

A Half-Dozen Things That We Are: Collective Identity in Intersectional LGBT/Queer Social Movement Organizations Part II

Tim Jones-Yelvington¹

For decades, Black and multiracial feminist theories of intersectionality, which establish major systems of power and privilege with relation to race, class gender and sexuality as interlocking and mutually reinforcing, have promised to end reductive debates about which is “the ultimate” oppression and provide the basis for coalitional, multi-issue activism on the Left. Yet intersectional approaches are still not the norm in LGBT/Queer organizing, which, if anything, has narrowed over time. This research examines the work of two intersectionally-directed LGBT/Queer social movement organizations, *Queers for Economic Justice* in New York City and *Southerners on New Ground* in the U.S. South. Through the lens of collective identity theories that emerge from social movement theory, this study seeks to understand how the organizations in question cohere, address challenges posed by diversity and inequality and communicate their collective identities in a variety of settings. This research brings to Queer and multiracial feminist theories a deeper interaction with “on-the-ground” activisms, to social movement theory a more nuanced conception of collective identity and to activists new ways of interpreting their struggles and successes. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address:

<journal@transformativestudies.org> Website:

<http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2008 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS: Queer Theory, Black Feminism, Social Movement Theory, Intersectionality, Nonprofit Structures.

Continued from Vol.1, No. 1, 2008

¹ **Tim Jones-Yelvington** is a Chicago-based writer, activist and cultural critic. This research was originally completed for his undergraduate senior thesis in Women’s and Gender Studies at DePaul University. He acknowledges Natalie Bennett, Beth Kelly and his informants at *Queers for Economic Justice* and *Southerners on New Ground* for their assistance. Address correspondence to: Tim Jones-Yelvington, 2255 W Giddings BSMT, Chicago, IL 60625; tel. (773) 425-3709; e-mail: timjy@sbcglobal.net.