This collection has been several years in the making and arose in large part as a result of my participation in the Lesbigay Caucus and (as co-chair, with Glen Elder) the Sexuality and Space Specialty Group (SSSG) of the Association of American Geographers (AAG). In these venues and as a discussant or participant in several SSSG-sponsored sessions in annual AAG meetings, I experienced palpable, gendered tensions amongst queer folk. My supportive co-chair and I tried to negotiate some of these tensions by devising bylaws for the SSSG that would help structurally to ensure gendered diversity in the leadership. In particular, we suggested that the chairship be permanently shared by two persons who occupied different “sexual subject positions.” The motion was passed by the SSSG’s membership and is now part of the nationally sanctioned SSSG’s bylaws of the AAG. While technically the rule might result in two men or two women serving as co-chairs (the possibilities are many), it seemed likely at the very least that the stipulation would promote awareness of gender diversity issues.

But tensions amongst queer folk continue, which in large part inspired me to give a paper at a recent annual meeting of the AAG called, “Queer Patriarchy, International,” a paper suggesting that many privileged queer white men in certain postindustrial contexts assume positions of privilege, as did white men of industrial old (see Nast this issue). At the end of the paper session, the discussant came up to me and queried why I seemed so angry, noting that my anger seemed problematic; the issues I raised (it was implied) might be expressions of deeply rooted, highly personal anxieties displaced unfairly onto gay white men. What about the liberatory possibilities
arising out of gay maleness, such as new ways of imagining the male body as penetrable and of gay male participation in otherwise feminine activities and professions? Since that encounter, I have spent much time thinking about those comments, re-asking myself the same and other questions, in the process realizing that my anxieties stem from ongoing structural inequalities within a community in which I am invested.

What I called queer white patriarchy seemed to be everywhere: in images of queer life circulated in magazines, advertisements, and television shows; in urban landscapes internationally and rural queer resorts in the US (Saugatuck, Provincetown, Key West); and in a continuation of racialized and patriarchal prerogatives—better access to education, higher-paying job opportunities, less child- and elder-care burdens, and so on. Many women geographers whom I met in the context of the caucus or SSSG who research sexuality issues (or who were members of a non-heteronormative community) expressed similar concerns. Did the concerns we raised amongst ourselves reflect some sort of collective unease—even anger? A central question seemed to be whether or not certain gay white men were necessarily less patriarchal or racist because they were gay, raising larger questions about how (and in what) all queer lives are invested.

Perhaps some of the dis-ease derived from a sense that racialized class-based prerogatives were trumping other lines of identity formation, especially “race,” sexuality, and gender. Non-class-based identity movements have exposed the power that other sorts of inequalities have had in shaping oppression and marginalization—patriarchy, racism, and heteronormativity salient among them. The most radical implication of these movements has been that social injustices can only be overcome by forging identity-based solidarities across identity categories and class; working only in class terms overlooks other forms of oppression not determined solely by class. In a sense, the anxieties I shared with other women (and which were sensed by the discussant) were what motivated me to articulate these and other questions. This collection, then, lies at the intersection of this questioning and represents in some sense a cross-section of discussions held amongst a variety of scholars and nonacademics alike.

While most persons with whom I have spoken over the last several years and who are engaged in research across queer male and female communities have experienced gendered tensions in striking ways, little has been documented or published about such tensions, especially in geography. At the same time, little discussion about racism has taken place, despite its importance across sexual social formations (see Sinfield 2000). This collection attempts to confront these aporias in geography as one means of shaping future scholarly debate. The contributors’ research spans an impressive social geographical range.
My own paper deals primarily with racist and misogynistic images circulating largely in white gay male circuits of representation-production and how these intersect questions of reproduction and maternity, while Alex Papadopoulos explores how patriarchy in ancient Greece was rendered in the crucible of male same-sex relations as well as in heterosexualized relationships. Jasbir Puar critiques industry-set definitions of travel in light of the masculinity and racism of the queer tourism industry, and Paola Bacchetta, a researcher with long-standing connections to queer communities in Italy and India, discusses her experiences with lesbian activists in India.

The collection is led by an autobiographical narrative written anonymously by a non-geographer whose poverty led her to give up her biracial daughter of nine months to two wealthy gay white men, her choice to do so mitigated by promises that the men would remain in-state. Soon thereafter, counter to a preadoption agreement, they moved out of state, changed the child’s name, and told the child that the woman who gave her up was not her mother: that she had no mother. Her story, which also describes a wealthy and all-white gay male adoption party, is included to foreground a major theoretical question: How will reproductive rights and images of procreation be played out in postindustrializing worlds where divisions between the wealthy and the poor burgeon and where child-bearing is increasingly an option, rather than an economic necessity? Here, wealthy gay white men, like wealthy white lesbians and heterosexually identified couples, hold a decided advantage. They can afford the children that the poor (women foremost among them) increasingly cannot—to wit, the many intranational and international adoptions from impoverished regions. At the same time, the phraseology “renting wombs,” used by prospective adoptive gay white men in the story, and the disavowal of the author’s maternity by the men who adopted her child speak to a peculiarly masculinist fragmentation and class-informed commodification of a women’s person and ability to procreate. It is this intersectionality of class, race, gender, and sexuality—particularly in the context of maternity and child-bearing—that informs “Queer Patriarchies, Queer Racisms, International,” the article that follows the anonymous contribution. In some ways, concerns over reproductive rights in contexts where birth mothers are incidental to child-bearing (wealthy, white, heterosexual or lesbian) are even greater in contexts where mothers are incidental altogether (wealthy, white, male, homosexual), where it can be asserted to a child that motherhood does not exist—that a child’s biological beginnings took place in a womb that could be rented. While maternity is itself a complex of representational politics, it has a materiality that cannot and should not be ignored. Curiously few queer theorists consider children in their discussion of eros and the future (but see Edelman 1998).
As Alex Papadopoulos’s contribution (this issue) makes clear, patriarchy in ancient Greece was never limited to heterosexualized relationships; indeed, it was productively defined through same-sex male relations. The maternal, fertility, and—more particularly—the symbolic and practical power of the womb and procreation were often superceded in ancient Greek societies by practical and symbolic hypervaluation of maleness, expressed in some rural areas in ritual celebrations of penis fetishes. Ancient Greek patriarchy disbursed itself across heterosexualized, and male homosocial and homosexual fields, Papadopoulos arguing that ancient Greek practices of male homosociality and same-sex desire were flexibly redeployed in the service of patriarchal reinvestments during Christian, Ottoman, and modern nationalist times, with no definitive rupture in patriarchy’s contours. His paper suggests that male desire in Greece has always been negotiated through a freedom of movement denied women.

Somewhat analogously, Jasbir Puar notes that a recent US-based queer tourism industry survey found 94% of queer travelers to be gay men, largely a result of their differentially higher incomes and the kinds of travel measured. She asserts that queer travel needs to be retheorized, and she begins by questioning why industry standards alone are deployed in defining what constitutes (queer) travel. In the process, Puar questions why “home” is a priori held to be the place away from which travel presumably takes us. Many lesbians invest in “travel” by adopting children from overseas, and lesbians in various racialized diaspora often travel “home” to originary national contexts to consolidate ethnic and sociocultural identities and/or to create internationalized sites of safety and political activism for women locally. Both forms of lesbian investment in “travel” escape industry statistics. Puar also points to the cruel contemporary irony whereby industry travel is valued and cultivated whereas the “travel” of migrants is not (see also Alexander 1998). In queer contexts, mostly male white tourists visit exoticized locales, their desires cultivated by industries because they are lucrative; here, corporate profit-seeking supercedes legal concerns over travelers’ perceived perversions. Like profit itself, privileged gay men’s liquidity is welcomed in a variety of capital-inducing transnational contexts. Against these legitimizing flows, “colored” migrant bodies are tightly regulated and negatively cast.

Paola Bacchetta charts a similar conundrum of representation and legitimation in her discussion of the patriarchal and racist ways in which US scholars have cast cyberspace as the communication artery through which queer liberation movements first took hold in the postcolonial world. Here, an implicitly white and male “West” is (again) constructed as the harbinger of innovation, its progress diffusing outwards to formerly colonized margins. Bacchetta dispels the linearity
and ethnocentricity presumed in this narrative by presenting histories of lesbian Indian activists in the 1970s and 1980s. She elaborates importantly on the differences amongst these women’s lives, foreclosing any collapse of their respective geographies and histories. In the end, we are admonished to think through lesbian lives at a number of scales simultaneously and from multiple locations, developing and deploying new vocabularies that will allow us to do so.

To be sure, most of the concerns raised in this special issue relate largely to urban contexts or rural tourist destinations. Queer women and men residing in Western rural areas—and thus their differentially sexed, gendered, and racialized challenges and resources—are not adequately represented here (see eg Phillips 2000; Shuttleton 2000). Most issues raised, moreover, have something to do with the representation of white gay maleness, rather than with the “real” lives of gay men per se. I nonetheless argue that hegemonic representations speak to hegemonic desires and cannot be dismissed out of hand as altogether non-representative of the ideals and practices in which “real” people invest. In the end, the larger point is that there is substantial room for discussion about white patriarchal privilege outside heterosexual confines. Denying internal (queer) divisions for the sake of a larger cause (queer survival) is important when survival is clearly at stake, as it has been historically and as it is today in geographically uneven ways. Yet, there are many cases today where survival is tenuously assured and where more complicated discussions can take place.

The decision to place such a discussion in Antipode has been a somewhat difficult one. Antipode has historically been the nominal bastion of Marxist geographers, a group generally disengaged from and unsympathetic to queer issues. Moreover, geography has been a largely homophobic discipline (Chouinard and Grant 1995; Elder, Knopp and Nast forthcoming; Valentine 1998), its many institutional ties with nationalist defense and intelligence initiatives linked to heteronormative structures and values. There is hence a risk that the issues tabled here will be taken up in ways that further marginalize and derogate non-heterosexual subjects and/or identities. This fear has been discussed by many other queers in a variety of contexts. For example, Jacquie Alexander (1998:285), in her critique of white gay male tourism in the Caribbean, notes that “These are not easy questions to undertake at this moment when attempts at deep self-reflexivity within marginalized communities runs the risk of perverse appropriation by right-wing movements whose secular and religious arms are unrelenting in their desire to mobilize homoerotics as a pretext to refuse citizenship.” At the same time, as a Caribbean lesbian of color, she understands quite viscerally the necessity to broach these questions so as push the envelope of what constitutes radicality (see also Hennessy 2000). The fear that radical critiques nested within
radical enterprises will be co-opted and used against the totality of the radical enterprise by conservative forces is not unique to gay communities. All marginalized groups include those who feel their issues have not been addressed and who desire to speak out in this regard. Yet these persons are often asked to silence themselves so as to further the cause of the larger movement or revolution. Such silencing has never been revolutionarily cathartic or productive. Ironically, those at the greatest risk of societal rejection within and outside the queer community (e.g., transsexuals, women, and all persons of color) are often the most vocal in registering intracommunity dissent. The intracommunity plea that certain groups be silent for the sake of some larger revolution is therefore suspect, given the differential privilege of those asking for silence (see Randall 1992). Even given the additional burden of working against co-optation by conservative forces, those working for radical change need to remain open to critique. Thus, what is hoped for here is to open up dialogue within and across sexed communities, to develop means for investigating systems of power that ultimately are not restricted to any particular identity or place.

Antipode’s subtitle, “a radical journal of geography,” avers that radicality and not Marxism is central to its mission; and this collection asserts the importance of queerness in radical agendas. This assertion is especially significant because there is no queer publishing venue in geography in which to publish articles such as these, nor should there necessarily be one. Antipode, at the core of the discipline’s radical tradition, is the logical place where discussions deemed radical can belong. Disciplinary practices are, at any rate, changing, with lesbigay issues being negotiated more openly, including at annual meetings of the AAG, in the newly formed SSSG and in its invitation to write a chapter in the AAG-sponsored text, Geography in the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century (Gaile and Wilmott forthcoming), and in the many recently published edited collections and books by geographers about sexuality.

Perhaps, then, this twenty-first-century forum is a time-place where geographers investigating the queer can move a bit beyond defensive images of coherence and explore differences—and where the prototypical, traditional “radical” (white, male, Marxist) can be opened up to the queer (Hawley 2001; Hennessy 2000; Morton 2001). We want to move beyond Alexander’s (1998:292) assertion that “only a few of us are willing to problematize the production of the ‘gay marketing moment’” and instead “ask ourselves whether an unwitting trade in silence is the price we want to pay in order to provide a few of us with a ticket to walk on the welcome mat” (see also Anzaldua 1998:530, 532; Stein 1998:559–560). We need to question, as Jagose did early on, “whether a generic masculinity may be reinstalled at the heart of the ostensibly gender-neutral queer; whether queer’s transcendent
disregard for dominant systems of gender fails to consider the material conditions of the west in the late twentieth century” (cited in Hawley 2001:4). Hawley’s (2001:6) work, in fact, suggests that what he calls “queering” (politically questioning) racialized lesbian and gay interests is productive because it includes a “demand that the liberal (white, uppified, Western) gay and lesbian establishment recognize the ‘subalterns’ in its midst,” his particular project being to question how homosexuality intersects power relations in transnational contexts. Here, Morton (2001) takes special issue with the lack of class analysis in most queer theory, a theory that often imagines “desire” to be divorced from political economy (see also Hennessey 2000).

This collection points to the crosscurrents of patriarchies, racisms, and classism that flow across sexuality formations and sexed places, in so doing tracing out critical lines of sociality and communication amongst all sorts of queer and not-so-queer lives. By acknowledging how all sexualities productively transect class, “race,” and gender and by acknowledging sexuality’s geographical force, we include many lives previously left out of the picture and we are better able to theorize “place” as a site of hierarchies as erotic investments (see Blum this issue; Sinfield 2000:27).

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Endnotes
1 Several reviewers asked if the discussant was a queer white man, for which reason I point out that she is a straight-identified white woman—a clarification suggested to me by one of the reviewers.
2 The original title of the paper, “Queer Patriarchy, International” assumed that my audience would intuit from my work that idealized fatherhoods in the U.S. have always been racily imagined as white. I therefore did not put “race” in the title. But in discussions with others I realized that “race” needs to be in the title, especially since images of the white father and black son emerged coevally and relationally (Nast 2000).
3 In 1994, the New York Times (Elliott 1994) published the results of the ground-breaking Yankelovich Monitor national survey (conducted by the research company Yankelovich Partners Inc) of 2503 persons that included a question about sexual orientation. The sexuality data suggested that there were no significant differences in the incomes of heterosexual and homosexual individuals, but that there were significant differences
in their educational attainments and consumer profiles. Forty-nine per cent of queer individuals attended any college, while only 37% of heterosexuals did so, for example, and 29% of homosexuals were “looking for new department stores” compared to 18% of heterosexuals. Homosexual households also seemed to be much more technologically aware, with 39% “strongly agree[ing] that “we must all learn to deal with technological change” compared to 23% of those in heterosexual households. The mean household income of gay men was $37,400, less than that of heterosexual men ($39,300). The mean household income of lesbians, meanwhile, was $400 greater than that of heterosexual women ($34,800 versus $34,400). Nonetheless, the numbers need to be analyzed from the perspective of gender and number of dependents. The incomes of lesbians are significantly less than those of gay men, for example, and the study makes no mention of disparities in the number of dependents within the various households. A heterosexual man with two dependents will obviously have more financial constraints on self-directed consumer spending than a childless homosexual man, while any single woman with dependents will be considerably disadvantaged in relation to either homosexual or heterosexual men.

4 I point to the author’s white racialized identity because one reviewer guessed otherwise, explicitly identifying her as a “deadbeat black welfare mother,” implying that her story was better suited to a Rush Limbaugh radio show program than a scholarly journal. The author chose to write her piece anonymously as a short story rather than as an analytical paper to protect what are still very tenuous visiting rights with her child. Readers therefore need to place the genre and story in sociopolitical and structural context. Also, see Pratt (2000:649), who, after Kondo, notes that, for “marginalized groups, realist writing [autobiographical] can be a way of writing an identity into existence.”

5 The anonymous contributor’s considerable angst over her underprivileged position in relation to wealthy gay white men is mirrored across a plethora of social fields. Recently, an African-American friend in a large Chicago law firm made up predominantly of straight-identified white male partners almost lost her marketing job when she argued against promoting certain of the firm’s products (estate management) exclusively to white gay men (their preference). As a lesbian of color, she took exception to the fact that queer people of color and women, generally, were ignored, and assumed considerable risk in opposing the firm, eventually receiving permission to market across the queer spectrum. Interestingly, and mirroring other privileged contexts, these largely heterosexually identified corporate white men were seduced by visions of white gay men’s differentially higher incomes.

6 A recent high-profile adoption case in the UK illustrates the gendered and class complexities that can be involved in commercially arranged surrogacy transactions. Two white gay men in their early 30s, both millionaires, paid over $320,000 to have one woman’s egg transplanted to another woman’s womb (presumably so neither woman could claim maternity rights) and inseminated with one of their sperm. The woman who carried the child to term was a US citizen. Twins (Saffron and Aspen) were born in December 1999 and brought to the UK several weeks later. The twins’ citizenship was contested by Britain’s Home Office (their US passports were seized), the office noting that the state recognizes only surrogate mothers as legal parents. Discussions then ensued as to whether the children should be sent back to the US. Interestingly, a white male Labour MP petitioned the Home Secretary on the men’s behalf, stating, “This family should be allowed to settle back into obscurity rather than be denied their basic human rights and the unity of the family” (The Data Lounge 2000). It was suggested that the case be taken to the European Court of Human Rights, one of the adoptive men stating that “We’ve been through so much before just to get pregnant and then worrying all through the pregnancy” (BBC News 2000a). Soon thereafter, the Home Office backed down and gave the children unrestricted stay, albeit still no citizenship. As a later BBC News report (2000b) noted, no less an
authority than “the US Supreme Court registered both men … as fathers of the twins and did not register a mother.” While I am not at all claiming this case is a typical one, I would like to bring attention to the incredible economic, cultural, and political capital these men, as white wealthy men, could mobilize. I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for bringing this case to my attention.

Despite the high profile of Marxist geographers on the *Antipode* editorial board up through the 1990s and general perceptions of the journal as radical in the Marxist sense, explicitly Marxist contributions were somewhat rare in its earliest years, when the journal was supposedly the most radical (Philo 1998). See also Elder, Knopp and Nast (forthcoming) for a discussion of the heteromasculinity of much Marxist analysis, where capital is cast as paternal and labor as the valiant, struggling (“emasculated”) son—both fighting over access to, and ownership over, a naturalized maternal.

The collection Hawley (2001:10) edits was set up “to address configurations of homosexual and ‘queer’ identity from a transnational perspective; to question the relation between hegemonic (US) cultural transmissions as they intersect with indigenous or colonized formations of sexual identity; to connect cultural arrangements like sexual, racial, and class identities to the political economy of late capitalism; and to engage some of the theoretical debates around how to know these issues.”

**References**


