation of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum and the Robert Scheer campaign. Writing to fifty colleges around the country using stationery from the Associated Students of the University of California, Turner claimed that the student government was considering asking the University's Health Center, Cowell Hospital, to provide contraceptive advice to Cal students. The ASUC president ordered Turner to retract his statements because he used ASUC stationery and apparently, not everyone in the student government supported calling on the health center to provide contraception or advice to students in 1965.³⁸⁶ But the calls for the Pill and birth control information began increasing on campus and were linked to new left activist organizations.

One impetus for increased interest in the availability of birth control information came from Berkeley Planned Parenthood's refusal to administer the Pill to unmarried students. The *Daily Californian* reported on July 16, 1965, that the Berkeley chapter of the Sexual Freedom League planned a protest of Berkeley's Planned Parenthood office because they were "concerned about reported refusal of the local Planned Parenthood office to dispense contraceptives to unmarried and minor girls."³⁸⁷ The Berkeley SFL chapter planned to picket the Planned Parenthood and demand free access to information and the administration of devices to both unmarried women and underage girls. Although

³⁸⁶ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 131.

³⁸⁷ Creighton H. Chandler, "The Sexual Freedom League," *The Daily Californian*, July 16, 1965, p.1.

this was technically an off-campus problem, unmarried women students could not expect birth control from the university health center and the refusal of Planned Parenthood to serve them left women with little recourse.

In the late summer and early fall of 1965, the emergence of the Vietnam Day Committee, the organization of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum, and Robert Scheer's budding campaign for congress coincided and was reflected in Scheer's platforms. Students revisited the issue when they ran another article about birth control in the *The Daily Californian* a few months later, on September 29, 1965. "Prexy Backs Health Director on Pill Issue" described a recent conflict over the administration of the birth control pill to students at Brown University.³⁸⁸ The article explained that the Brown University administration had supported their health director's decision to prescribe the Pill to two unmarried coeds. The article quoted the director as explaining the extenuating circumstances of his decision, Both women involved were 'mature people, already engaged, and they both had been referred to me by clergy.'" The article went on to assure readers one of the women had since married. The article highlighted, in bold print, that the university health center director used his own discretion to prescribe the Pill to university women, but that "it is common practice to do so well before marriage."³⁸⁹ The story went on to quote the doctor as saying he did not want to encourage promiscuity but instead contribute to solid relationships. In choosing to run the story on the front page and to highlight sections where the doctor admitted to regularly providing contraception to

³⁸⁸ Frank B. Merrick, "Prexy Backs Health Director on Pill Issue," *The Daily Californian*, September 29, 1965, p.1.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.12

unmarried college students, the *Daily Californian* writers suggested that the same practices could be implemented at UC Berkeley. At the time of the article, in the fall of 1965, there was not yet a broadly-based student call for the Pill, introduced in 1960, at UC Berkeley's health center. But the increasing newspaper coverage about contraception on campus signaled new student interest in that direction and was reflected in Scheer's campaign, long before any organized student movement for the Pill at Cowell Hospital.

In addition to calling for increased access birth control and the legalization of abortions, Scheer's flyers reflected the careful language of the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum's demands to decriminalize homosexual sex. The CSFF's official position stated that "there should be no laws restricting freedom of the individual in any act between consenting adults," in addition to laws legalizing prostitution and abortion.³⁹⁰ The activities of "Consenting adults," the CSFF noted, included sodomy and intercourse.³⁹¹ The Campus Sexual Freedom Forum was bold enough to include sodomy in its language; it was more common to see calls for the decriminalization of acts between "consenting adults," euphemisms for homosexual sex. In Scheer's extended document on the issues, he favored an "end to punitive laws concerning birth control, abortion, and sexual practices between consenting adults."³⁹² Scheer's language reflected the CSFF's inclusion of the decriminalization of homosexuality alongside the Pill and abortion. As with the birth control pill, certainly the CSFF and the Scheer campaign were not the only voices on campus to begin testing the waters with regard to homosexuality at the

³⁹⁰ "Sex Freedom Group to Act," *The Daily Californian*, September 23, 1965, p.12.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² "Scheer-For-Congress Campaign: Positions on the Issues," Social Protest Collection.

University of California Berkeley. It was, in fact, a story about gay life on campus in 1965 that received mention in SUAC's scathing *Supplemental Report*. The story ran in the *Daily Californian* and claimed that there were more than two thousand gay men at UC, a figure students miscalculated from the Kinsey Reports. The article appeared in the *Daily Californian* on November 19, 1965 with the headline, "Minorities—2700 Homosexuals at Cal," and was accompanied by a picture of toilet stalls in a campus bathroom with every other door removed. The article claimed that campus police removed the door in a men's bathroom in the library's basement to prevent sexual encounters there. The story and picture suggested a gay subculture at Cal but was not a call for the decriminalization of homosexuality and did not use the language found in the Campus Sexual Freedom Forum or Robert Scheer campaign literature.

The campaign was also implicated in the relationship of the VDC and the charges of sexual indecency of the VDC Dance in March of 1966. Although the Legislative report had focused primarily on the specific events of the dance itself, the consequences for the Scheer campaign can be understood within a larger context of that day's fundraising events. In other words, the day's events were two-fold: a political rally followed by a fundraising entertainment event. Although it was standard procedure for the antiwar organization to combine a strict "political" meeting with some kind of other event such as music or a Mime Troupe show to raise money, that night's dance attracted negative press and legislative attention about the excesses of student activism. It was held up as another example of just what was wrong with Berkeley and, more specifically, what was wrong with Berkeley's new left student activists. Robert Scheer emerged out of the VDC to run

for Congress and was directly tied to the organization and, by extension, these associations with the supposed sexual degeneracy of the campus antiwar movement.

As such, the history of the campaign cuts against the grain of narratives about the complex relationship between the counterculture, the antiwar movement, and the birth control pill.³⁹³ Reflecting language that mirrored that of sexual freedom groups on campus (usually identified with the counterculture), the Scheer campaign endorsed birth control access not prior to calls for “sexual freedom” but rather, simultaneously. In other words, rather than the Pill enabling a politics of sexual freedom for Berkeley student activists, student activists demanded the Pill in the name of sexual freedom. Moreover, they defined sexual freedom as unrestricted access to contraception and abortions, even for UC Berkeley women students, and the decriminalization of homosexual sex between consenting adults. Within the complex relationship of the counterculture and the politics of the anti-Vietnam war protest movement, the Scheer campaign articulated narrower visions of the amorphous ideas of sexual freedom in Berkeley and it did so, in part, by using the language of students and organizations on campus. The Scheer campaign for the 7th congressional district grew out of the campus-based VDC but as a bid for congress, it was not a campus-based movement. Yet, it drew on student activist language to craft a political platform that advocated greater sexual freedom in precise terms. If the campaign itself was the manifestation of “politics” and “counterculture” then its articulation of what sexual freedom meant at the messy intersection of those concepts in the antiwar movement was clear and tangible.

³⁹³ See Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999)

While the Scheer campaign was not the first to raise the issues of birth control on campus or the decriminalization of homosexuality, neither was it the last word on those movements. Student pressure on campus for the Pill continued and a campus-based gay liberation movement emerged in 1969 in the wake of the Stonewall riots in New York City that same year. Robert Scheer's quest for a congressional seat in 1966 failed and he lost the bid to the incumbent Cohelan. For activists who worked on the campaign, however, the results were promising despite the loss.³⁹⁴ Scheer earned forty-five percent of the district vote and won the Berkeley vote by fifty-four percent.³⁹⁵ Voter turnout in Berkeley and Oakland was good.³⁹⁶ Students active in the VDC and working for the Scheer campaign walked door-to-door and registered 10,000 voters.³⁹⁷ Scheer remained a significant figure in the new left, focusing on journalism rather than electoral politics.

The Robert Scheer campaign had indeed been constructed as “unabashedly radical.” “The war in Vietnam,” Scheer explained, “is a product of American liberalism.” Scheer, and the Vietnam Day Committee organization out of which he emerged, was antiwar and radical.³⁹⁸ The Scheer campaign wove various issues together—such as housing, the war, and poverty--with the politics of sexuality in the student new left. The Scheer campaign's endorsement of birth control, homosexual rights, and its relationship to the VDC's fundraising events illustrate the extent to which the campaign was

³⁹⁴ See Serge Lang, *The Scheer Campaign* (New York: W.A. Benjamin, Inc., 1967)

³⁹⁵ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 103.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*; Lang, *The Scheer Campaign*

³⁹⁷ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley war War*, 102.

³⁹⁸ Newspaper clippings, Robert Scheer for Congress folder, Social Protest Collection.; Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 101.

imbricated with the politics of sexuality in the Berkeley student new left and the extent to which student activists at Berkeley understood sexuality as central to political issues.

“Clean Up that Mess at Berkeley”: Ronald Reagan’s 1966 California Gubernatorial Campaign, California Politics, and Sex on Campus

On May 13, 1966, Ronald Reagan gave his first major gubernatorial campaign speech in nearby San Francisco and, after quoting the legislature’s anticommunism report of Berkeley student activism, he vowed to “clean up that mess at Berkeley.” “That mess at Berkeley” became perhaps the most notorious quips of Reagan’s 1966 California gubernatorial campaign and has long been understood as a condemnation of student unrest in the early years of the 1960s. But strikingly, when he recited his list of grievances against the University of California Berkeley, Reagan did not mention the sit-ins on campus nor in San Francisco as part of the Civil Rights Movement in the Bay Area; nor the Free Speech Movement, which had effectively closed the campus for days at a time in 1964; nor any other number of protests and activities we often associate with student or new left activism in the sixties. Instead, Ronald Reagan charged the University with harboring sexual deviance and filth, and thus engaged in a public debate about sex in the mid 1960s, a debate in which sex, sexuality, and obscenity were entangled with competing notions of individual rights, freedom, and democracy.

SUAC’s claims and report gained new, national attention in 1966 when Reagan announced his bid for governor. Although by no means alike in scale, political power, or outcome, the campus activism and campus politics of the University of California, Berkeley took center stage in both Scheer’s new left political campaign for congress and

Ronald Reagan's New Right campaign for governor. While Scheer's platform and language reflected student politics, Reagan used the left's sexual politics in attempts to discredit them and earn the favor of conservative voters around the state who looked to Berkeley as all that was wrong with the student movements of the 1960s.

As other scholars have shown, the grassroots conservative movement in southern California reveals how conservatives reinvented the Republican Party and created a solid political base to carry a new kind of conservative candidate like Ronald Reagan.³⁹⁹

Reagan himself illustrates the sweeping power of this grassroots movement that captured both California and, in 1980, the White House. However, if Reagan's ascendancy began in 1966 with California, then at the root of both that campaign, and Reagan's success, was his politicization of Berkeley's student movements.

In the spring of 1966, Reagan claimed that student activism had not been an initial campaign issue, but that it was only after touring around the state, talking to California residents, that he realized the significance and gravity of the Berkeley situation. He explained that as he went from small town to small town, the voters repeatedly questioned him about student unrest on the state's largest campus. According to a campaign aide, Reagan "discovered" the Berkeley problem because every time he gave a speech, "this university thing" came up.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁹ See Dallek, *The Right Moment*, McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, and David Farber and Jeff Roche, *The Conservative Sixties* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2003); Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk, *Sunbelt Rising* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Robert O. Self, *American Babylon* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); Becky Nicholaides, "Suburbia and the Sunbelt," *OAH Magazine*, October 2003.

⁴⁰⁰ Lou Cannon, *Governor Reagan: His Rise to Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), 157; Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment*, 190.

But Reagan had criticized Berkeley's student antiwar movement as early as October 1965 when the marches and protests were reaching a zenith in the Bay Area, as described earlier in this chapter. Reagan spoke out against the movement and against the "liberal" administration and liberal state governor that he believed failed to stop student protests. "The time to have stopped it was when the student first blocked a police car on the campus. The administration should have taken the leaders by the scruff of their necks and kicked them out, and it should have put the rest of them back to work doing their homework."⁴⁰¹ Just like California legislators, Ronald Reagan characterized Free Speech and anti-Vietnam war protesters as errant children who needed university administrators and government leaders to redirect their misbehavior. Rather than take on the political aims and tactics of Berkeley's student movements, Reagan dismissed them as in need of swift punishment, not negotiations. In addition, Reagan's comment regarding students blocking a police car referenced the Free Speech Movement and pinpointed that moment as the beginning of moral and, obviously disciplinary, decline at the University of California, Berkeley. Thus, as early as the fall of 1965, Reagan was already criticizing both the student movements and the UC administration as part of his campaign rhetoric, although it would not become a central issue until 1966.

Moreover, long before his infamous May 1966 speech, conservative voters in the Bay Area had already begun calling for the new candidate to address the activism at Berkeley in the fall of 1965. *Daily Cal* writers exposed when members of the Hells

⁴⁰¹ Dallek, *The Right Moment*, 190. Also see Dallek, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals and Reagan's Rise to Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012). Michelle Reeves, "Obey the Rules or Get Out:," *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 92, No. 3 (Fall 2010), pp. 275-305.

Angels, a motorcycle club, attacked one of the October 1965 antiwar marches as it crossed into Oakland from Berkeley and were subsequently arrested for violence against the activists, conservatives in the area paid for the Hells Angels' bail. The Conservative Action Committee, a local conservative political organization, supported the opposition to the antiwar movement and explained that supporting the Hells Angel's by paying their bail was a "humanitarian gesture" because they were challenging antiwar activists.⁴⁰² The Conservative Action Committee described itself as a pro-Goldwater group that had supported the former presidential candidate in the 1964 election. Berkeley's Conservative Action Committee took credit for preventing the VDC from staging the 1965 march through by blocking the issue of a parade permit. They said to the *Daily Californian* that they were "instrumental in getting the parade permit denied [to] the VDC."⁴⁰³ The leader of the Conservative Action Committee, Fred Ulner, also claimed to have started a "draft Reagan for Governor [of California]" movement. Ulner and fellow conservatives in Berkeley obviously believed that Ronald Reagan, a conservative candidate, could address the student antiwar movement in Berkeley.

Reagan and his campaign supporters created files of events and student political activities on the Berkeley campus. Reagan received transcripts from a Filthy Speech rally in which participants repeatedly used the word "fuck."⁴⁰⁴ The files also contain information about six "free love" sex parties in Berkeley—a reference to a national news

⁴⁰² "Conservatives Raise Bail for Hell's Angels," *Daily Californian*, October 18, 1965.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Dallek, *The Right Moment*, 192; See also Chapter Two of this dissertation.

story about the Berkeley Sexual Freedom League, as covered by *Time Magazine*.⁴⁰⁵ In addition, the files contain information about the Sexual Freedom League's table on the campus and its buttons for sale that read, for example, "Take it off," and "I'm willing if you are." Campaign aides collected information the League distributed about birth control, contraception, abortion, and venereal disease.

Reagan's campaign followed campus politics and campus issues. What Berkeley students were doing on their campus—what kinds of political activity they were involved in—became significant to Ronald Reagan's 1966 gubernatorial campaign. In addition to items collected from various organizations like those mentioned above, he received information from conservative California legislators, such as Don Mulford. Leading up to Reagan's infamous speech, Mulford sent a collection of news clippings about the *Thirteenth Report* to University of California Chancellor Heyns. The news stories summarized the *Report's* characterization of the University campus being a haven for "sexual deviants."⁴⁰⁶

When Ronald Reagan visited San Francisco to deliver his campaign speech at the Cow Palace, Don Mulford supplied Reagan with a copy of SUAC's *Supplemental Report* and Reagan made haste in using its language in his speech. Reagan took the stage on May 13, 1966 and described some of the events covered in the Report. He charged that "the incidents in this Report are so bad, so contrary to our standards of decent human

⁴⁰⁵ Dallek, *The Right Moment*, 191; See also Chapter Three of this dissertation.

⁴⁰⁶ "Senate Unit Blisters Kerr," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1966. After Reagan's speech, Mulford also sent Heyns copies of another story, "Facts about UC: Good and the Bad," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 23, 1966, University Chancellor Records.

behavior, I cannot recite them to you in detail.”⁴⁰⁷ Reagan then assured his audience, “There is clear evidence of things that should not be permitted on a university campus...”⁴⁰⁸ He then called for “complete, detailed, open legislative hearings on charges of Communism, sexual misbehavior, and anarchy on the Berkeley campus of the University of California.”⁴⁰⁹ This investigation by the state legislature would combat the “morality gap” in Sacramento. He proposed a “morality crusade” because, he asserted, “freedom is at stake and it is our responsibility to preserve it.”⁴¹⁰ Reagan explained that the university campus was an illustration of how a “small minority of beatniks, radicals, and filthy speech advocates” had brought “shame and a loss of confidence to a great university.”⁴¹¹ Reagan proposed a “morality crusade” against the university because “freedom was at stake” and it was the California government and the California public’s responsibility to preserve it.⁴¹² In that vein, finally, Reagan quipped that if elected, he would “clean up that mess at Berkeley.”

As part of this “morality crusade” against Berkeley, Reagan proposed to disaggregate the campuses in the UC system so that regents would be able to effectively take back Berkeley. By breaking up the UC system of campuses up and down the state, individual regents would have more control over specific campuses. Furthermore, the regents were elected by the public, thus, allowing Reagan to argue that in effect, the public could have more say in the goings on at the University of California. More

⁴⁰⁷ “Reagan Lashes ‘Morality Gap,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 13, 1966.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ “UC Probe Demanded by Reagan,” *Oakland Tribune*, May 14, 1966.

⁴¹⁰ “Reagan Lashes ‘Morality Gap,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 13, 1966.

⁴¹¹ “UC Probe Demanded by Reagan,” *Oakland Tribune*, May 14, 1966.

⁴¹² “Reagan Lashes ‘Morality Gap,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 13, 1966.

specifically, the governor (which Reagan of course imagined to be him) and the voters of California could have increased control over Berkeley.⁴¹³ There were other reasons offered for disaggregation, such as being able to more effectively marshal campus police forces among the various campuses in the case of student protests, but these were not the highly politicized reasons. Ronald Reagan focused on how investigating the university and giving greater control to individual regents could address sexual misbehavior and sexual misconduct at Berkeley.

Reagan's speech reignited the issue of how much control administrators, regents, and the California public could have over the Berkeley campus. Three months later in August 1966, and months before he succeeded in his campaign for governor of California, Ronald Reagan recanted his calls for complete investigations and moral takeovers of UC Berkeley through disaggregation after Kerr and the regents rejected the plan. However, campus politics continued to remain central to California state politics. In a statement in December 1967 between two university administrators about the public image of the campus, one of the top concerns cited was that "students have abandoned the moral values of their parents and the University condones the value systems of the students."⁴¹⁴ Although this remained an internal memo within the university, it reflects the administration's anxiety that these issues—moral values—could become more ammunition for the California Legislature. More than a simple observation, a

⁴¹³ "Burns Wants UC Probe Conducted by Regents," *Oakland Tribune*, May 17, 1966. Burns, the head of the Senate Subcommittee that investigated the Berkeley campus wanted the regents to investigate immorality and communism but did not want Ronald Reagan involved as a political candidate. Burns explained, instead, that it was up to the regents and Governor Brown, not any political candidate running for office.

⁴¹⁴ Memo from Jay Michael to Vice President Hitch December 11, 1967.

generation's abandonment of moral values constituted much of the neoconservative rhetoric surrounding student activism at Berkeley. In other words, free love on campus, nude parties, and the so-called sexual depravity of students remained key issues in the California State Legislature and in the minds of university of California administrators, and the public.

In addition, when it came to the campus, the Legislature and the public were primarily concerned with the university's "unwillingness" to "prevent unlawful acts of non-students, prevent unlawful acts of students, enforce University rules, control obscenity."⁴¹⁵ All of this language, of course, referenced the Free Speech, Filthy Speech, and anti-Vietnam War movements. Non-students and students alike had been charged with obscenity, either formally by the police and administration or informally by the administration, in each of these three new left student movements. Moreover, in 1968, two years after Reagan's election as governor, Don Mulford and nine other California Legislature Assemblymen met to discuss the University's public image and reported to the University President that:

The message that came through the most clearly throughout the day was that, in the opinion of the legislators, the University has failed in its opportunity to present itself positively and favorably to the public. Despite its enormous value to the State, its image is reported to be that of a place where bearded and ragged students and professors are in league to defy conventions and to see how far they can go without going to jail. In the battle between positive intellectual values and negative, emotional reactions the latter are sure to win in forming the attitudes of the uninformed public unless extraordinary efforts is made. The second message

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

is that a politician is distinctly more likely to receive favor in his constituency if he slaps, rather than supports, the University.⁴¹⁶

The Chairman's estimation regarding the success of a California politician who criticized the university, rather than supported it, was certainly illustrated in the 1966 Ronald Reagan campaign.

"That mess at Berkeley" was an indictment of the sexual politics of the new left at Berkeley. Long obscured by histories of the new left, student activism, and even the counterculture, sex and sexuality were part and parcel of the development of the new left, and perhaps more significantly, became the most intense point of conflict between the rising new left and what would later be termed the New Right. With his critiques of Berkeley and student unrest, Reagan used a language of morality and freedom to strengthen the groundswell of a movement on the Right that would later peak in the 1980s with his Presidency; the movement we now call the New Right.⁴¹⁷

Reagan's speech pointed to a new politicization of sex in the mid 60s. Of all the events that had made headlines daily and filled the papers with polarized editorials over events since the first major sit-ins in 1963, Reagan chose to engage in a public debate about sex: sex on campus, sex and politics, sex and the new left, and sex and the New Right.

⁴¹⁶ Letter from Robby C. Williams, Chairman of the Academic Council to U.C. President, to Charles J. Hitch, February 29, 1968, UC President Records.

⁴¹⁷ Barry Goldwater's 1964 Presidential Campaign politicized conservatives in new ways and was one of the first grassroots movements of what we can call, in historical hindsight, the growth of the New Right. But Ronald Reagan so successfully captured the energy on the Right and reshaped it that by the 1980s, he is the poster child of the New Right and symbolizes the movement's new direction, face, and character. See Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

With the Robert Scheer and Ronald Reagan campaigns, the sexual politics and the various political meanings assigned to issues of sexuality within those student movements reached new heights. Sex on campus at Berkeley became a focal point for the Reagan campaign. If Robert Scheer's campaign for Congress represented the success of new leftists' activism and Reagan's campaign as neoconservatives' response to student movements on campus, then it is possible to understand these two 1966 electoral campaigns as a real and metaphorical conversation about sexuality at Berkeley. In other words, these two electoral political campaigns were the net effect of all the sexual politics of student activism up to 1966. Furthermore, if the 1966 Reagan campaign is central to understanding the beginnings of a national rightward political shift we term the New Right, then sex at Berkeley was an integral part of that moment and critical for understanding that turning point in California postwar politics.

Chapter Five

Antiwar Activism, Surveillance, and Sexual Politics

In 1968, the San Antonio field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation sent a memo to FBI headquarters in Washington D.C. that described and justified its surveillance of new left activists on the UT campus. The new left, it claimed, was led by a cohort of morally depraved individuals whose personal and sexual lives ran completely counter to mainstream American cultural norms. As a result, the FBI proposed several campaigns that relied on charges of sexual impropriety and character smearing, targeting female activists in particular, in order to thwart the growth of new Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) chapters nationally and in Texas.⁴¹⁸ Authorities on multiple levels—university, local, state, and federal—responded to antiwar activism through increased surveillance, surveillance that was gendered and relied on a particular politics of sexuality.

Furthermore, the interest of federal authorities like the FBI in campus politics speaks to the significance of campus student activism at UT and to the campus as a special political space during this period. Although headquartered thousands of miles away, the FBI considered student campus politics significant to local and national

⁴¹⁸ The FBI conceived of the “New Left” as being synonymous with Students for a Democratic Society. While I take a broader view, UT’s SDS chapter was their primary new left target, and it was also the largest student activist organization (and antiwar organization) on the campus from the mid- to late 1960s. Certainly there were other organizations on campus that were active in civil rights and antiwar activism. However, the FBI field office in San Antonio and headquarters in Washington D.C. were only interested in SDS. For the purposes of this chapter, then, I use their terms of “new left” and SDS almost as interchangeably as they do in the records.

security. To combat antiwar student activism and contain its influence in Austin, federal, municipal, and university authorities relied on local sexual and racial mores.

At the national level, and sometimes at the local level on particularly active campuses like Berkeley and UT, the shift from activism in the civil rights movement to resistance to the Vietnam War in the mid-1960s appeared fluid and instantaneous. This is particularly true for the administrations, police, FBI informants, and state legislators who responded to the emergent antiwar movement through surveillance and repression. As discussed in the previous chapter, the *Thirteenth Report Supplement* of the California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities (SUAC) reported that the same individuals active in the Free Speech Movement and the Free Student Union could also be found in the new Vietnam Day Committee, a key antiwar campus organization.⁴¹⁹ In fact, SUAC understood the rise of the antiwar movement as part of an unbroken trajectory of leftist--and lawless--activism on the Berkeley campus. However, this perspective obscures not only the multifaceted nature of SDS activism but also the imbrication of the new left and the movement for sexual expression as discussed in previous chapters of this dissertation.

On the one hand, by the late 1960s, Students for a Democratic Society had expanded exponentially, and although it was always a multifaceted umbrella

⁴¹⁹ California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities Committee [hereafter SUAC], "Thirteenth Report Supplement," March 1966, 128, Records of the Office of the Chancellor [hereafter noted as *Supplement*], University of California Berkeley, CU-149, University Archives, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.

organization, its main focus became the antiwar movement.⁴²⁰ As a result, SDS became almost synonymous with the antiwar movement and the new left, both in the history and historiography of the period. The University of Texas was home to the second-largest SDS chapter, after the University of Michigan, reflecting its membership growth with the antiwar movement. In addition, the marches and demonstrations that drew the largest crowds were those protesting the Vietnam War. The same might be said for leftist activism at Berkeley: Vietnam Day “teach-ins” and the marches in Oakland drew tens of thousands of participants.

But largely, the characterization of the antiwar movement arising instantly, and fully formed, out of a collection of new leftist organizations like Athena from the head of Zeus is an oversimplification. Such an oversimplification obscures earlier politicizations of sex by new leftists, which conservatives claimed was a new, depraved aspect of activism within the antiwar movement. Or, conversely, by contemporaries and scholars alike, that movements for sexual expression occurred alongside antiwar activism without any political ties between them. What is obvious, however, is that as interest in antiwar activism increased among those on the left, so too did surveillance and repression of that activism by various coordinated levels of authority.

The conservative response to student antiwar activism via surveillance—coming from university administrators, local police, and federal FBI agents—created a dialogue about the significance of sexual behavior and sexual morality between student activists in

⁴²⁰ SDS ran economic programs in urban centers in the Northeast and Chicago, called Economic Research and Action Programs (ERAP), and as I will explore later in this chapter, the UT SDS chapter maintained an active interest in civil rights issues alongside antiwar activism. The two were simultaneous and coexisted in the organization.

the new left and authorities on the right. Both SUAC and the FBI's COINTELPRO program associated activists' antiwar activism and politics with pervasive, incorrigible sexual moral depravity. In their efforts to watch, investigate, and undermine domestic student antiwar activism at Berkeley and the University of Texas, a nexus of local, state, and federal authorities used charges of sexual misconduct and impropriety to discredit new leftists and smear their reputations. In addition, the FBI enacted their surveillance and repression along gendered lines, targeting men and women students in vastly different ways.

The conversation between the left and the right did not take place on equal footing. Authorities, administrators, and lawmakers wielded much greater power—socially, legally, politically—than student activists on the left. They demonstrated this power through investigative committees, such as SUAC, and successful state campaigns, the topics of chapter four. The new left did not sweep state elections, gain congressional seats in Washington, or put one of their own in the White House like those on the burgeoning New Right eventually would. But articulations of the importance of sexuality in student movements did not take place in a vacuum on the left or the right. Instead, they occurred in response to one another and became central, in distinct ways, to both the new left and what would later be termed the New Right.

In addition, there have long been both historical and historiographical debates about where the new left ends and the counterculture begins--or, to phrase it another way, what counts as "politics" or "activism" and what was "culture." Viewed through the lens of local, state, and federal surveillance, the distinction between new leftist "politicos" and

counterculturalists breaks down, and the lines are blurred between them. Because activists in civil rights, Free Speech, and the anti-Vietnam War movements were targeted and repressed for their *ideas* and *beliefs* rather than actual committed crimes or illegal activity, they were surveilled for how they looked, where they went, or with whom they associated. There were no distinctions, from the authorities' perspective, between antiwar politicians, for example, and long-haired counterculturalists who also shared antiwar political ideas. At UT especially, men with long hair were likely to be stopped by campus police, whether or not they were participating in any campus political activity. Activists--not the politics of collective movements--but instead their personal lives, their individual behavior, their physical appearance and what it might signify, became the targets of surveillance and repression.

COINTELPRO and the policing of UT's antiwar movement

In May 1968, the San Antonio field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation requested permission from its Washington D.C. headquarters to begin a letter-writing campaign targeting new left activists at the University of Texas as part of the COINTELPRO, the Counter-Intelligence Program, surveillance of the university.⁴²¹ They proposed to begin rumors that Dick Reavis, a prominent UT SDS leader, was actually a narcotics agent spying on fellow SDS members. The idea behind the rumor campaign

⁴²¹ San Antonio field office to FBI Director's office, 28 May 1968, *COINTELPRO: The Counter-Intelligence Program of the FBI* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1978). Hereafter, I will cite as San Antonio office (SA) and FBI headquarters (FBI). Also, FBI to SA, 11 June, 1968, *COINTELPRO*. These documents were published with names of agents and targeted activists redacted from the records, but subsequent references to the SDS leadership and community made it possible for me to identify Dick Reavis as a targeted activist.

was to discredit Reavis and create distrust and conflict among antiwar student activists. The Washington office of the Bureau declined to approve the rumor project for fear that it could damage real narcotics investigations and compromise pending cases against Austin activists. Three months later, however, in August 1968, Washington approved an alternate plan: an anonymous letter-writing campaign to the governor of Texas, his brother in the state senate, and the UT president detailing the personal lives of SDS members to expose the “depravity of New Left leaders and members.”⁴²² Like student antiwar activists at Berkeley, local, state, and federal authorities targeted UT SDS members in highly coordinated networks of surveillance and repression that used gender and sexual politics as key tactics in their response to the student antiwar movement. Furthermore, while male activists, like Dick Reavis in the example above, might be portrayed as drug users or undercover narcotics agents, female activists were almost exclusively portrayed as promiscuous or as otherwise violating gender and sexual norms. COINTELPRO programs were aimed at disrupting and interfering with the progress of the student antiwar movement, and those efforts were coordinated along several axes of authority, using both legal and extralegal means. Their character assassination and smear campaigns were also, however, highly gendered, revealing the extent to which the conservative response to the movement engaged in conversations about sexuality and the student left at UT.

⁴²² SA to FBI, 12 August 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

J. Edgar Hoover developed COINTELPRO in the 1950s to neutralize radical or subversive political groups and individuals.⁴²³ Throughout its existence, COINTELPRO targeted civil rights organizations, communists, white supremacy groups, Native American activists, and antiwar new leftists. The modus operandi of COINTELPRO was not to prosecute illegal acts of subversion or treason, but instead to undermine individuals and groups by sabotaging them via smear campaigns, character assassinations, and other means of disruption. With civil rights organizations and new leftists, COINTELPRO exploited or created conflicts between individual members or groups by writing fake letters, suggesting activists were lying to one another, spreading rumors, and so on. When Bobby Seale, founding member of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in Oakland, California, described the standoff between the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles Panther Party, he claimed that it was well-known that several of the letters the Los Angeles group had received from other major Panther groups were falsified in an attempt to make the L.A. Panthers feel angry with fellow activists and isolated from the national Black Power movement.⁴²⁴ In another example, which I will return to later in the chapter, Bettina Aptheker wrote in her memoir that as her wedding to Jack Kurzweil drew closer in 1966, several anonymous letters were sent to her home with details of an

⁴²³ See Cathy Perkus, *COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* (New York: Monad Press, 1975).

⁴²⁴ Bobby Seale recounted this narrative when he spoke on campus in a Black Power class at the University of Texas in the fall of 2009 for the rededication of the Martin Luther King, Jr. statue on campus.

abortion she had received in Mexico. She believed that the letters were sent to her and her fiancé by COINTELPRO to intimidate her and curtail her political activism.⁴²⁵

These examples, though plucked from different years and from vastly different circumstances, illustrate the aims and activities of COINTELPRO. The objectives were not to legally prosecute individuals for their political activism but to use alternative, oftentimes extralegal, means to neutralize that activism. COINTELPRO became interested in the University of Texas in the mid-1960s and increased its attention with the rising antiwar movement there.

As discussed in Chapter One, UT SDS formed in 1964 both out of and as part of the local civil rights movement. The initial founders and members of UT's SDS chapter had been veteran civil rights activists and focused the new organization on continuing those politics on the campus and in the surrounding Austin area. UT's SDS was never a single-issue organization, prioritizing civil rights activism alongside growing concern over events in Vietnam. When SDS put up a candidate for student body president, Gary Thiher, in 1966, for example, he ran on a platform that supported desegregating university housing and opposing the escalating Vietnam War. Members of SDS and *The Rag* continued to work and report on civil rights activism through the 1970s. The turn towards Vietnam at UT did not mean the end of civil rights political activism, as has been claimed in general accounts of this period, based on other cities. In fact, among the FBI surveillance records are reports of SDS working at UT to raise the minimum wage for

⁴²⁵ See Bettina Aptheker, *Intimate Politics: How I Grew up Red, Fought for Free Speech, and Became a Feminist Rebel* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006).

cafeteria workers on campus and campaigning for the hiring of more African-American and Mexican-American university employees; both efforts occurred in 1968, at the height of antiwar activity.⁴²⁶

Nevertheless, UT SDS increasingly turned towards the war, with activism beginning in 1965 and peaking in 1968 in a trend that was common nationwide. The SDS chapter at the University of Texas was one of the largest in the nation, second only to the Ann Arbor chapter. Although SDS chapters around the country were, and had been, large umbrella organizations, at UT, SDS was particularly inclusive as a new left organization. The campus chapter combined civil rights activism alongside antiwar activism, as well as students' rights issues and freedom of speech, throughout the 1960s. This made UT's SDS chapter unique. Meetings on campus in a large lecture hall often attracted several hundred attendees by 1968, and that year antiwar marches numbered in the tens of thousands.⁴²⁷ Also in 1968, the FBI office in San Antonio began its anonymous letter-writing campaign at UT as part of its COINTELPRO surveillance of SDS. University of Texas police and Austin police had been reporting on activists since SDS's formation in 1964.

Surveillance of University of Texas activists reached a high point for COINTELPRO and the FBI in 1968 but began with Austin Police Lieutenant Burt

⁴²⁶ FBI to SA, 26 November 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

⁴²⁷ "Memorandum for Information," 27 September 1968, *Allen Hamilton Files*, <http://www.tlok.org/Rag>. The Allen Hamilton files are a collection of notes and clippings from University of Texas police and informants chronicling their surveillance of SDS and other leftist student activists at the university. The files were donated to a local used bookstore in Austin, where someone alerted an archivist at the Center for American History about their contents. The files have been digitized on *The Rag's* website and will eventually be housed permanently at the CAH.

Gerding in 1964. Gerding was a World War Two veteran who continued taking courses at the university, at his leisure, and thereby maintained a student status that augmented his position as a police officer. As a student, he could attend antiwar activities on campus and join SDS. Gerding used his student status to conduct surveillance of UT's antiwar activists as part of a larger program he directed, the new left intelligence division of the Austin Police Department.

According to Gerding himself, his job was to gather information on UT and Austin activists, and this often took the form of sitting in on campus meetings and photographing or listing individuals he saw there.⁴²⁸ Together with Allen Hamilton, the UT police chief, and various student informants both men recruited for surveillance purposes, he produced hundreds of pages of documents and photographs chronicling the lives and political activities of UT antiwar and new left activists.⁴²⁹ Both Thorne Dryer and Robert Pardun, leaders in the SDS chapter, recalled seeing Gerding often at SDS meetings and at rallies, taking notes and taking pictures.⁴³⁰ Pardun and Alice Embree, another SDS leader, however, recall another incident in Gerding's surveillance of them that illustrates ways in which conservatives used gender and sexuality to discredit and intimidate activists.

In the fall of 1964, only months after they formed the fledgling UT SDS chapter, Robert Pardun, Alice Embree, Jeff Shero, Gary Thiher, and Judy Schiffer (later Pardun)

⁴²⁸ Ibid.; Thorne Dryer, "Spies of Texas," *Texas Observer*, 17 November 2006, 8; Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical: A Journey Through the Sixties* (Los Gatos, CA: Shire Press, 2001), 88-89.

⁴²⁹ These documents constitute the *Allen Hamilton Files* referenced above.

⁴³⁰ Andrew Paul, "A Culture of Repression: Federal and Local Campaigns to Combat the Antiwar New Left Movement at the University of Texas at Austin" (History Honors Thesis, University of Texas, 2007); Thorne Dreyer, "Spies of Texas"; Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 88-89.

took an afternoon trip to swim in Hamilton Pool, a natural spring located thirty miles west of Austin in Dripping Springs, Texas.⁴³¹ Once an isolated grotto privately owned by ranchers, by the 1960s, Hamilton Pool had become a popular swimming hole for Austinites. After spending the day hiking around the canyon area and picnicking, the group decided to skinny-dip in the pool when it became dark. Unbeknownst to them, Burt Gerding had followed them from Austin, taking surveillance photos of the five of them throughout the day. A few days later, Gerding approached Alice Embree and informed her that he had some “good pictures” of her swimming that he obtained using an infrared camera.⁴³² Although Embree never saw the photos, the threat worked. In an interview, Embree explained that she was mortified and concerned that someone else might see the photos. Given that she was the daughter of a UT psychology and education professor, it is not difficult to imagine how effective Gerding’s intimidation might have been. The photos never surfaced but were useful for Gerding just the same.

The incident with Embree highlights the quite different character of campaigns against women activists, who were targeted and threatened with violating social and sexual norms of behavior acceptable for women. The police officer’s threat did not stop Embree from continuing her activism on campus and, in fact, from becoming more and more visible on campus over the next four years. They reveal, however, the tactics used by the Austin Police Department’s new left surveillance division and the highly gendered and sexualized methods in which that surveillance worked. Significantly, none of the

⁴³¹ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 88-89; Andrew Paul, “A Culture of Repression,” 26; Embree, Alice. Interview by author. Austin, Texas, 16 December 2009.

⁴³² *Ibid.*

three men present was told that Gerding had nude pictures of them, despite the fact that all had participated in swimming. As I will explore in the following section of this chapter, the threats and intimidations towards men activists took other forms, including claims that they were undercover narcotics agents or drug users. Gerding threatened to use Embree's choice to swim naked with men as a young, unmarried college student to smear her character as a respectable young woman. He aimed to tarnish the image of leftist student activists, and one way he chose to do so was by using gender and sexuality, not the actual antiwar or civil rights politics of the activists. In other words, the idea was to depict the "depravity" of new leftists on campus, as the FBI explained it, instead of charging that the activism itself was explicitly treasonous or seditious.

Since Embree was the daughter of a University of Texas professor, suggesting that she had participated in any perceived sexual misconduct worked on another level as well. Not only could Embree be embarrassed and cautioned by her behavior, but so too could her father and the university itself. In fact, one of the specific goals of the FBI's anonymous letter-writing campaigns was to portray the University of Texas as doing little to curtail the raucous, lewd, and unbecoming behavior of the activists it housed there. Embree's position as the daughter of UT faculty made her especially vulnerable to the APD's surveillance tactics.

It also reflected a larger network of surveillance aimed at the university. Lieutenant Burt Gerding's decision to photograph Pardun, Embree, and the others was his own, but certainly that type of activity was not unique to Gerding or the Austin Police Department's new left division. In fact, various levels of state and federal authority

worked in tandem in their efforts to minimize the growth of SDS antiwar activism on campus and what they perceived as its larger political and cultural effects. All them used gender and sexuality to do so.

In the spring of 1968, at both the height of the Vietnam War and the domestic antiwar movement, the FBI headquarters green-lighted a letter-writing campaign for the San Antonio Field Office to disrupt and neutralize activism at the University of Texas at Austin. The overall goal of the FBI's COINTELPRO program at UT Austin was to rid the campus of its SDS chapter and, if successful, to repeat this process across all Texas university and college campuses. The San Antonio Field Office believed it was important for the FBI to focus its efforts to ensure the demise of the antiwar organization. In a letter from the Field Office to FBI headquarters, an FBI informant explained, "San Antonio strongly feels that the time is ripe to accentuate the present climate in fomenting disruption within the SDS with the ultimate goal of causing the SDS demise on the campus at the University of Texas as a campus-approved organization."⁴³³ The letter went on to advise the offices in Dallas and Houston to take similar action:

In view of comments set forth in referenced letter, Dallas and Houston should seriously consider steps which could be utilized as a counterintelligence operation within the University of Texas system to ban SDS from all Texas campuses. San Antonio feels that only sophisticated and bold counterintelligence actions will thwart SDS growth.⁴³⁴

⁴³³ SA to FBI, 10 April 1969, *COINTELPRO*.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*

The FBI in San Antonio and Austin had followed the SDS chapter at UT since December 1965, slightly less than a year after Burt Gerding began his surveillance as part of the Austin Police Department.⁴³⁵ In fact, the FBI gathered information on SDS in several ways, one of which included information fed to the Bureau by Gerding himself and from UT police chief Allen Hamilton. Both Hamilton and Gerding participated in recruiting student informants on the university campus to attend meetings and SDS activities “undercover” and then provide any information they gathered to the Austin police officer and the UT police chief. In addition, the FBI used its own direct surveillance of activists and relied on its own student informants on the campus. The FBI also recruited some of the student informants introduced by Burt Gerding. Finally, the chief of the entire University of Texas systems police, George Carlson, was a former FBI agent himself, with ties to the Bureau.⁴³⁶ These relationships reveal the network of various level of local, state, and federal authority that participated in surveillance of leftist student activists at the University of Texas at Austin. They also reveal the extent to which those surveillance efforts were rather sophisticatedly coordinated.

Lastly, the university’s relationship to the governor of Texas, the state legislature, and the White House were immensely important to APD, UTPD, and the FBI in their coordinated efforts to police the antiwar movement. With Lyndon B. Johnson in the White House, UT took on particular political significance since local and federal authorities believed they could exploit the relationship between the president, the

⁴³⁵ SA to FBI, n.d., *COINTELPRO*.

⁴³⁶ Andrew Paul, “A Culture of Repression,” 29.

governor, and Frank Erwin, president of the University of Texas. Erwin had been both a national committeeman of the Democratic Party and a consultant to LBJ. As the flagship public university of the state of Texas, LBJ's home state, and the university his daughter, Lynda, attended, the University of Texas held symbolic weight that the FBI hoped to marshal and use as leverage in its efforts against the antiwar movement. The San Antonio office wrote to FBI headquarters that they were sending a newspaper clipping from the *San Antonio Free Light*, a counterculture newspaper, with the headline "Free Love Comes to Surface on and Around UT-Austin."⁴³⁷ The field office planned to send the clipping along with an anonymous letter on commercial stationery to state senator Wayne Connally, the brother of Governor John Connally of Texas. They sent a similar letter to Frank C. Erwin, Chairman of the Board of Regents, former National Committeeman of the Democratic Party, consultant and confidante of President Lyndon B. Johnson.⁴³⁸ All three levels of authority believed that by providing examples of the sexual politics of the campus antiwar movement to Erwin or Connally or LBJ, they could use that leverage combat the movement and gain greater state and national support to do so. In other words, APD, UTPD, and the FBI sought explicitly to not embarrass not only new left student activists but also the UT administration and state leaders because this behavior was happening was the state's flagship public university.

In addition, the San Antonio field office advised that all articles from underground newspapers "showing advocacy [sic] of the use of narcotics and free sex

⁴³⁷ "Free Love Comes to Surface on and Around UT-Austin," *San Antonio Light*, SA to FBI, 8 August 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

⁴³⁸ SA to FBI, 8 August 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

are ideal to send to University officials, wealthy donors, members of the Legislature, and parents of the students who are active in New Left matters.” There was not any explanation of why the “Free Love” article in particular was chosen, nor was there mention of the fact that it was a San Antonio paper and not an Austin one. There was also no explanation of what “free love” meant, either to the new leftists being investigated or to the FBI agents who believed the term was so powerful that any reference to it or to drug use was valuable to send to politicians with connections to UT in order to prompt more action against activists. The field office proposed such an anonymous letter could be “written in the vein of an irate parent who was considering sending his son and/or daughter to the University of Texas to receive a college education” and who could object to that kind of activity on a state-supported campus.⁴³⁹

In response to the San Antonio field office’s request, FBI headquarters enthusiastically supported the idea of writing anonymous letters so long as the stationery used was “locally obtained” and could not “be traced to the Bureau or the Government.” But overall, the FBI believed the letters could be useful in combatting the growth of the new left at UT. Headquarters made a special note in their response to San Antonio that the “free love” article “concerns the atmosphere of free love and cohabitation which exists at the University of Texas,” and that the Bureau believed that exposing this kind of immorality and excess “may be of value in forcing the University to take action against those administrators who are permitting an atmosphere to build up on campus that will be a fertile field for the New Left.” Sending the letters to Frank Erwin and Wayne Connally,

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

the FBI agreed, could help “nip this in the bud” and “prevent the development of another New Left such as that at Columbia University.”⁴⁴⁰ The kind of anonymous letter-writing that FBI headquarters approved for the field office expanded beyond a focus on underground newspapers to defame individual activists and, in so doing, the SDS chapter at UT.

The first letter the field office chose to write concerned a coffeehouse in Killeen, Texas, home to a large military base, Fort Hood. The coffeehouse, called the Oleo Strut, was reported by the FBI to be an antiwar hangout for both Killeen locals and Austin SDS activists trying to talk to military personnel about their views on Vietnam. The San Antonio office suggested targeting coffeehouse owners and employees and the fact of their cohabitation. San Antonio wrote to headquarters, “There has recently been established near Fort Hood, Texas a coffeehouse known as Oleo Strut. Pursuant to instructions [to another field office]...dealing with the depraved nature and moral looseness of the New Left, San Antonio has just secured the identities of male and female employees of this establishment.” They went on to explain that they planned to submit a specific fictitious letter for final approval that would best “deal with” the “counterintelligence activity regarding these male and female employees who are living together in Killeen, Texas.”⁴⁴¹

The final approved version of the fictitious letter read:

⁴⁴⁰ FBI to SA, 12 August, 1968, *COINTELPRO*. The Columbia University comment is a reference to the student strike and takeover of the university and the Dean’s office. Part of that protest was due to student anger over the university collaborating with the CIA on various levels. Of interest is that UT SDS activists Jeff Shero and Alice Embree were at that takeover by 1968 as observers-participants but not students.

⁴⁴¹ SA to FBI, [n.d] November 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. [name redacted]

I am sure that you would not approve of your son doing what he is doing. At the present time, he is connected with a coffeehouse near Fort Hood, Texas, and for the past 7 months he has been living with a girl in the Fort Hood, Texas area.

It is common knowledge that marijuana has been used at the residence where your son is living with this girl and he has participated in some "pot" parties. If this is not bad enough, there are other couples who are living in the same residence with your son and this girl and are engaged in the same type of activity.

As I consider [activist's name redacted] to be a friend and wish to maintain that friendship, I am remaining anonymous with the hope that you can take effective action as a concerned parent.⁴⁴²

Although the letter mentions drug use, that is hardly the intended focus. Rather, the field office was attempting to use the fact of the activists' cohabitation in efforts to minimize their influence in the Fort Hood area. The military and the FBI shared concerns about the growing popularity of Oleo Strut and its role as an important center of antiwar activity in the area and supported working to neutralize it.⁴⁴³ In fact, San Antonio sent correspondence to FBI field offices in San Francisco, Boston, Denver, and Los Angeles to recruit their help in investigating the individuals San Antonio named at Oleo Strut. San Antonio explained, "In order to prevent any influence that personnel at the coffeehouse may have on military personnel at Ft. Hood, Texas, and in order to cause some disruptive tactics among individuals at the coffeehouse," the other field offices were to provide additional investigative information about the activists.⁴⁴⁴ San Antonio coordinated efforts with various other field offices around the country in order to obtain background information to use in the surveillance and repression of antiwar activists. Moreover, this coordination reveals that not only was San Antonio interested in using activists' private,

⁴⁴² SA to FBI, 12 March 1969, *COINTELPRO*. Names and other specific information were often redacted from much of the *COINTELPRO* records that were released under the Freedom of Information Act.

⁴⁴³ SA to FBI, 14 January 1969, *COINTELPRO*.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

sexual, and romantic lives in order to thwart their political activities, but that this was obviously commonplace throughout the FBI's COINTELPRO program. Field offices in other cities were expected to provide additional assistance to San Antonio, and the request seemed unremarkable.

The field office later reported that the activists they targeted with this letter moved to the west coast; the office believed the FBI agents were partly responsible, making the campaign a success.⁴⁴⁵ Indeed, although the San Antonio office had used this particular letter, it was not the first time the field office had the idea of using cohabitation to discredit activists.

In October 1968, a few months prior to the Oleo Strut letter, San Antonio identified a white female activist and an African American male activist at UT who were supposedly living together and wanted to use that information to "diminish the influence of these individuals." San Antonio wrote that "[name redacted], white woman, is on the Security Index of the San Antonio Division because of her membership and leadership role in the New Left. [name redacted], a Negro, is also on the Security Index of the San Antonio Division and is attempting to organize the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in the Austin, Texas area."⁴⁴⁶ The real interest, however, is revealed later in the correspondence when the office clarifies, "reliable informants have recently advised that [redacted] and [redacted] are living together. San Antonio is now considering the

⁴⁴⁵ Andrew Paul, "A Culture of Repression," 34; SA to FBI 10 June 1969, *COINTELPRO*.

⁴⁴⁶ SA to FBI, 10 October 1968, *COINTELPRO*.

matter as to how this can be *exploited* to diminish the influence of both of these individuals.”⁴⁴⁷

As discussed in Chapter One, the specter of racial miscegenation carried tremendous historical, legal, and symbolic weight in the South. Articulated fears about miscegenation, real or imagined, had long been used to police and demarcate proper gender, sexual, and racial norms of behavior for both black and white Southerners. It was also a foundation, among other historical processes and social constructions, for legal Southern segregation. In practice, cries of miscegenation were responsible for drawing clear definitions of white womanhood and expectations for white female respectability. For a young, white, Southern activist woman to live with a man outside of wedlock was to transgress the boundaries of gender and sexual norms; to live with an African-American man outside of wedlock was almost beyond the pale. San Antonio did not directly target the two activists’ political affiliations, although they are listed. Instead, the field office meant to capitalize on their nonconformist gender and sexual behavior, obviously believing this to bear more than any political activism in the New Left and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee might.

The San Antonio COINTELPRO field office, like other Southern surveillance organizations, used charges of sexual misbehavior as part of smear campaigns and character assassinations against women activists, white women activists in particular.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., emphasis mine.

⁴⁴⁸ The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission also participated in similar character assassinations against white female activists. See Gregg Michel, “Red Squads, Sovereignty Commissions, and COINTELPRO: Government Repression of White Southern Activists in the 1960s,” in *Rebellion in Black*

Thus, COINTELPRO used issues of race and sexuality to target UT antiwar and leftist student activists. Furthermore, they targeted women, in particular, in specific ways. Just as Austin Police Lieutenant Burt Gerding used nude photos of Alice Embree in an attempt to threaten her reputation as a young, unmarried, female student, so too did the FBI use appearances of sexual impropriety in its efforts to repress domestic antiwar activism.

Beyond the bounds of campus: student activists and city, state, and national politics after 1967

Political activism in Austin by and large, after 1967, and many activists shifted their focus from the university as a center for change to communities within the larger city such as West Campus and East Austin. Several factors contributed to the redirection of activism in Austin and the decentering of UT as a particular and significant new left site. Furthermore, shifts in activism in both Austin (and Berkeley) led to a privileging of activism within communities and neighborhoods rather than focusing exclusively on the campus as a politicized space.

In Austin, the intense surveillance of activists created a chilling effect on campus activism. As previously discussed, the administration had colluded with other authorities at the local and federal levels—namely the Austin Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation—to facilitate the surveillance of student activists on the campus. Authorities attempted to disrupt new activism through character assassinations and by

and White: Southern Student Activism in Perspective (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

using activists' private sexual lives to embarrass them. This surveillance, coupled with the expulsion of SDS entirely, helped shift activist focus off the campus as a primary site of political change. Unlike in Berkeley, however, the Texas Legislature never conducted any in-depth investigations into the university. Because most attempts by authorities at UT (and in Austin) to combat the new left took place behind the scenes, the Legislature did not directly challenge new left activism on campus as the California Legislature did in Berkeley. In addition, although the Texas Legislature sat in Austin down the road from the University of Texas (unlike the distance that existed between UC Berkeley and Sacramento), the legislature chose the UT Board of Regents. This gave the legislature tremendous power over the administration of the university, a situation different from Berkeley's. Thus, Frank Erwin and the members of the Board wielded considerable control over UT and helped "keep the lid on Austin."⁴⁴⁹ The surveillance, with Erwin's blessings and support, worked in many ways to achieve what authorities had hoped for: a difficult climate for activists that helped push them off the campus and into city communities. Erwin commissioned the construction of stonewall planters along the west side of the campus, creating a more obvious separation between the end of the university campus property line and the beginning of the city's. A later women's liberation activist would joke that she had always wondered if that was Erwin's attempt to keep the activists out, as in outside the boundaries of the university.⁴⁵⁰ Her joke illustrates the relationship Erwin and the UT administration fostered with student activism in the late 1960s: they

⁴⁴⁹ This is actually a quote from Allen Hamilton, a former UT police chief, but he acted under Frank Erwin, and his sentiment that UTPD and the administration constrained activism on campus rings true.

⁴⁵⁰ Austin Lesbian Herstory Project, "We Ain't Got It Easy But We Got It: A Herstory of Austin Dykes 1969-1979," Videocassette, 1996. In author's possession. Courtesy of Robin Birdfeather.

did their best to thwart on-campus political activism, and students responded by moving into areas of the city.

Although the legislature did not conduct any in-depth inquiries into the university, legislators nevertheless proposed several bills meant to curb campus activism. The introduction, and debate of these bills in the Texas House of Representatives, reveals the significance of gender and sexual politics to state politics in Texas, beyond the covert surveillance of activists.

The first bill the Legislature proposed, but did not ultimately pass, was a dress code to combat the long hair and beards popular among many male students. On March 13, 1967, *The Rag* reported that Representative D. Jones introduced a bill to the Texas House of Representatives that required a dress code for all the public universities. Alongside that story in “Bubble, Bubble, Toil, Etcetera,” *The Rag* quoted Texas senator Grady Hazelwood as characterizing the Sexual Freedom League on the UT campus as a bunch of “queer-minded social misfits.” Coupled together, these stories indicate that the Legislature did attempt to directly undermine the new left vis-à-vis issues of gender and sexuality. The bill died, however, and nothing came out of the two legislators’ challenges to UT activists.

The Legislature did successfully pass a bill arming campus police officers with guns, which *Rag* writers suggested was aimed directly at the new left. *The Rag* reported on February 5, 1968, that following the University Freedom Movement demonstrations and SDS’s removal from campus, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 162, which invested campus police with much greater power, including the rights to carry guns on campus

and to receive training similar to city police.⁴⁵¹ Frank Erwin called UT “a Texas city in itself” that required increased police presence and a change in the scope of the police’s authority.⁴⁵² From the perspective of *Rag* activists, the arming of campus police signaled a significant crackdown on campus activism from the Legislature. The arming of campus police, no matter how intimidating, however, did not squash campus activism. *The Rag* denounced guns on campus, and this issue resurfaced for UT students in 1970 after the National Guard shootings at Kent State University. Activists continued to resist guns on campus and to push for the rights of student activists to protest on campus.

Finally, the UT administration kicked SDS off the campus in 1967 after SDS protested Vice President Hubert Humphrey’s visit to the campus; the expulsion highlighted the instability erupting within the Democratic party—both nationally and locally in Texas. Humphrey had planned to speak at UT during his visit to the Texas Legislature to defend his administration’s war policy in Vietnam.⁴⁵³ SDS protested the speech and President Johnson’s policies in Vietnam. LBJ faced increased pressure from the growing antiwar movement on the left. That pressure affected the Democratic Party as a whole and would eventually create deep fissures by the time of the 1968 national convention. UT claimed that SDS had failed to adhere to campus rules regarding time, place, and manner restrictions for its protest of Humphrey’s speech. Activists in SDS, however, believed the administration simply used a technicality to finally get rid of the organization that had caused it so much trouble. Several SDS leaders, including Alice

⁴⁵¹ Sue Jankovsky, “Licensed to Quell,” *The Rag*, Vol.2, No.13, February 5, 1968.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

⁴⁵³ Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 185.

Embree, Gary Thiher, Dick Reavis, and David Mahler, faced disciplinary charges for their involvement in the organization of the protest.⁴⁵⁴

Although the student activists fought the university's decision, the banning of SDS had serious implications for the campus left. Some activists left UT for personal reasons, like Alice Embree and Jeff Nightbyrd, who moved to New York City to continue activism there. Dick Reavis, another key UT SDS member, abandoned the campus as a site of political activism, which speaks to the dramatic shift in focus in Austin during this period.⁴⁵⁵ Another student organization, the University of Texas Committee to End the War in Vietnam, essentially took the lead role in UT's antiwar movement, but despite two large marches in 1970 to protest Nixon's invasion of Cambodia and the shootings at Kent State, the antiwar movement on the campus changed significantly. Antiwar activism was no longer a primary student movement on campus.

Internal factions within SDS created deep divisions within the organization and also contributed both to its demise at UT and to activists' decisions to move off campus. Robert Pardun suggested in his memoir that what remained of SDS in Austin fractured into groups either supporting or opposing Progressive Labor (PL), an organization from Boston that had joined SDS nationally and promoted an economic vision of radical change, calling for student alliances with workers and unions. But PL's vision departed significantly from the basic foundations of SDS as a student organization seeking to radicalize students, not workers. Essentially, PL sought to completely redefine and

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., 186.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

transform the new left. Pardun argues that as PL ideas and supporters grew in Austin, SDS members split into those who supported PL and those who didn't, creating tension.⁴⁵⁶ However, while internal disagreements over the future of SDS weakened the organization, the administration's decision to ban it from the campus dealt UT's SDS chapter a serious blow. Despite the widespread student support in large antiwar marches in 1969 and the early 1970s, no unified reconstruction of a new left antiwar movement took place on campus.⁴⁵⁷ Although UT's SDS combined civil rights activism with antiwar activism, its expulsion from campus and the inability of individuals or groups to rekindle a unified antiwar movement shifted activism from SDS on campus into other avenues.

In addition to the actions of the Legislature and the administration, and to internal splits within SDS, other factors pushed student activists off campus and drew them towards the wider community. Students on campus grew increasingly interested in Black Power and Chicano movements by the mid- to late 1960s. By 1967 and 1968, they began to work in between the campus and East Austin. The Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), for example, still used the university campus to recruit new activists, but the focus of its work remained in the Mexican American neighborhoods of East Austin. In fact, Yolanda Chavez Leyva, a Chicana scholar and former lesbian-feminist activist recalled this as a huge difference in her experiences as an activist in

⁴⁵⁶ Pardun, *Prairie Radical*, 193-194.

⁴⁵⁷ Rossoniw, *Politics of Authenticity*, 238.

MAYO. The campus was simply a bridge to the community but not the focus of social or political change.⁴⁵⁸

Women's liberation and gay liberation also had their roots in earlier campus activism but largely focused their work off campus, in many cases simply because the university would have forbid much of their activity. Women's liberation arrived in Austin a bit later than in other parts of the nation, but by the early 1970s, West Campus had exploded with feminist activism. Women used the University Y, located just across the campus, to organize and hold meetings they could not otherwise have held on the campus due to university restrictions. At the Y, for example, women distributed information on birth control and, before the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision—a court case that came out of Austin—legalized abortion in 1973, ran a phone tree whereby callers could get in touch with an abortion provider.⁴⁵⁹ In fact, UT graduate students were busy working towards fighting the state's abortions restrictions in the late 1960s when Sarah Weddington, a young UT Law graduate, joined them before later arguing the *Roe* case. By the early to mid-1970s, a large and vibrant feminist community had established itself in the neighborhood, with counseling centers, women's health clinics, and feminist cooperative housing. Although beyond the bounds of this project, it is important to note that this off-campus activism around women's and gay liberation flourished in Austin.

All of these strands of activism grew out of the new left activism on campus; moreover, the political developments after 1967 speak to the centrality of campus politics

⁴⁵⁸ Yolanda Chavez Leyva. Interview by author, 15 March 2006, San Antonio, Texas. Chavez Leyva also expressed a feeling of isolation on the campus as a Chicana and emphasized that that contributed to Chicano students looking to East Austin, not the university campus, as a site of political change.

⁴⁵⁹ Meg Barnett. Interview by author, 5 February 2006, Austin, Texas.

to the larger city. By the mid- to late 1970s, women's and gay liberation activism had moved towards electoral politics when Janna Zumbrun, a self-identified lesbian-feminist, won a seat on the Austin Human Relations Commission, an important advisory board to the city council, in 1976.⁴⁶⁰ As an open member of the Austin Lesbian Organization, a lesbian-feminist activist group, Zumbrun focused her efforts on the HRC toward ending discriminatory anti-gay employment and housing practices. She championed an antidiscrimination ordinance that forbade landlords from refusing to rent or sell property to gays and lesbians and forced the local paper, the *Austin-American Statesman*, to stop running such discriminatory housing ads. The ordinance also extended similar protections in employment, though it only applied to city of Austin jobs.⁴⁶¹ The city council's antidiscrimination law drew the attention of Anita Bryant's national "Save Our Children" campaign and local social conservatives. Bryant visited Austin in 1978 as part of that campaign to call for the repeal of city ordinances--like those passed in Austin and Miami, for example--to protect children from gays and lesbians. Ultimately the ordinance survived Bryant's visit and has remained in place into the present.

By the early 1970s in Austin, there was a notable shift in the new left activist community evidenced by an interest in electoral politics. In October 1972, *The Rag* was endorsing candidates in an upcoming political campaign, including the 1972 presidential election.⁴⁶² Unlike the somewhat unique situation in Berkeley, where Robert Scheer

⁴⁶⁰ Richard Croxdale. Interview by author, 26 March 2013, Austin, Texas.

⁴⁶¹ Leah Deane, "Gay Women, Lesbians, or Dykes?: The Interstices of the New Left and Austin's Lesbian-Feminist Community, 1970-1978" (master's thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2006).

⁴⁶² Steve Russell, "Only 3 More Election Days 'til 1984," *The Rag*, 30 October 1972. See also Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 243.

emerged out of a new left antiwar campus organization to run for Congress, the Austin community, like many new left activist communities around the country, had rejected formal electoral politics. The shift in 1972 towards electoral politics marked an important illustration of the changing nature of politics in Austin by the early 1970s.⁴⁶³ A few former *Rag* contributors and activists, including Marian Wizard, became actively involved in supporting liberal Democrat Frances “Sissy” Farenthold’s bid for governor of Texas. Judy Smith, another activist, immersed herself in local Democratic Party precincts in Austin, supporting proposals to end the war in Vietnam and to repeal all abortion laws in Texas.⁴⁶⁴

The shift toward electoral politics by those involved in new left activism is most evident, and notable, among women who joined women’s liberation and gay men and women who participated in gay liberation. Feminists, like Marian Wizard and Judy Smith, who became involved in the Democratic Party, and lesbian-feminists who later in the 1970s challenged city ordinances reflect these shifts from new left activism towards greater involvement in electoral politics by the next decade. The shape, nature, and trajectory of student politics transformed from primarily campus-based to beyond the boundaries of the campus and into the city beginning in the late 1960s and into the 1970s.

While new leftists were politicizing sexuality in their campaigns for free speech and against housing segregation and the Vietnam War, so too were authorities in their attempts to disrupt, thwart, or diminish that activism for their own political aims. It is

⁴⁶³ Doug Rossinow characterizes this shift as a “return” to electoral politics after the early 1960s. See Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 243-245.

⁴⁶⁴ Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 245.

possible, therefore, to understand the two sides as participating in a conversation with each other about the shape, nature, and function of sexual politics in student activism at UT, or, at the very least, commenting on a shared dialogue. Students were pushing the boundaries of acceptable sexual norms within larger contexts of leftist movements like Free Speech, civil rights, and anti-Vietnam War, and there was a conservative response to those claims and behaviors. Sex became political in new and different ways when authorities charged students with sexual impropriety.

The student movements at UC Berkeley and UT Austin obviously did not stop in 1966 with the election of Ronald Reagan or the dismissal of SDS from campus, respectively. However, the surveillance of activists on the UT campus coupled with the expulsion (and internal demise) of SDS did change the direction of student politics from campus-centered to community-centered and community-based by the late 1960s and into the 1970s. Activism continued on both campuses throughout the late 1960s and into the 1970s: there were sizeable antiwar demonstrations, and women's liberation and gay liberation politics flourished on campus, but activism also spread beyond the boundaries of the campus into wider communities within the city.

Furthermore, activism that arose on and off campus informed both state and national politics into the 1970s. The nexus of political networks between governor John Connally, UT president Frank Erwin, Lyndon B. Johnson, and the legislature, had impacts on the national Democratic Party as activists challenged the party on the left and state politicians in the legislature responded on the right. The national, and landmark, *Roe v Wade* case emerged within the political context of women's liberation activism on the

campus and within the larger city. What happened on the UT campus and within the broader city of Austin affected both Texas and national politics.

In Austin, women's liberation and gay and lesbian activism helped change the map of local city politics and, in the process, drew the ire of a rising tide of evangelical social conservatism in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. This social conservatism challenged the sexual politics articulated by women's liberation and gay liberation. These two liberation movements grew out of campus politics and redefined sexual freedom—and the conservative backlash--within the broader context of the city itself.

Conclusion

This project concludes in 1968 yet the stories of both new left activism and the rise of neoconservatism hardly concluded at that point. For what would later be alternately termed the New Right and neoconservatism, in fact, the biggest political victories were yet to come in 1968. Neoconservatism's power as a national political force grew exponentially throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In Texas the "Republican Revolution" came even later in the 1990s, but the state has since remained overwhelmingly Republican-dominated and both former presidents George Bush and George W. Bush came out of Texas. Today, California remains a blue state, but Ronald Reagan won the White House—twice. Reagan's 1966 election to governor of California marked a significant shift in the state's electoral politics and, moreover, signaled a growing, powerful movement of conservatives that began a rightward trend in national politics and eventually won the White House in 1980. Conflicts over sexual politics were key to both Reagan's campaign rhetoric and the ascending New Right's political values and platforms. Phrases like "family values" accompanied the phrases of "law and order"—both speaking to a desire to reject the tumultuous changes wrought by the various new left movements of the 1960s.

By the late 1960s, there was a flowering of movements on the left--such as Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation—in which activists constructed a different kind of politics of sex that was explicitly about a politics of identity. Both scholars and contemporaries of the period have often described these movements as "leaving the [new]

left” but this obscures the fact that there had been a politics of sex emerging throughout the decade, including within the antiwar movement.⁴⁶⁵ While both Women’s Liberation and Gay Liberation radically reimagined the political significance of sex and relationships, particularly to the construction of identity, this project illustrates how these movements grew out of earlier new left activism in the period I examine. The year 1968 marked a highpoint for the antiwar movement on many campuses and the same was true at UT, with the notable exceptions of two marches in 1970 to protest Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia and the National Guard’s shootings at Kent State University. Although beyond the scope of this project, it is important to note that while campus politics in Austin shifted after 1967, Austin exploded with activism as part of the Women’s Liberation Movement during this period. Similarly, student activism spilled over from campus-based issues toward the greater community in East Austin with Black Power and the Chicano Movement. The antiwar movement began to decline by 1969 but other aspects of the new left—like Women’s Liberation Movement, Black Power, the Chicano Movement, and Gay Liberation—flowered during the period from the early-to-mid-1970s.

This project has focused on the early formation of both of these movements—on the left and the right—to analyze how a changing politics of sex were key to their constitution. Before the Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition, or Free Love, this project analyzes how students at two flagship, public universities articulated new ideas about sex within larger political movements that seemed on their surface to have nothing

⁴⁶⁵ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2001)

to do with sex. New left student activists at the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin attached new meanings and values to sex within the larger context of their political activism around civil rights, desegregation, free speech, and anti-Vietnam War protest from 1960 to 1968.

While new leftists were politicizing sexuality in their campaigns for free speech, housing desegregation, antiwar, so too were authorities in their attempts to disrupt, thwart or diminish that activism for their own political aims. It is possible, therefore, to understand the two sides as participating in a conversation with each other about the shape, nature, and function of sexual politics in the student activism at Berkeley, or, at the very least, commenting on a shared dialogue. Students were pushing the boundaries of acceptable sexual norms within larger contexts of leftist movements like Free Speech, Civil Rights, and anti-Vietnam War, and there was a conservative response to those claims and behaviors. Sex became political in new and different ways when authorities charged students with sexual impropriety. This conversation, of course, reached new heights in state electoral politics.

At UT, student activists in the early 1960s participated in interracial civil rights activism and focused their attention on the remaining vestiges of segregation on campus and as part of campus life. For student activists and the administration, the issue of women's housing became particularly salient, and explosive, from 1962 to 1964. Interracial campus organizations protested women's segregated housing as a civil rights issue but opponents of desegregation raised old southern fears of miscegenation and claimed that segregated women's dorms would mean greater social intimacy between

black men and white women—and the possibility of interracial relationships and sex. By 1964, however, when some of these students formed an SDS chapter on campus, they took up the housing issue but transformed it from a social justice cause to a campaign for women’s sexual freedom. Women should have had the right, they claimed, to live anywhere they chose, without the University’s permission or regulation. Desegregation remained the impetus but the rhetoric shifted to one about women’s right to choose where to live: be it on campus or off, with a boyfriend before marriage, or in whatever arrangement they desired. SDS wed housing issues and campaigns for desegregation with new claims about sexual rights and sexual freedom on campus.

The Free Speech and Filthy Speech Movements at UC Berkeley challenged university *in loco parentis* regulations and did so, in part, by arguing that obscenity and “pornographic” films constituted freedom of speech on campus. Students, they argued, enjoyed the same constitutional protections, such as the protection of free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment, on campus just as much as they did off campus. Students claimed that obscenity, homosexual films, and lectures on birth control or abortions constituted free speech rights on campus, pushing the boundaries of what constituted a “political” movement.

The Campus Sexual Freedom Forum in Berkeley articulated a nuanced set of values and political beliefs they argued created true “sexual freedom” on campus and beyond. Birth control information and access to contraception from the university health center, as well as the decriminalization of homosexuality constituted a cohesive political platform for new left activists. Robert Scheer drew on the ideas within the organization

during his congressional campaign and what had been amorphous definitions of sexual freedom on the left transformed into a clear electoral platform alongside ending the war in Vietnam. At UT, administrative actions to squelch the publication and distribution of material by the Texas Students for Responsible Sexual Freedom that advocated overturning the state's sex laws helped pave the way for an all-out University Freedom Movement—a movement that demanded freedom to distribute any material student organizations wanted without the permission of the university. Furthermore, UT's *The Rag* operated as a primary producer in the new left's sexual politics. In Austin, new left sexual politics and the radical underground press grew up together.

One form of conservative response to campus activism in the mid to-late 1960s took the form of high coordinated surveillance of student activists by local, state, and federal authorities. On both campuses, these authorities—university, local, state, and federal—responded to antiwar activism with surveillance that was gendered and relied on a particular politics of sexuality. In the process, they created a dialogue about the significance of sexual behavior and sexual morality between student activists in the new left and authorities on the right. Both SUAC and the FBI's COINTELPRO program characterized activists' antiwar activism and politics with pervasive, incorrigible sexual moral depravity. In their efforts to watch, investigate, and undermine domestic student antiwar activism at Berkeley and the University of Texas, a nexus of authorities used charges of sexual misconduct and impropriety to smear new leftists' reputations and disrupt campus activism.

Finally, by 1966 and 1967 in Berkeley and Austin, respectively, the ground had shifted and what had been campus politics spilled over into the city, affecting electoral political campaigns and the direction of new left activism. One strand of Berkeley's antiwar movement supported Robert Scheer's campaign to challenge a Democrat for a congressional seat as a radical student activist. Campus political organizations, as mentioned above, shaped that campaign that focused off campus but echoed the rhetoric of student demands on campus—greater access to birth control, rights to on-demand abortions, and the decriminalization of homosexual sex between consenting adults. On the right, Ronald Reagan's gubernatorial politicized sex on campus in new ways and his claim that he would “clean up that mess at Berkeley” illustrated a shifting focus on sexual morality on the right in electoral politics, a trend that would develop in a longer trajectory throughout the next three decades.

Ronald Reagan's 1966 election to governor of California marked a significant shift in the electoral politics of the state of California. That shift signaled a growing, powerful movement of conservatives that began a rightward shift in national politics and eventually won the White House in 1980. Sex, and conflicts over sex, was key to both Reagan's campaign rhetoric and the ascending New Right's political values and platforms. Phrases like “family values” accompanied the phrases of “law and order”—both speaking to a desire to reject the tumultuous changes wrought by the various new left movements of the 1960s. But in Texas, neoconservatism took different forms, particularly in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. Texas was part of the dramatic shift of the “Solid South” from Democrat to Republican but the southern context in Texas also

fostered the growth of evangelicalism, the kind of evangelicalism associated with the Christian Coalition and Moral Majority of the 1980s.

In Austin, the university's administration decision to ban SDS from campus after the organization protested Vice President Hubert Humphrey's speech in 1967 highlights the fracturing of liberalism and the unstable foundation of the Democratic Party. The delicate relationship Frank Erwin attempted to maintain between conservative Southern Democrats in the Legislature on the one hand, and his close ties to President Lyndon B. Johnson as a liberal Democrat in a microcosm of the same problems from the national Democratic Party. Antiwar activists challenged Democrats on the left, just as UT students did with their protest in 1967, and conservative Democrats on the right called for increased crackdowns on student movements.

Austin new leftists, albeit in a different time and manner than those in Berkeley, also shifted towards electoral politics at the close of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. *The Rag* began endorsing candidates in electoral campaigns for the first time in 1972, a significant departure from its former articulations of politics. Activists threw themselves into supporting local Democratic precinct candidates and Sissy Farenthold's bid for Texas governor in 1972 and 1974.

In addition, *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court case that legalized abortion nationwide, had its roots in the Austin feminist political community and reflects the local/national context of Austin's left politics. Austin's Women's Liberation Movement had created an extensive "phone tree" service to provide women with information about birth control and abortion services locally. That energy and networking laid the

groundwork for increased interest in overturning the state's abortion restrictions, something that attorney Sarah Weddington drew upon when she took the *Roe* case. Weddington, an attorney and former state representative who successfully argued *Roe*, attended the University of Texas Law School in the mid-1960s and, after graduation, joined with other UT graduate students interested in fighting anti-abortion laws in the state. Campus politics reached far beyond the boundaries of the university, affecting a landmark Supreme Court case and shifting national politics.

Although a study of campus politics from the early to late 1960s, this dissertation illustrates the interconnection of local and national politics in this period and, specifically, the centrality of campus politics to those larger state and national politics. In Austin, the FBI's decision to target UT activists, and to do so using politics of sex, was largely predicated on maintaining the university's image as "LBJ's school" and the delicate relationships within the national Democratic Party. In California, campus politics—the antiwar movement and the sexual politics as key to that movement—clearly affected great shifts in state conservative politics and later, informed national conservative politics as well.

At the broadest level, this project examines two campuses as significant sites of contestation that speak to larger constructions of sexuality and politics in postwar social movements and the origins and trajectory of a neo-conservative political movement. It reimagines the history of the political movements of the 1960s to challenge characterizations, in both scholarship and popular culture, of a so-called sexual revolution. It argues that sex was central—and not merely tangential—to the

development of new left activism such as civil rights, free speech, and antiwar movements in Berkeley and Austin. Furthermore, this project explores the nuanced meanings and values activists attached to sex before Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation to illustrate how the sexual politics of those movements, although radically reimagined, had their roots in earlier movements of the 1960s.

Morality, sex, and family have become primary issues in our current national politics. The Supreme Court recently heard two cases about same-sex marriage—one case, *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*, in fact, originating from California—and the constitutionality of the federal Defense of Marriage Act that former President Bill Clinton signed in 1996. At present, some of the most explosive and divisive national political conversations center on contraception, abortion rights, and same-sex marriage. This project reveals the roots of these national debates about sex and the origins of the divisiveness among Democrats and Republicans regarding the sexual politics that remain central to each party's platform in the twenty-first century, so long after the so-called sexual revolution.

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