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Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence by Christina B. Hanhardt (review)

Claire Potter

Journal of the History of Sexuality, Volume 24, Number 2, May 2015,
pp. 332-334 (Review)

Published by University of Texas Press



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it's a legitimate rape," he insisted, "the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down." In the intervening two years, public conversations about sexual assault have refocused on the US military and college and university campuses. We need this book. It offers a usable past for all of us who engage with these issues as scholars, teachers, and activists.

REBECCA L. DAVIS
University of Delaware



Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence. By CHRISTINA B. HANHARDT. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013. Pp. 376. \$94.95 (cloth); \$25.95 (paper).

Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence makes a major contribution to the histories of urban sexual communities and activism. It also intervenes in long-cherished approaches to LGBT history, arguing that even a radical approach to winning political citizenship can make civil rights a zero-sum game, where gaining power over public space and a voice in governance constricts the rights of others and obscures their voices. Ironically, in the case of LGBT community leaders determined to secure their own physical safety from the 1960s on, a focus on community outsiders who were prone to homophobic violence led not only to the criminalization of perceived outsiders but also to the oppression of other queers who were gender-variant, poor, of color, and homeless.

Hanhardt focuses on the histories of New York and San Francisco, where mostly white and middle-class queers played a crucial role in redefining working-class and postindustrial neighborhoods as cultural and sexual destinations after World War II. This process of migration and gentrification produced claims that linked political citizenship to securing the safety of queer neighborhoods and their residents.

This was both a rhetorical and a political struggle. *Safe Space*, Hanhardt explains, is "not a history of gay neighborhoods per se, but an urban history of the encounters between *gay* and *neighborhood* in U.S. social movements over the past fifty years" (4). Opening up histories of gay liberation to scrutiny, she asks important questions: When neighborhoods become "safe" for LGBT people, how do some queers but not others benefit from policing? How are other long-time residents policed more intensely and endangered in the name of safety? Five chapters focus on each city as a case study in turning points for urban policy: the Great Society, the entry of gays into politics in the 1970s, urban gentrification under the Reagan administration, the creation of hate crime and victims' rights under the Bush and Clinton administrations, and neoliberal policies that promoted urban development and home ownership in the twenty-first century.

This book could not be more relevant in the aftermath of the 2014 riots in Ferguson, Missouri, and a renewed greater recognition of militarized policing. Hanhardt takes particular aim at LGBT activism that, in the name of ending homophobic violence, adopted real estate developers' narratives of orderly neighborhoods under siege from disorderly, transient residents who seemed to threaten violence. Market-based models of urban progress that emphasized comfort, security, and rising property values also made these economically insecure residents, who live much of their lives in public, into unwelcome interlopers and potential sources of homophobic violence. Long after these neighborhoods were gentrified and ceased to be centers of queer sociability, city governments continued to exploit the safety of gays and lesbians as a rationale for intensive policing, making "LGBT politics and property politics . . . indistinguishable" from one another (7).

Importantly, Hanhardt asks us to revisit the progress narratives that LGBT policy makers reproduce around the axis of liberal, rights-seeking minority achievement. Exaggerated concern for the safety of queer people becomes, through federal and local policymaking apparatuses, an attractive cudgel for preserving profits and class privilege. Business improvement districts (BIDs) became a common way of privatizing city services by the 1990s, one that was eagerly adopted as a self-help strategy in queer urban spaces where businesses, often literally, selected which customers they wished to serve.

Complicit in broader strategies of displacement that were envisioned by financial and political elites, LGBT community activists also embraced "homophobia" as a complete explanation for the violence some members of the community experienced. While hatred of LGBT people could sometimes be the cause of violence, the broader effect of "homophobia" was to rename and reconceptualize legitimate resentment and anger as a psychological disease brought into the community by pathological outsiders. The solution, for many LGBT liberals and radicals, was to reform the police. Beginning in the 1970s, groups like the Bay Area Gay Liberation (BAGL) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force made reforming police abuses toward gay men a central agenda but could not imagine a city that was not policed in their own interests (99).

Hanhardt makes a bold intervention in a social history literature that has previously marked the freedom of LGBT people from policing as a critical step to full citizenship. In fact, it was often the case that this police violence was simply shifted to other queers, primarily youth of color and sex workers. *Safe Space* complicates the stories queer history has told about the successful fight against homophobic violence, particularly trajectories of community formation that make "us" (educated and artistic homosexuals seeking homes in an embracing, diverse space) safe from "them" (unnamed, unraced, ignorant people who hate "us").

Too much scholarship on the left contents itself with savage critique and fails to locate models of resistance, change, and cross-class coalition building

that can be learned from and implemented more broadly. In a deft turn in the final chapter, Hanhardt creates an unexpected moment of optimism, documenting the emergence of Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment (FIERCE). This mostly queer youth of color organization fought successfully for a place at the policy table as their constituency was being crowded out of Manhattan's West Village and the Piers, a place where they had historically felt safe from the police and from family violence. I like this move partly because it makes a grassroots, youth of color organization the object of serious study, showing the promise of democratic claims that go beyond simple ideas about safety. It also addresses the political opportunities available in a contemporary moment when middle- and even high-income wage earners are now being priced out of the housing market in New York and San Francisco.

The virtues of *Safe Space* outweigh its minor flaws. The almost complete absence of the AIDS crisis in *Safe Space* and of ACT UP's insistence on intersectional critique struck me as reasonable, given the scope of Hanhardt's inquiry already. But bringing ACT UP into the story would have required closer examination of a thorny problem in the book: Was the kind of organizing represented by FIERCE without much precedent, as Hanhardt appears to think? Does seeking the assistance of the state automatically make any political group, even a radical one, complicit with racist and classist liberal progress? Hanhardt appears to think so, but a closer reading of the groups that organized to fight AIDS by the mid-1980s would reveal more complexity.

These absences leave room for scholars to be inspired by what Hanhardt has achieved in this impressive debut and take this work forward. *Safe Space* does what path-breaking political history ought to do: bring underrepresented groups into stories about policymaking that we think we know well and ask larger questions about the forms of citizenship policy promotes and obscures. In the process, Hanhardt has opened up new possibilities for practicing the history of sexuality and writing the history of a recent past in a way that makes it vitally relevant to a contemporary activist agenda.

CLAIRE POTTER

The New School for Public Engagement



From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity. By KYLE HARPER. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. 304. \$39.95 (cloth).

Kyle Harper's *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity* is a monumentally ambitious work that attempts to analyze and comprehend the momentous shift in sexual morality that accompanied the rise of Christianity in late antiquity. The transformation